

LAM RIM



MANDALA

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EDITORIAL

Well, another six months have gone by since our last Mandala, and so much has happened. Geshe La travelled to South Africa with Mike Austin and was well cared for everywhere he went. Thank you all for your many kindnesses.

Geshe-La was taken in to Abergavenny hospital with a swollen appendix - it was a worrying time for everyone, but he is thankfully home at Lam Rim now. With Geshe La being so ill, we realise how even more precious he is to us all. Thank you Emma for your lovely prayer for Geshe La when he was in hospital early this year. You have put into words what many of us would like to say. As well as Emma's prayer on page 4, the Long Life prayer for Geshe La is on page 4.

I would just like to say thank you all so much for contributing so many interesting articles. The lovely poems by Sheila Wilde are becoming a regular spot in the Mandala and are available at 70p from the Lam Rim shop. Thank you Jill for all the 'hot drink' recipes.

I would also like to thank Ann Davies for all her help in proof reading the Mandala for me.

We are very grateful also to receive articles from our dear friends in South Africa. Puddha

(also from S.Africa) has now made his presence known and we are very glad that he is also contributing - what a wonderful cat!

Part 2 of Life in a Tibetan Monastery will appear in the next edition of the Mandala.

Thank you Margaret & Edita for all the love & care you give to Geshe La, and show also to us all.

We are trying to produce a Mandala twice yearly, so please keep those articles rolling in. I appreciate all the time and care given to writing these articles. Until next time **Lorraine**

**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
sacred happiness which is sorrowless**

**May all live in equanimity,
without attachment and aversion**

**And live believing in the equality
of all that lives.**

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LETTER FROM GESHE DAMCHO-LA



Dear Friends

Since writing my last letter to you I have had an extraordinary real samsaric experience. Over the last 25 years I have visited many people in hospital but I have never experienced living in a hospital.

In May I really realised this experience. I was shocked - one moment sitting on my bed at Lam Rim, next moment sitting on a bed in hospital ward. No choice. No way you can control, you just cannot say 'No'. Once on hospital bed you have lost your freedom. Same with our life - no freedom of choice.

My fellow patients were very kind giving me initiations into the rituals and rules of the hospital. Very interesting - rather like a monastery. However, then followed the needles into veins, again no choice, my body was attached to tubes and bags of various liquids hanging from a stand on wheels which followed me everywhere - just like my delusions. That drip, drip, became the focus of my attention together with the realisation that my body was in serious trouble. No food, just water, glucose and antibiotics. Many staff in different coloured uniforms together with doctors smiled encouragingly, examined my abdomen, crossed their fingers and said I was doing really well. I was fast becoming the perfect skeleton in a yellow vest and petticoat. I think they were also interested in how I could sit in the lotus position all day without my knees hurting.

So, what did I do in these circumstances. I had one book, the stories of the Great Kadampas for inspiration, my daily prayers and then spent the rest of my time practising thought transformation meditation. All the patients' suffering I wish to take - all the merit and virtues from this and previous lifetimes I wish to offer. I wish to heal their suffering because all those mother sentient beings have been so kind to me in this and previous lives. The doctors and nurses work so hard, all the technology involved in X-Rays and body scans - all began as seeds in someone's thoughts of wanting to help - such concern and patience by the X-Ray staff. Breathe in - Hold - Breathe out - Well done! So many different ways of receiving kindness including the medical treatments for relieving pain.. So - I wish to help, I want to help, but I can't, therefore my mind gets frustrated - how can I help? My own mind needs to develop. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas teach all the time - don't do non-virtue, do virtue, but we don't know and don't really care - many lifetimes bad habits, so the result is suffering - no choice.

I know I will go sooner or later and I am not frightened of death as I am constantly preparing for next life by wishing to help all living beings. In the hospital room I only thought of the suffering mother beings, so when I came back to Lam Rim I thought ah, the air, so sweet, the green trees, the birds and animals in the fields - but it is still samsara. Really no different - hospital bed or Lam Rim, this body is constantly subject to the three sufferings: change suffering, suffering suffering, pervasive suffering.

Thank you again for all your prayers, flowers and cards. They were shared out to everyone in the ward. So many happy faces enjoyed indoor hospital garden.

*With my love and prayers
Geshe Damcho*

Long Life Prayer for Our Precious Teacher Ven. Geshé Damchö Yönten

To my great Buddha of long life, Amitayus,
Manifestation of the essence of Wisdom of all Buddhas
of the past, present and future,
Having made offerings with sincere faith from my heart,
May I request to you to bestow your Wisdom power upon us,
To disperse all obstacles to the long life of my Guru,
Venerable Geshé Damchö Yönten.

OM-AH-MHA RA-NE ZHE WAN-TE YE SOHA. (100x) *HRIH*

To my dear protector Tara,
Manifestation of all the Buddha ten measurable
Wisdoms and fearlessness powers,
Having made offerings with sincere faith from my heart,
May I request you to bestow your limitless power upon us,
To disperse all obstacles to the long life of my Guru,
Venerable Geshé Damchö Yönten.

OM TARA TUT-TARE TURA SOHA. (100x) *TAM*

To my Buddha, Oh great conqueror, Namgyalma,
Manifestation of all the Buddhas great compassion,
Having made offerings with sincere faith from my heart,
May I request you to bestow your boundless compassion upon us,
To disperse all obstacles to the long life of my Guru,
Venerable Geshé Damchö Yönten.

OM DHRUM SOHA OM AMRITA DHE SOHA. (100x) *HUNG*

May my Guru's long life, and may great Tsong Kharpa's teachings
Spread unceasingly to disperse all inner darkness of all beings.

*This prayer was composed by Kensur Pema Gyaltzen Rinpoché on the 15th day of the
1st Month, according to the Tibetan Calendar, 1985.*

EMMA'S PRAYER

Dearest Geshe-La

- My beloved teacher
- May you be free from pain and suffering
- May your body be healed and come to feel at ease again
- May you receive bountiful care and nurturing from all at the hospital, and from all who love you so much.
- May your mind feel happy knowing that your spirit is strong, and that you are loved dearly by us all

I pray for your long life and recovery

Much love, peace and light

Emma

On the 8th May Geshe - La was admitted as an emergency to Neville Hall hospital in Abergavenny with a large abscess on his appendix. Geshe - La was treated with vast quantities of anti-biotic therapy rather than surgical intervention, which would have been extremely hazardous at that point in time.

Emma's Prayer is one of the many cards that Geshe - La received when he was so dangerously ill. Geshe - La was hospitalised for 2 weeks and lost 1 stone.



TURNING THE THREE WHEELS OF THE DHARMA by HIS HOLINESS DALAI LAMA

Sometimes people come to me and say “*my religious practice is not very relevant*”. This may be the result of a wrong emphasis on minor practices at the cost of more significant ones. We tend to think of meditation, chanting and ritual alone as religious practices. However, these are not very relevant in day-to-day life. Contentment, tolerance, sharing, caring, self discipline and mindfulness, these are the essence of the Buddha dharma.

Very often, we perceive religious practice as a means of livelihood. Sometimes religion is misused for purely material ends. This is disgraceful.

Whatever religious traditions we adhere to we should first grasp their essence and transform our mind accordingly. By transforming our mental attitude, we transform our emotional life as well. Since many human sufferings are related to emotions and thoughts, we will find that cultivating positive and logical conceptual thinking helps in eliminating negativities. Here human intelligence plays a great role. For it is only through discrimination between right and wrong that we can transform our mind, not through force. It is because of this that the Buddha gave extensive teachings. We have the profound lineage and we have the vast lineage. Whether we refer to the 84,000 classes of teachings or the over 300 volumes of Kagyur and Tangyur in Tibetan Buddhism, they all focus on transforming the mind.

Tibet House Bulletin.November 2000 .

A MEDITATION ON LOVING KINDNESS

..... The following meditation is a 2,500 year old practice that uses repeated phrases, images, and feelings to evoke loving-kindness and friendliness toward oneself and others. You can experiment with this practice to see if it is useful for you. It is best to begin by repeating it over and over for 15 or 20 mins once or twice daily in a quiet place for several months. At first this meditation may feel mechanical or awkward or even bring up its opposite, feelings of irritation and anger. If this happens, it is especially important to be patient and kind toward yourself, allowing whatever arises to be received in a spirit of friendliness and kind affection. In its own time, even in the face of inner difficulties, loving kindness will develop. Sit in a comfortable fashion. Let your body relax and be at rest. As best you can, let your mind be quiet, letting go of plans and preoccupations. Then begin to recite inwardly the following phrases directed to yourself. You begin with yourself because without loving yourself it is almost impossible to love others.

May I be filled with loving-kindness.

May I be well.

May I be peaceful and at ease.

May I be happy.

As you say the phrases, you may also wish to use the image from the Buddha's instructions: picture yourself as a young and beloved child, or sense yourself as you are now, held in a heart of loving-kindness. Let the feelings arise with the words. Adjust the words and images so that you find the exact phrases that best open your heart of kindness. Repeat the phrases again and again, letting the feelings permeate your body and mind.

Practice this meditation repeatedly for a number of weeks until the sense of loving-kindness for yourself grows.

When you feel ready, in the same meditation period you can gradually expand the focus of your loving-kindness to include others.

Extract from A Path With Heart
by Jack Kornfield

**We follow desire in the hope of getting satisfaction
- but following desire only leads to dissatisfaction.**

Lama Tsong Khapa

Appreciations of GODWIN SAMARARATNE

Godwin, the “gentle giant” is no more. Gentle he was with all that inner goodness and feeling for humanity radiating through the world to those who sought solace from him. Gentle and childlike was his nature so that all who came into contact felt comfortable with him.

He was soft spoken and calm in all his dealings with people. A very gentle teacher, he did not force his views on people but guided them so that a natural unfolding of the Dharma took place within themselves, thus transforming their lives. The simplicity with which he taught something so profound touching the very core of their lives was understood by all, whether adult or child.

A giant he was in that he embodied all that is good and wonderful in human nature. He did not consider anyone's need as of little importance. To him each one was special. His boundless goodwill and compassion made him special to all who sought his guidance and friendship. He was loved and respected the world over.

He made giant strides encouraging and instructing people into a meditative way of life. His extensive knowledge of the Dharma and the wisdom he imparted in his teaching made him a great master much sought after. His spiritual guidance and counsel brought understanding and with it happiness to many weighted down by the pressures of life. Many are the saddened and despairing who felt themselves isolated and who found a genuine friend in him to guide them tactfully and gently back to the acceptance of life as it is lived with its “see-saw rhythm” as he put it. In this way he brought comfort and harmony to many a home torn with conflict and aggression.

He wasn't the traditionally accepted holy guru seated cross-legged, cut away from the realities of life. He was one of us. He enjoyed company and his laughter was infectious.

His interests were manifold and his knowledge was not confined to one particular topic but extended to many. Once listening to him I was amazed at the skill he displayed in discussing English literature with the Advanced Level students with particular reverence to R.K.Narayan and Chekov.

He gave freely not only of his spiritual guidance and counsel but his time and energy wherever they were needed. In addition to running two meditation Centres and conducting numerous classes and retreats here and abroad, he was involved with research into near death experiences and rebirth. He was committed to many humanitarian activities and his special interest was to help the two hospitals at Peradeniya and Kandy drawing on his own resources and those of friends abroad. He gave solace not only to the physically ill especially those desperate with terminal illness, but the mentally sick, with no concern for the sapping of his energy and health.

He responded positively to the poverty he saw around him. The distribution of frames for pairs of spectacles and hearing aids donated by his foreign friends, and the payment for lenses with his own resources, the contribution of medical

supplies and stationery to the less privileged villagers and financial assistance for the renovation of their homes and active involvement in setting up projects for self employment of youth, made him a true friend of those who were in need. Something remarkable was that he never complained, never fussed but was always with a smile.

Just prior to falling unconscious from which he didn't recover, the smile was there.

His classes in meditation were of great depth imparted with a lightness. His sense of humour and wit were remarkable so that the sessions we attended for nearly seventeen years were fresh and full of life. The mind became a source of experiment and enjoyment, in “knowing the mind, shaping the mind and freeing the mind” so that we could achieve a mind that is “free, happy and full of loving kindness,” as he put it.

It was the epitome of such a mind. We learnt many guidelines for harmonious relationships and meaningful living.

In any age when the world's fast losing its sense of humanity, we cannot afford to lose people such as Godwin who in their selflessness are so rare in our midst. His absence leaves an abysmal void in the spiritual world, in our society and in our individual lives. What better monument can there be to his memory than his goodness engraved in many hearts.

May he be always peaceful just as he lived

Visakha Wickremeratne

This article was sent by his student Jeanne in Sri Lanka.

Godwin Samararatne was a very dear friend and teacher from Sri Lanka. He taught at Lam Rim Buddhist Centre when he was in the West and also in South Africa. Geshe-La, David and Margaret met him whilst in South Africa for the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in December 1999. Godwin was so surprised and delighted to see us there. It was so beneficial to spend our last time together receiving teachings.

Margaret

A book will be coming out next year on Appreciation of Godwin and his Teachings

A message from Buddha on the May Day protest

by John Peacock

It was not what happened on the streets that was interesting, during the much - trailed May Day mass demonstration against global capitalism. Rather it was society's response. By that I do not mean the deployment of thousands of police, so much as the way that politicians and the media vilified the protesters as some kind of lunatic fringe. Perhaps a minority were. But many were just individuals who simply questioned the wisdom of an unimpeded aggressive global capitalism.

What seems to have provoked such ire was the attack, not on shop premises, but on some of the great mythologies of the Western world - namely that increased economic wealth leads to happiness and that economic determinism is clearly common sense. These together with other tenets represent the rationale behind much of global materialism and capitalism.

That opposition to these tenets is not new is evidenced in the figure of the Buddha, who lived in India some time in the fifth century BCE and who could perhaps be described as the first royal 'drop - out'. This month, throughout the world, Buddhists celebrate the festival of Wesak - a commemoration of the Buddha's life and achievement. Legends about the Buddha's life claim that it was on the full moon of May that the royal prince who was known as Siddhartha Gautama became the "Buddha" or "awakened one". What the Buddha had awoken to, so Buddhists maintain, is the way things are, that is, a clear and direct insight into the nature of reality. In understanding the nature of reality the Buddha had discovered and overcome suffering and dissatisfaction by identifying its cause.

It would be easy to dismiss that as an event which took place in a world which is radically different from our own. Yet many of the values which drove society in India in those days are ones that we would readily recognise. The yardsticks which measured the life of the aristocracy in which, the legends tell us, the Buddha was born were those - as now - of material success and sensuality. The Buddha was encouraged to cultivate a taste for material and sensual pleasures as a means to find "happiness". Such are very much the values that underpin much of the economic theory that is taught within the contemporary business

schools of the West: today status, material success and an addiction to sensuality are also thought to be the pre-requisites to happiness.

Yet it was these very values that the Buddha rejected in his quest to find freedom from the dissatisfaction and suffering that seem to dominate human life: the unquenchable "thirst" or craving for happiness was, in fact, the Buddha discerned, the very cause of our dissatisfaction. One manifestation of this thirst is the attempt to avoid the existential issues of old age, sickness, and death, by the accumulation of material wealth and goods. However, as the Buddha identified, these issues can only be evaded for so long and eventually they catch up with each and every one of us - no matter how wealthy or successful.

Today the affluence and abundance of the Western world can similarly blind us to the existential realities that underpin our existence. International corporate business would not acknowledge that; it has a vested interest in selling us the old recipes for happiness. But, as we are now beginning to realise, the enormity of commercial business - on the global scale on which it is now manifested - has a dark side. Globalised commercial activities, in order to provide

the material goods for our unending thirst, are causing a very real threat to future life on this planet. It is this awareness that has provoked much of the anger against corporate business and the World Trade Organisation which was so manifest in the May Day demonstrations.

The Buddha delineated a path of wisdom and compassion to lead us out of this. What Buddhists celebrate at Wesak is the inauguration of a path that can be seen as a "peaceful revolution". The Buddha throughout his long teaching career - nearly 45 years - stressed the cultivation of morality and the lessening of egotistical concerns as essential to his path to "awakening". In this he had a message for the demonstrators: anger, he taught, no matter how righteous, is never justified as it simply leads to a perpetuation of the hatred within the world. But he has a much wider message for the advocates of unbridled global capitalism; of paramount importance to this path is the examination of one's own greed, hatred and delusion. Central to the Buddha's message was the lessening of the belief that material possessions could be equated with happiness. On

founding his order of monks and nuns the Buddha enjoined them to be "content with little".

It is this final phrase that has so much resonance for us in the Western World. Whilst the majority of us will never don the robes of the Buddhist monk or nun, can we learn to be content with little? Can we learn to search for happiness and peace in things other than the material goods proffered by corporate business? These are real and pressing questions for all of us. The challenge is for us to live differently. The life of the Buddha, celebrated at Wesak, represents a paradigm of what it means to live that radically different life.

Independent 5th May 2001

HOT GINGERED MILK

Preparation time: 10 minutes Serves 2



1 cup of cow or goat milk
1 cup of water
1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger root
3-4 cardamom seeds
½- 1 teaspoon ghee

Put milk, water, ginger, and cardamom into a small saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat until boiling. Reduce heat immediately to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Pour into individual cups and stir in ghee.

Alternative additions to the above can be:

Fresh ginger, cardamom seeds, fennel seeds, cinnamon, grated nutmeg, cloves and honey

Homage to the Holy Lamas, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Whatever small benefits these Offerings bring to those who read them, May it become a cause for their Enlightenment.

Sharing the Process

Within the context and with the support of a spiritual practice, illness can be experienced as great opportunity. With Buddha at your side, it is also a gift.

When kindness is shown towards us, or we receive a gift of any kind and in any form, Buddha asks us to remember this act of kindness and give something of ourselves in return.

When Illness Catches up with Us

His Holiness, teaching, 'The Complete Path to Enlightenment', in France last September, reminded us, that before we experience an illness of some kind, we may think of ourselves as being self-sufficient and very independent. When illness catches up with us, we become dependent on others for help and support. Then we realise our interdependence. If we recover well, sometimes we can forget how dependent we were and begin to feel independent again. Bearing this in mind, His Holiness asked us to remember others. When others we know are ill, we make special effort to give of oneself, to spend time with, and show loving-kindness. Then if they seem to be recovering and are sent back home, concerning especially the elderly or the disabled, we can forget them and they may be lonely, with few people to visit them and to share with them, their worries and problems.

If we have experienced hospitalisation for any period of time, we come face to face with the sufferings of others. Our fellow patients, family, and friends, who may visit us and show much love and concern. There are those in hospital who have few or no visitors at all. Often, if they are elderly, some of their friends and family may have died or be living far away and unable to visit them. So sometimes they do not also receive any gifts while they are unwell. We also experience the care and support from those who have dedicated their work to be of service to others; the nurses, and doctors and those who come to work there. These experiences can help, if it is needed, as it was in my own case, to open the Heart Centre.

His Holiness spoke of those who had

Offerings to the Mandala Teachings given by H.H. Dalai Lama in France On the Complete Path to Enlightenment

by Emma Juliet Lawton

experienced much illness and disabilities, as having a self-cherishing mind. In my own case, this is very true, which is why when Buddha teaches us to cherish others, I realise the many faults I have, and try harder now to have more concern for others, and not just for myself.

Taking Refuge as the First Step

On the first day of teachings in France, His Holiness introduced everyone to the importance and significance of taking refuge as the first step on the Path to Complete Enlightenment. In order for a spiritual practice to be authentically Buddhist, taking refuge in the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha had to be an integral part of it.

In order for a Buddhist practice to be authentically Mahayana, then the intention to generate Bodichitta motivated by the wish to become fully enlightened, fully awakened, for the benefit of all Sentient Beings, needed to be integral to it.

Taking Refuge in the Buddha, His Holiness advised us not to fall in to a tendency to associate the Buddha merely as a historical figure who lived at a particular past period of time, and who was a kind person. The Buddha realised the full awakening that is realising a very high level of conscious awareness experientially. That is in order to reach this level of consciousness, he actively engaged in the practice of Mindfulness of Body, Speech and Mind. This is mentioned in the Abidharma, and refers us to the Mahasatipattana Sutta for a fully outlined guidance through what is known as the Four Foundations of Mindfulness and the Eightfold Path.

Here the Buddha has taught this practice, which included the Four Noble Truths and the Two Truths, as the only way, for the purification of beings, for overcoming sorrow, for extinguishing suffering, for walking on the path of truth and for realising Liberation.

Taking refuge in the Guru initially, we pay homage and honour our teacher as an emanation of the Buddha, of realised awakening. We also pay our respect by valuing the spiritual guidance of our Lama without which we would surely lose our way on the Path to Enlightenment.

Taking refuge in the Dharma, we are asked to study and experience experientially, following the example of the Buddha and our Lamas, the Four Noble Truths and also the Two Truths which are referred to further on.

Taking refuge in the Sangha, in the same manner of respect and appreciation with which we regard the Buddha and Guru, we similarly look for inspiration to the Spiritual Community, our Dharma companions who have progressed along the Path. In this way, we look for guidance, and our role models,

those whom have at least overcome the base or gross mental and emotional afflictions and defilements. In this way we support each other. By this support and encouragement of one another, we also protect and expand the Dharma, honour our Teacher and please the Enlightened Ones.

My own introduction to taking Refuge and to the Mahayana Buddhist Path began in 1999 when I first came to Lam Rim to join a retreat. I had experienced major illness, having been hospitalised for 10 months, undergoing abdominal, brain and heart surgery from 1996 through to the end of 1998, returning for a last operation.

Although I had worked with the Satipatthana Zen Tradition since 1991, I was not aware of the practice of taking Refuge or the Mahayana tradition. This was not a reflection on my former teacher Roshi John Carne, whose spiritual centre then was based at a place called Taliaris in Llandeilo, but a reflection on limitations in my own practice. Just as the Buddha warns in the Sutta in the "Better Way to Catch a Snake", and also in the Diamond Sutta; be mindful of becoming attached to the Dharma as image, form and sign. Do not carry the raft on your head for the rest of your journey when you have reached the other side. Leave it on the river bank as others will need to use it to cross safely. So I had become attached to the surface image or form of the Sati-Zen practice but had not sufficiently entered deeply into the essence of the Spirit of Buddha. If I had done, there is no doubt in my mind that I would not have become so dangerously ill and been a cause of such suffering for myself and others both before, during and after.

So the beginning of the "Dawn of Awakening" came when I first met Geshe La and the Sangha at Lam Rim.

Gradually, although it was apparent to me after our first conversation together, many of the limitations of my practice, and shortcomings of my personality became often painfully obvious to me, even though they took quite some time to sink in! During this first and subsequent conversations, I was touched deeply by Geshe La's gentle wisdom, the warmth of his compassion, and his loving kindness. Due to what I sensed was reflecting his high level of consciousness



and spiritual practice, great humility emanated from him, flowing with patience and tolerance which accepted unconditionally all shortcomings. This, inspired and motivated by his wish and commitment to alleviate beings from their sufferings by helping them to step on to the Path of Full Awakening.

I found that Geshe La's example and the spirit of his practice permeated the whole atmosphere at Lam Rim. I felt that his dedication and commitment to protect and maintain the purity of the Dharma inspired and continues to inspire everyone who meets him. And the members of the Sangha who have in the past, and those who continue to now, give of themselves, in service under his guidance, create anew each day, a precious jewel of spiritual sanctuary for all to benefit from.

May our beloved teacher Geshe Damcho and his precious Sangha be blessed with long life, health and happiness.

The 'hardships', the illnesses, or any difficulties in life, we ourselves experience, either as a result of afflictive emotions or such like, can be gratefully received, if we are able to use our minds to transform a habitual negative response to a positive appreciation. The appreciation being, that we have been given the opportunity to diligently put into practice the Precious Dharma, that we have been fortunate and blessed in this lifetime to receive, if not just for us, but for the sake of all beings.

On the first morning of the teachings, H.H. showed us how we may develop an empathy with all beings, and how basically we are all equal:

'We all have from our base cell, the possibility to lead a successful and happy life and also create happiness for others. We also, have from our base cell, the possibility to lead a negative way of life and create much suffering for ourselves and for others.'

The Four Noble Truths

His Holiness presented the method, the way with which we may overcome suffering, by asking us to study and work with the Four Noble Truths:

The First Noble Truth was to **acknowledge our suffering**, realising that although suffering comes in many forms, the suffering of suffering - being from the results of illness, old age and dying. This type of suffering being a condition of existence for all sentient beings. And the suffering caused by afflictive thoughts and emotions, arising from a misapprehension of the true nature of reality, termed the suffering of ignorance.

The Second Noble Truth was to **see the Truth of the**

Origin of suffering, and our own Individual sufferings. If we sat still and reflected, on what aspects of our thoughts, feelings and actions created happiness, (a sense of ease, a wholesomeness for ourselves and with others, and what aspects of our feelings, thoughts and actions created suffering, unhappiness (a sense of dis-ease, an unwholesomeness with ourselves and with others), we would then begin to see part of the origin of some of our sufferings.

H.H. also spoke of the suffering of ignorance, which was not merely related to lack of knowledge or confusion. Here H.H. referred to it as a misapprehension, a misunderstanding into the true nature of reality at any given moment. This would then give rise to and be a cause of mental and emotional unrest, (afflictive emotions), dissatisfaction, and discontent within ourselves, and therefore with others.

By correctly understanding the True Nature of reality, rather than misleading ourselves by taking the way things seemed to appear, the appearance of things, etc., as the whole Truth, would lead us to an understanding of the third Noble Truth, the Truth of Cessation.

The Third Noble Truth His Holiness gave us was the **Truth of Cessation**. Because there have been examples of fully awakened beings in the past and as there are in the present by the example of the Buddha and our present Lamas and Teachers, this should give encouragement to us that it is possible to realise cessation from our sufferings. Cessation was described as the complete elimination and transformation of all afflictive mental and emotional states into their positive attributes. This would have led to the complete purification of negative karmic imprints in the consciousness, the mind, so that they no longer arise, leading to a state of tranquillity, peace and equanimity creating and sustaining happiness within and extending out to all beings. If we also have an understanding and faith that the natural state of mind is clear and luminous, like the bright shining sun at our heart centre in a clear blue sky, then we can see that the negative mental and emotional thoughts, feelings and sensations, are merely transitory clouds created by the conditions caused by lifelong habitual tendencies, reactions and patterns, obscuring the clear light of our heart wisdom, the True Nature of Mind.

His Holiness asked us first to consider and correctly understand & distinguish the Two Realities, the Two Truths, which would be the key to comprehending the Fourth Noble Truth, The Truth of the Path leading to Cessation. But in terms of Realities or Truths, Buddha mentions Conventional Reality, the appearance of how things, people, events, all phenomena seem to look, or appear to us when we just perceive them at face value with the superficial eye, this being termed Ordinary Reality, the convention of the everyday.

• Buddha teaches us that in everything we see, the events and

people we experience, even down to the thoughts and feelings that arise, that there is more to it than meets the eye.

To correctly perceive, to understand the ultimate Truth or Reality, H.H. asked us to consider how the very fact of something coming into existence, thoughts, feelings, objects of mind, people, events, all phenomena depended on a multitude of interdependent causes and conditions. This was termed Dependent Origination. This could also be perceived in nature as a natural law or condition of all life. Therefore, there was no possibility of something becoming on its own, existing as a separate intrinsic identity or self, without being part of and dependent on many things.

- Because in terms of language, all appearance had to be labelled or designated in order for it to be identified in ordinary or conventional terms, a certain use of language, tended to give the impression of things being isolated entities in themselves, this created the conditions for many misunderstandings, causing the suffering of mental and emotional unrest.
- His Holiness asked us to reflect on impermanence, the natural universal law, that all phenomena is in a constant state of flux, of change, fluidity. Nothing is ever static or fixed but is changing from one form of energy to another continuously. By understanding this truth of impermanence, it would help us not to hold on to, cling, or become attached and grasp at any thing, which in its very nature was transitory. This applied to all sentient existence, all events, all phenomena, thoughts and feelings included, all ideas, opinions, concepts, and would as a consequence, lead to the experience of suffering - discontent and dissatisfaction.

The Fourth Noble Truth His Holiness gave us was the **Truth of the Path to Cessation**. Here we are asked to gain a thorough understanding of Emptiness / Sunyata and Impermanence / Anicca. Though initially, by inference arising from an intellectual understanding and then by meditative single-pointed concentration, an intuitive experiential understanding. These stages on the Path were termed the Path of Preparation or Connection, the Path of Accumulation, and then the Path of Seeing.

The Genuine Wish for Liberation

Thus the beginning of the Buddhist Path is opened when the practitioner recognises the genuine wish for liberation. Ultimately, when we have progressed along the Way and are motivated by the Wish to gain Liberation in

*Continued from page 9.....***Offerings to the Mandala
Teachings given by H.H. Dalai Lama in France
On the Complete Path to Enlightenment**

by Emma Juliet Lawton

order to benefit others, for the sake of others, we are asked to and guided, as Machig Labdrong did so to her son through the channel of a Dakini who was sent to him during his long retreat; to unite the Way of Seeing with the Way of Behaving.

In the Fourth Noble Truth, The Truth of the Path to Cessation, His Holiness guides us by asking us to put into practice our understanding of the ultimate, true 'empty' state of reality, which we have now comprehended as being in fact 'full', owing to our correct understanding of dependent origination. This is why in the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra, The Prajnaparamita, it is written, 'Form is emptiness and emptiness is form, Form is neither emptiness and emptiness is neither form'. Hence, the use of paradox in Buddhist thought, and in essence, the paradox of existence.

H. H. therefore, showed us how to access these Four Truths and believe and have faith that the application of them in daily life, moment by moment, can lead to a state of Buddhahood. As we know this is possible by the existence of fully awakened beings in the past and in the present, all of who have practised the same Path. In this way H.H. showed us how to understand the Fourth Noble Truth, The Truth of the Path leading to Cessation.

Practice with Great Humility

During the first morning's teaching, H.H. spoke of his early days studying and practising the Buddha's Teachings.

'From the age of around 11-15yrs, I took an interest in Buddhism, and despite some limitations in my practice, I continued practising diligently. Now I am some 69yrs of age.' Here, H.H. encourages us in our practice with great humility.

During that same morning, His Holiness introduced us to where he was coming from in terms of teaching Buddhism. Much of his way of thinking and way of life has been influenced and formed through applying the Buddha's Teaching to his own personal experience of life. For this reason, H.H. when giving the Teachings speaks from the

heart. In this way it is accessible to people because it relates directly to personal life experience and is known as The Path with Heart.

If we find these Teachings useful and relevant to our individual mental dispositions, then H.H. encourages us to study them and put them into practice. On the other hand, if we find them of no use and not relevant to our way of thinking, then H.H. reassures us, it is okay to leave them.

Nurturing a newly planted seed with tender care, we are asked to tend to the garden of our minds. We increase our positive habits of body, speech and mind, those that give benefit to others and ourselves. And we decrease and dissolve all negative habits of body, speech and mind that create suffering for others and us. In doing so we become skilled gardeners and are able to create and dwell in beauty within and around us.

Show Great Respect to All the Various Major Religious Traditions

His Holiness has the greatest respect for all the various major religious traditions of the world. Because in his view, they all share as a common purpose, the aim to discipline the human mind and make better human beings out of us. So, His Holiness asked that we also show great respect to all the various major religious traditions of the world.

Originally I intended to transcribe all the tapes from the 5 days teachings in France and write a complete summary for the Mandala. However, I underestimated how long it would take, so the references to His Holiness's Teachings are written from memory quite spontaneously.

Any errors or misrepresentations of H.H. words and the Buddha Dharma, I apologise for. May they be forgiven and may I be corrected as a beginner on the Path! As I have now started to transcribe the recordings on to print for my own study and practice, if it would benefit others and if there is someone who would like a copy of the Teachings in France I would be happy to send them to you. I could be contacted through Margaret or David.

(The above has been written from memory, so there will be large sections of the Teachings untouched here. If there are passages which convey an incorrect rendering of the Dharma, it is due to my lack of experience and I apologise for this as the fault is mine.)

May all beings be free from fear and suffering and find everlasting happiness.

**With metta
Emma Juliet Lawton**

GOLDEN SLICES



5oz rolled oats
6oz finely grated carrots
4oz finely grated cheese
1 egg beaten
2oz margarine, melted
Salt and pepper
Pinch rosemary

Combine all ingredients, seasoning to taste. Press into a greased swiss roll tin and bake in a moderate oven, 375°F or 180°C gas mark 4 for 20 mins until lightly browned. Cut into slices, serve hot with parsley sauce. This is very easy to make and is also nice cold with a slice of lemon on top.

For a change, it is delicious with chopped mushrooms added. Chop and cube mushrooms and fry lightly in the margarine, before adding to the mixture.

Thrify Fifty—Rose Elliot

Did I Love Well?

Even the most exalted states and the most exceptional spiritual accomplishments are unimportant if we cannot be happy in the most basic and ordinary ways, if we cannot touch one another and the life we have been given with our hearts.

Jack Kornfield...A Path With Heart

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 66th birthday celebrated at St James's Palace

London, 26th June 2001 (Office of Tibet, London).

On 25th June at St James's Palace, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, gave a reception to the Tibetan Community in Britain, to celebrate the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Over a hundred Tibetans from all over the U.K. and some fifteen representatives from Tibet related organisations attended. Tibetans wore their national dress in the various styles of different regions of Tibet. The gathering was entertained by a charming presentation of Tibetan music and dance by members of the community traditional arts group. The Prince spent an hour and a half, rather than the scheduled one hour chatting with as many Tibetans as he could.

Mr Migyur Dorjee, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for northern Europe, thanked His Royal Highness on behalf of the Tibetan community and the Office of Tibet, saying,

"It is a great honour and privilege for the Tibetan Community in Britain to be offered a reception here, enabling us to celebrate the imminent 66th birthday of our leader His Holiness

the Dalai Lama together with your Royal Highness".

He added,
"...all Tibetans in the United Kingdom have been aware of your sympathies regarding the Tibet issue over the years, and this concern and your principled stance on this politically sensitive matter has always been very highly appreciated by all of us. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama wisely insists that the Tibet issue can only be resolved through peaceful means, whatever moral support you can give in our struggle for self-determination is very meaningful and valuable to us, and most helpful and welcome".

The Prince of Wales was offered a traditional, hand-made Tibetan Thangkha by Mr Dorjee on behalf of the Office of Tibet and the U.K. Tibetan Community. Making the presentation, Mr Dorjee said

"This small token of our appreciation is intended to propitiate your long life, and the success and prosperity of the United Kingdom".

In response, Prince Charles made a welcoming speech to felicitate the Dalai Lama on his birthday and to express his "intense admiration" for him as a person which he had felt "for countless years".

He especially acknowledged his sincere respect for His Holiness's principled stance of "non - retaliation against the Chinese", despite the vicious "persecution and provocation" of Tibetans carried out by the Chinese for over 50 years since they had "invaded Tibet". He regretted that there was so little that he could personally do to help the Tibetan cause, although he tried his best to help "by using what little influence he had", behind the scenes. To laughter and applause he mentioned his recent failure "for a number of reasons" to attend a banquet in honour of the Chinese leadership, saying he had been pleasantly surprised by the number of appreciative letters he received from people as a result. He expressed his own belief that, through maintaining this stance of "non - retaliation", the time would eventually come when the Tibetan situation would "right itself" and a just outcome would ensue.

He hoped and prayed that then, all the Tibetans in exile would be able to return safely to their own country and find happiness there. He also hoped that, one day, he might also be able to visit Tibet himself - although, he added as a parting jest, by then he would probably have to be "carried there on a litter". He thanked Mr Migyur Dorjee, the Representative of His Holiness for arranging this with their limited resources. <http://www.tibet.com/NewsRoom/hhdl-charles.htm>

WHAT A PIECE OF WORK IS A MAN

What a piece of work is a man?
How wonderfully elegant can one be,
Oh, remarkably powerful, - equally.
What stories can be told in our eyes,
And our salted tears cried likewise,
How one physical action, can befriend 10,000 meanings
And how 10,000 words can be illustrated
in one action or expression.

There are however greater things than fine biology offers.
Take for example, dear reader, if I were to offer you
the finest riches that I could possibly offer you
You would automatically question what advancement
I would ask of you.
Indeed a fair question, for illusionary true 'selflessness' is hidden
in our selfishness, and our pleasantness hidden by the world's
unpleasantness.

What would you do, if I offered you a person?
Whom when you met, you received such riches,
not your golden coins, or winning lottery ticket:
For although these can buy you the material,
They cannot give you spiritual substance.

His concern is not to achieve your kind regard,
Although this he would gladly accept.
He prays for you to be happy, his presence
Grants you relief, and passes an iridescent light through
Your mind, the power of which, you must maintain yourself
What a 'peace' of work is a man.

Byron Harris

SHORT STORIES, POEMS AND SAYINGS

There was once a cobra, who, experiencing a state of meditative bliss went to see her teacher. Her teacher intimated that she should give practical expression to these strong feelings of compassion, and so slid off into the undergrowth of the jungle to help all sentient beings.

On resting by a stream, she came across a poor old woman collecting firewood, who was nearly blind. This old woman, having collected a sizable bundle of wood was feeling around for elephant grass or vines to bind her load. Reaching around, the old woman accidentally grasped the snake and thinking it a vine began fitting her around the wood bundle. The snake, rather surprised, and out of compassion, offered herself as rope, hoping to be of use, neither wriggling nor seeking escape.

The old woman, pleased with herself, knotted the snake around her wood bundle, unable to see the pain in the snake, and lifted the bundle to her head. Carrying the wood, the snake in agony, she arrived at her village.

Her son, on seeing the wood and the snake, began a hue and cry, and his mother began screaming. In the meantime, the snake had managed to untie herself and overcoming her cramps, moved toward the forest, only to be confronted by the villagers and the old woman.

Confused and dazed the snake turned this way and that, and was set upon by the crowd who beat the snake senseless and left her for dead. The snake spent many months recovering from this, and during her convalescence pondered over why her compassionate deed had gone wrong.

The snake eventually went to see her teacher, who

THE COBRA

A story adapted from one by Godwin Samararatne, told at a meditation workshop on being in the 'here'.



and hiss' she would have become frightened and so left you alone. In doing so, you would have spared the old woman, the villagers and yourself much heartache and pain.'

This opened the snake's eyes and she felt that she had much to learn about this enlightenment business, and thanking the teacher she wandered into the undergrowth with the joy of wisdom in her tail.

Dan Buys

suggested the following:

'It would have been better if, as a snake, you acted as a snake; so that, when the woman reached out and touched you, out of compassion, you acted as snakes do. On hearing 'slither

From silence

Come sounds, isolate tones
And marvellous ciphers, syllables
That from the deeps of space well up

om vajrasattva hum

Sheila Wilde

LEARNING TO BE SILENT

A group of four friends were all studying meditation. They decided, in order to clear their minds, to take a vow of silence and not talk for seven days. The first day, they meditated all day without saying a word. But when night fell and the oil lamps in the meditation hall grew dim, one of the friends whispered to a servant, 'Take care of those lamps.'

One of the others, shocked to hear his friend speaking, said, 'You are not supposed to be talking!'

The third one was overcome with irritation. 'You idiots!' he said. 'Why did you talk?'

'I am the only one who hasn't talked,' said the fourth friend, smiling proudly.

*The Barefoot Book of Buddhist Tales
Retold by Sherab Chodzin & Alexandra Kohn*



The Buddha under the Pine Trees

Only the air moves;
evening light flickers
over the damp grass.
Alone among the pine trees
the wind lifts
to where without wings
it cannot fly
and because of this
I touched the earth
and become
gentle,
quenched,
and cool.

Sheila Wilde

SHORT STORIES, POEMS AND SAYINGS

The Deer

She has renounced
her body,
the soft belly of grief.



She has renounced
her skin,
the dressing for her body's hurt.

Her heart
is a river pearl,

her tears
are a web of dew,

her womb
is a wild poppy.

Her abandonment is perfect;
she has kept back nothing.

Sheila Wilde

Note:

Sheila was very moved when she saw the statue of 1000 armed Chenrezig. The deer is known to be kind and considerate towards its offspring and therefore is a symbol for conventional enlightened motivation. The cultivation of a kind and compassionate attitude towards others.

There comes a time in the life of every kind of creature when they have to go out on their own and join the company of their elders. Crows are no exception.

It happened one day that the elder crows were testing three young ones to see if they had reached the age where they had the wit and maturity to fly with their elders. To the first of the young ones, the leader of the crows put the following question: *'In this whole world, what do you think crows should fear the most?'*

The young crow thought a moment and then answered, *'The most fearsome thing is an arrow, for it can kill a crow with one strike.'*



When the elder crows heard this, they thought it was a very clever answer. They flapped their wings and cawed with approval. *'You speak the truth,'* said the leader. *'We welcome you into the flock.'*

Then she asked the second crow, *'What do you think we should most fear?'*

'I think a skilled archer is more to be feared than an arrow,' the young one said, *'for only the archer can aim and shoot the arrow. Without the archer, the arrow is no more than a stick, like the twig I am perching on.'*

The crows thought that this was one of the most intelligent comments they had ever heard. The parents of the second young crow croaked with pride and beamed at their brilliant child. The leader said, *'You speak with great intelligence. We are pleased to have you as a member of the flock.'*

Then she asked the third young crow, *'And what do you think is the thing most feared in the world?'*

'Neither of the things mentioned already,' responded the young bird. *'The thing in the world most to be feared is an unskilful archer.'*

THE WISDOM OF THE CROWS

*The Barefoot Book of Buddhist Tales retold by
Sherab Chodzin & Alexandra Kohn
A traditional Buddhist Tale*



Here was a strange answer! The bewildered crows stood about silent and embarrassed. Many thought the third young crow was simply not bright enough to understand the question. *'Why do you say a thing like that?'*

the leader of the flock finally asked.

'The second of my companions is right. Without the archer, there is nothing to fear from an arrow. But a skilled archer's arrow will fly where it is aimed. So when you hear the twang of the bowstring, you only have to fly to one side or the other and his arrow will miss you for sure. But with an unskilled archer, you never know where his arrow will go. If you try to get away, you may fly right into its path. You never can know whether to move or stay still.'



When the birds heard this, they knew that the third young crow had real wisdom, which sees beyond the surface of things. They spoke of him with admiration and respect. Not long afterwards, they asked him to become the leader of the flock.



In my experience going to India is not like visiting other countries. It's best to have plenty of time, to make more allowances for the less predictable circumstances, to be mentally and physically fit and prepare by trying to be clear about one's reasons for wanting to experience it at all. I love India - this was my fifth trip and the place has never failed to stretch me in unexpected ways.

This trip was different from previous ones as my companion, Caroline and I were squeezed for time. We were trying a new strategy of spending money to save days of travel. Increasingly opportunities are opening up in India for cash-rich, time-poor westerners to visit more on their own hurried but expensive terms, thus insulating them from some of the rigours of life in the crowded subcontinent. Incomes and living costs in India can be less than ours by a staggering factor of 20 times or more. This makes it possible to stay in a comfortable hotel for around £3 a night and means that many of us have more cash in our waist money belts than most Indians can save in a lifetime.



Flying to Delhi

Flying into Delhi in the early hours (for around £400), under this strategy we had to hang around for 8 hours waiting for our pre-booked internal flight onto Varanasi. At approx. £200 return this is no bargain compared with the 2nd class sleeper train at £3 or so. (There is a new dual pricing system whereby Foreigners pay a much higher rate in dollars to fly within India.) But the journey time was less than 2 hours compared with up to 20 hours by train and with no need for time consuming reservations and jostling for our seats. There is a gulf separating those travelling in quick isolated comfort from the masses grounded in overstretched public transport. Two days later we struggled (fought, Caroline would have said) to enter the unbelievably crowded express train for the 4 hour onward journey to Gaya (just short of 'Buddha' Gaya). This reminded us of our relief at our direct arrival route which saved us from initially engaging with the nitty gritty of India whilst still jet lagged. A feeling reinforced when, despite my previous experience, we had to argue with the conductor as I had apparently bought the wrong type of tickets. We needed reserved tickets for unreserved seats! I sometimes feel that when you think you've grasped the code needed for Indian travel, they change the code.

Pre-book over the Internet

Sarnath, the quiet revered site of the first teachings of the Four Noble Truths, was our preferred destination to catch our breath and recover from our journey, as it's now virtually a suburb of Varanasi. Its reachable by an albeit terrifying half hour taxi ride from the airport. (I warned Caroline she should've shut her eyes). Our intention was to stay at its one modern hotel, the Golden Buddha, however others had realised

A NOTE ON A PILGRIMAGE TO BODH GAYA (with travel hints)

by Paul Kirby

similar intentions before us and everywhere was full. (We know now to prebook over the Internet). Showing a generosity that I'm more familiar with from the less tourist visited South, the owner agreed we could stay. We could

sleep the first night in the restaurant (after the diners had finished), as due to our onward flight, we had now been up over 36 hours. The next day the uninformed manager insisted we leave immediately from our promised room as they were overbooked. Struggling to practice mind transformation, we stood our ground, only retreating (with the key) to circumambulate the wonderful Stupa marking the Teaching site and generate some much needed merit. (The entrance fee to the site for foreigners has jumped from 4 rupees to \$4 since I was here last year - part of a new India wide dual pricing policy. Unfortunately poor Asian pilgrims are also caught, some having to do their pujas through the railings).

The Root Institute

An early one hour auto rickshaw ride unabashedly along the old Grand Trunk Road's pavement was essential to reach the railway station for Gaya owing to a five mile gridlock jam almost entirely composed of thousands of trucks. (A taxi would never have got there). Bodh Gaya is just an uncomfortable half hour ride from the chaos that is Gaya station forecourt. You can experience all life here and pay ten times too much if you are unwary; alternatively you can be unburdened of some of your worldly possessions - Bihar State has an unenviable reputation for crime (although most Biharis are both honest and helpful). We knew we would probably be all right as long as we kept our wits about us and took precautions like always travelling together and never at night. Still we were pleased to safely arrive at the peaceful haven that is the Root Institute. This semi monastic retreat centre was founded by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and is set in woody gardens several miles back from the bustle of the main settlement.

There are now many luxury (by Indian standards) hotels in Bodh Gaya; the results of ten years of rapid development that has transformed this once sleepy village into a Restaurant, Travel Agent and Internet Café led International Tourist Stop. The Mahabodhi Stupa marks the site of the Buddha's Enlightenment together with a descendant of the fig tree he sat under. It is walled off but free and well cared for by an international committee. (Their office has the best accessible toilets around).

Transport



The ubiquitous form of transport here is the cycle rickshaw. It is difficult to get used to paying someone else to use their muscles to move you around in the heat and traffic while you rest. Or would do but for the narrow seat and trying not to look while your rider swerves out of the path of a hurtling jeep. The 10-rupee fare you pay

is good business - locals pay 6 rupees and may overload the tricycle with three or more passengers. Still the drivers will ask for three times as much regarding it as 'White Man's Tax'. (At Sarnath we saw a nice reversal - a big American riding his wizened six stone rickshaw wallah around). There is a lovely alternative of walking to the Stupa for those at the Root Institute. This route winds along the edges of the paddy fields and through villages and can safely be accomplished with a companion in under an hour. Best undertaken early before the heat gets up, this is like the traditional approach for pilgrims enabling them to contemplate as the great Stupa comes ever closer. It has the advantage of arriving at the back of the site thus initially avoiding the onslaught from the touts, sellers and beggars that never fails to challenge. You surprise them by approaching from the direction of the town toilet!

Women are never seen

(The Hindi term means 'wide open space' that both denotes and describes it). You may be greeted by a squatting man which is a little unnerving when you understand the dynamic. By contrast women are never seen - they have to go before dawn. The complex issues surrounding begging are always present for me at the site. Briefly the strategy I've adopted is to try to anticipate, analyse and choose from amongst the crowds of sometimes persistent supplicants and to move fast. I attempt to respect and thank them and keep my patience but often fail. I give to Sanyasin (renunciate seekers), elderly widows and leprosy and polio cripples in that order, and never to children - except occasionally some fruit that they often refuse. Tragically during the tourist season many children bunk off schools to beg and through pestering make more than the hardworking rickshaw wallahs. This despite local teachers efforts to increase abysmal literacy levels by circulating leaflets begging visitors not to spoil these kids. I've realised that possibly no amount of money given to an individual beggar will significantly alter their life (unless it pays for medical treatment.) An alternative is to give to a health clinic or an Ashram that distributes appropriate alms. There is an excellent outreach health programme operating as part of the massive Maitreya Statue international investment project.

Challenges surrounding the visit to Vajrasanya, the Seat of the Diamond

I've outlined some of the challenges surrounding a visit here to Vajrasanya the Seat of the Diamond - Bodh Gaya's earlier name. Why is it so special? The short answer is that it's a potent place to do purification and generate good Karma. It's not comfortable, the roads can be atrocious, it can be very crowded, dusty and filthy. You can get tormented by mosquitoes and overtired, as sleep can be difficult here: you get hassled and of course ill. And all this in the tropical heat! It can get so hot that traditionally the site of one of the hottest hells is said to lie directly below the area - consequently the short winter in December and January is the best time to visit. Last year I caught Giardia, a type of amoebic dysentery, and yet I was still so happy to be there.

It's so special, I imagine a pilgrim to Mecca feels similarly about that holy place though I've no way of knowing. It's the place to visit for so many different traditions of Buddhists when they feel ready. It took me ten years and four India trips to arrive. Despite some poverty and visible suffering there's an indescribable feeling of joy about the place. This is most noticeable at dusk, which is the time of chanting and light offerings. Thousands of candles encircle shrines and stupas of every conceivable shape, size and state of repair, and thousand of fairy lights become apparent along the procession ways. The place glows with the fruits of peoples' observance. The tourists have left and the murmur of pujas in different languages greets you. The Sri Lankan Temple guardian monks are amplified so their moving, ethereal Pali chant rings out. The temperature has begun its slow descent and the balmy evening air embraces us as we start the traditional clockwise circumambulation.

Methods and Benefits of Observances

There are several concentric routes and I prefer the inner path walking on the cooling marble flags right beside the tall imposing pyramidal tower that is the MahaBodhi Stupa with its many carved Buddha statues. This takes in the latest Bodhi tree and the 'new' Vajra seat (The original is buried beneath the current internal shrine at the very heart of the Stupa). Last year at the Root Institute Lama Zopa Rinpoche kindly imparted some of the methods and benefits of observances here, which I vaguely recall. First time walking round you set your motivation that you can reach Enlightenment for the sake of all. Then once (or more) rounds each time visualising that you are leading all beings out of first the Hell Realms; then the Spirit Realms; Animal Realms etc. then all of suffering existence. Then once more to dedicate (and for me a few more for auspiciousness and purification - I regret my concentration is so poor).

Then we visit the inner sanctum and make an offering in front of the shining main shrine. Visiting the Stupa several times a day I have already made the very modest offering that I intended for this trip, but continue to add a few rupees each time with Lama Zopa's words of encouragement ringing in my ears. (Something like: 'Even a few rice grains given will generate merit like the sky'). Despite some shyness I prostrate on the hard stone floor and then sit and gaze in wonder at the imposing marvellous old statue of Buddha Shakyamuni touching the ground, demonstrating his Enlightenment at this very spot.

We ironically acknowledge the sparkling, intermittently flashing lights in his halo. There are fairy lights of all shapes and sizes at the site so why not utilise modern technology here also? It's a lesson in impermanence and strongly reminds us that this is an International Pilgrimage Site and a broad mind is essential given so many different traditions of expressing homage. And it all takes place alongside the locals making their living and doing their own observance.

Paul

Biography of H.E. Kyabje Denma Locho Rinpoche

H.E. Kyabje Denma Locho Rinpoche was born in Kham, Tibet in 1928 and recognized at age six as the reincarnation of a famous scholar/teacher from the local Selkar monastery. At age eleven Locho Rinpoche entered Drepung Loseling Monastic College outside Lhasa, obtained His Geshe degree at age 25, and then attended Gyume Tantric College. In 1959 He fled to India, living in Sarnath for two years and then two years on a research fellowship at Calcutta University before becoming principal of the Buddhist School of Dialectics in Ladakh for six years. In 1967 He became abbot of a small monastery in Manali before moving to Dharamsala, where He now resides. He served as Abbot of Namgyal Monastery from 1986 to 1991, and has visited the U.S. on several previous occasions, including one year teaching at the University of Virginia.

H.E. Locho Rinpoche last visited the Lam Rim Centres in 1987, and has accepted a request to teach again at the Centres in September this year. The programme of teachings will be published when the plans have been finalized.

Lam Rim Buddhist Centre have requested teachings on the Guru Yoga of Je Tsong Khapa (Ganden Lha Gye ma) and/or the Fulfilment of All Hopes of Disciples by Je Tsongkhapa and the initiation of Je Tsongkhapa. Lam Rim Bristol Buddhist Centre have requested teachings on the Foundation of All Perfections (Yonten Zhiggyurma) by Je Tsongkhapa together with the Bodhicitta Vows and the Medicine Buddha Initiation.

H.E. Denma Locho Rinpoche Programme for LAM RIM

Lam Rim Buddhist Centre, Wales

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Sep 10 Tues | am. Arrive Heathrow 7:55 Air India 112. pm Free |
| Sep 12 Wed | am. Free. pm Tsog Puja |
| Sep 13 Thu | am. Fulfilment of All Hopes pm. Fulfilment of All Hopes am. Teachings on Ganden Lha Gye |
| Sep 14 Fri | pm. Teachings on Ganden Lha Gye |
| Sep 15 Sat | am. Teachings on Ganden Lha Gye pm. Teachings on Ganden Lha Gye |
| Sep 16 Sun | am. Tsongkhapa initiation pm. Free |
| Oct 7 Sun | Free |
| Oct 8 Mon | am. Leave Heathrow 9:45 |
| Oct 9 Tues | |

Lam Rim Bristol Buddhist Centre

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Sep 17 Mon | am. Perfection of all Good Qualities pm. Perfection of all Good Qualities |
| Sep 18 Tue | am. Perfection of all Good Qualities pm. Perfection of all Good Qualities |
| Sep 19 Wed | am. Bodhicitta Vows & Medicine Buddha Initiation |
| Sep 20 Thu | am. Free pm. Leave Gatwick 6.25pm British Airways BA2604 Italy |
| Sep 20 - 29 | Spain |
| Sep 29 - Oct 7 | |

A STUDY ON REFUGE

by Venerable

Denma Locho Rinpoche

Translated by

Kim Yeshe revised by Ruth Sonam

While abiding by ethics, we should practise listening, thinking and meditating in such a way that they become inseparable from each other. When studying the Buddha's speech and commentaries on it with a teacher in the proper way, we should develop the following motivation. In order to establish all mother sentient beings in Nirvana which is the state of not abiding with either of the two extremes of mundane existence and peace, I will attain Buddhahood, the complete achievement of all cessations realization. In order to do this, having entered the Conqueror's doctrine, I will practise meditation in the correct way.

Stable realizations, which are not adversely affected by doubt and wrong views are established by first retaining the topics, whose explanation has been listened to with mindfulness which does not forget, and then analysing them with wisdom. Based on this we should try to practise meditation, developing familiarity with these topics which is done by thinking about them repeatedly. On the other hand, even with concerted effort in meditation, we will not achieve great realizations, unless thinking and meditation are induced by hearing. The reasoning that there can not be an effect without a cause establishes this. Thus it is important for correct hearing and thinking to precede meditation.

A STUDY ON REFUGE *continued from page 16.....*

Generally there are many objects of meditation, but since the refuge is the door to entering the Buddha's doctrine, I will briefly explain this.

We have at the present time achieved a human form but are uncertain when we will die. We will not cease at death, but must take another rebirth which will be in either the higher or lower realms. Whether we take a good or bad rebirth depends on our white or black karma. When we consider that we are likely to fall to the lower realms, because the white karma in our continuum is negligible, while the black karma is abundant and strong, since from beginningless time we have been performing wrong actions through the force of habit, we will fear and terror. As a result of this we develop the will to seek refuge and the conviction that the Three Jewels have the power to save us from all fears. If these two causes of refuge remain merely verbal, the refuge too will be merely verbal, but if they are strong and stable the refuge will also be so. Therefore it is very important to make the refuge meaningful.

The objects of refuge are the Buddha refuge comprising eight qualities including "uncaused phenomenon" and "spontaneity". The Dharma refuge comprises any of the eight qualities such as "that which can not be thought". This refuge can be subsumed under true cessations and true path. The Arya Sangha refuge consists of superiors on either a path of learning or no more

learning who possess any of the eight qualities of knowledge and liberation.

Whoever wishes to attain the state of total liberation must have faith in a stable and non-deceptive object of refuge possessing many qualities which worldly gods such as Indra do not have. The difference lies in that the Buddha, who is such an object of refuge, is free from all fears, skilled in the means of freeing others from fears, has equal compassion for all beings and helps all, regardless of whether or not they benefit him. Also, the Buddha possesses the thirty-two physical marks of a great person, such as the crown protrusion, the golden wheels on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, as well as the eighty minor characteristics pleasant in appearance, such as copper-coloured nails.

The Buddha's speech is endowed with sixty four virtues. Among other qualities, it has those of being gentle, appealing and beneficial, pure, stainless and in accordance with the trainee's predispositions, interests and abilities. The Buddha turns the wheel of the doctrine endlessly and places beings on the path to maturation and liberation.

Through his wisdom which understands each moment of mind, the Buddha's speech has the amazing quality of enabling him to apprehend simultaneously each of the questions asked by the sentient beings of the worldly realms and to answer all these questions simultaneously with a single statement which each can understand in his own language.

The Buddha's mind has the special

quality of seeing all objects of knowledge, both conventional and ultimate truths, directly with unobstructed perception, like seeing an olive in the palm of one's hand.

He has great compassion which is always like that of a mother for her only son, and which endeavours to free all sentient beings, whose number is as vast as space, from the three kinds of sufferings and all the troubles pertaining to mundane existence and peace. He possesses uncontaminated wisdom including the ten powers and the four kinds of fearlessness.

He benefits all sentient beings by spontaneous and uninterrupted activities of body, speech and mind, and will unfailingly do all that is appropriate, such as leading those trainees who are suitable to be trained away from trouble and towards prosperity.

Regarding the qualities of the doctrine, based on our respect for the Buddha, we must remember that such a Buddha with infinite qualities has actualised the abandonment of faults and accomplishment of qualities through meditation on the doctrine of scriptures and that of insight consisting of true cessations and true paths.

With respect to the spiritual community, we must think of how they transcend the state of common beings by seeing that mundane existence is without essence and by virtue of familiarisation with the three higher trainings and the paths of accumulation and preparation through their aspiration for liberation, how they have directly understood the mode of subsistence of the four truths, and how they have actualised cessations abandoning those stains which are the objects

of abandonment of the path of seeing, such as the intellectually formed view of the transitory collection.

Visualisation of the object of Refuge

In the space directly in front of you, there is a high and wide jewel throne supported by eight great lions. On it, upon circular cushions consisting of a variegated lotus, sun and moon is actually your kind root lama in the form of the conqueror Shakyamuni. His body is the colour of pure gold, and he has the crown protrusion. He has one face and two arms. His right hand touches the earth, while in his left, which is in the position of meditative equipoise rests a nectar filled bowl. He wears saffron coloured religious robes. His body is adorned with the signs and marks of a Buddha and is of the nature of pure, clear light. He emits a great radiance and sits on the centre of this with his legs in the Vajra posture.

You must place your mind repeatedly on this object with the stable faith of conviction free from doubt. This object possesses all the characteristics and qualities previously mentioned that make a being appropriate as an object of refuge, is in the nature of the aggregation of all the objects of refuge and is never deceptive. Although all the sentient beings, oneself and others, merely seek to attain happiness and avoid suffering produced through the force of contaminated actions and afflictions, they

A STUDY ON REFUGE *continued from page 17.....*

must not only endure uninterrupted sufferings in the form of old age, sickness and death which follows in unbroken continuity like a whirling firebond as well as all others included within the three kinds of sufferings, but will also have to experience still more in the future. Thus you should take refuge with a mind full of hope and pray to the lama and the three jewels to free you and all mother sentient beings from the fears of cyclic existence and the lower realms.

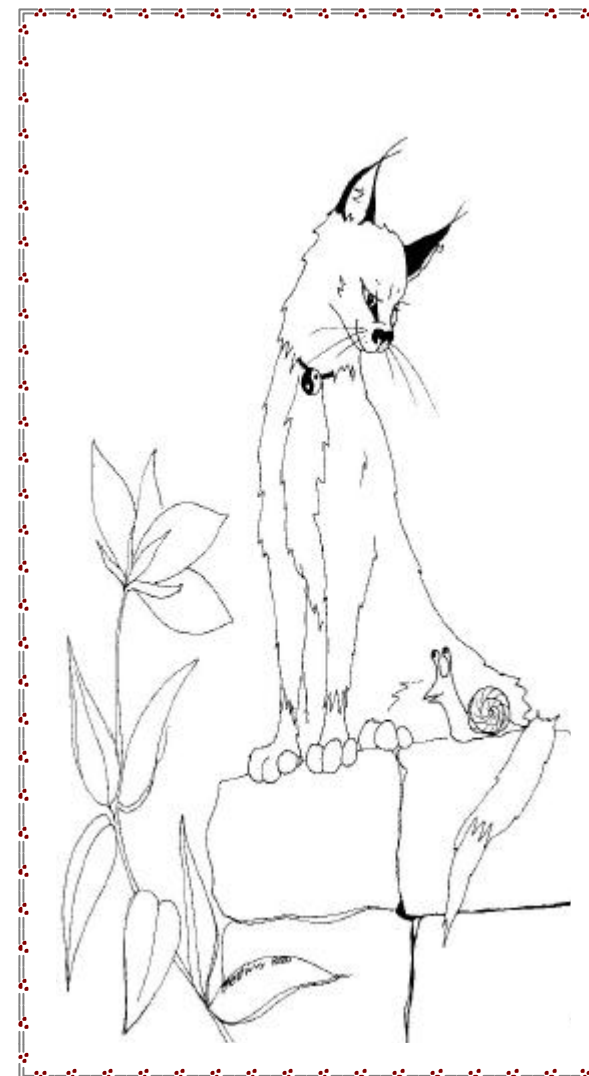
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**All things conditioned are
unstable, impermanent,
fragile in essence as an
unbaked pot, like something
borrowed, or a city founded
on sand, they last a short
while only.**

Lord Buddha, Shakyamuni.

Taking refuge in this way brings eight benefits:

- **One enters the Buddhist doctrine**
- **One will be a suitable basis for all virtues.**
- **Defilements of previously accumulated karma are diminished and exhausted.**
- **Great merit is accumulated**
- **One does not fall to bad migrations.**
- **One will be harmed by neither humans nor non-humans**
- **All wishes will be fulfilled**
- **One will quickly attain Buddhahood.**



*PURRS FOR THOUGHT ...
Others may reach enlightenment before you,
even though you think you're getting there faster*

News from our Friends in South Africa

Since His Holiness' visit to Durban in December 1999, a small, but dedicated group of people have been meeting each Saturday afternoon to listen to Teachings and meditating together. At first we looked at videos on various subjects, e.g. talks by His Holiness, or documentaries, etc... anything that could encourage us and give us a little more understanding. We listened to tapes concentrating on the Three Principal Paths, which was the subject matter of His Holiness' talks in Durban. Slowly the structure of our get-togethers has changed; we used to meet in various homes, which has its *upside*, but also *down-side*. Now we have obtained permission from the local Taiwanese community to use their temple facilities at a house in Durban North, which isn't too far from where most of us live, and this is also where Geshela gave his Teachings during his recent visit to Durban. So it has become quite a special place for us. The dynamics of our get-togethers has also changed since Geshela's visit and the meditation room at the temple houses a lovely Buddha rupa, which also adds focus to our practise. We now chant Tara Puja, alternating with the Inseparability Sadhana at the beginning, followed by Dharma tapes for say half an hour. After that some of us prepare a reading on a particular Lam Rim subject, which is the basis of our 30-40 min meditation that follows.

Once a month the local Burmese Sayadaw, who lives at the Myanmar Vihara in Pietermaritzburg, about ¾ hr drive from Durban, conducts an afternoon of Vipassana meditation, and we all support them, as we really enjoy the Burmese people – they certainly remind me of the Tibetans in many ways.

Geshe Damcho's visit has been the highlight of our year so far. It was lovely having

him in Durban and his Teachings were well attended, many people who came into contact with Geshela have been encouraged by his guidance. The schedule was quite busy with pujas every evening and 3 full weekend Teaching programme on The Three Principal Paths and Refuge. We also went to the Buddhist Retreat Centre in Ixopo for 2 days where Geshela taught on Karma. About 30 people took Refuge on the last weekend, which shows a genuine interest in the Dharma and respect for Geshela as being an exceptional person who has touched many people's hearts.

Our Dharma group joined the Wesak celebrations at the Burmese monastery, which was attended by Buddhists of all traditions, Indian, South African Tibetan tradition practitioners, Taiwanese, Burmese – quite a combination, but very harmonious. The newly ordained South African nun, Panyanandi, did a great job supervising the children who enacted the birth, Enlightenment and death of the Buddha.... with only one rehearsal it was quite an achievement!

About 3 years ago a group of people from all the different Buddhist traditions got together and called themselves, the KZN Buddhist Forum. The aim of the Forum is to get-together with Buddhists of other traditions to participate in a meaningful activity, which could be seen to complement the Teachings and our sitting practise. This group has been arranging the Wesak celebration activities for the last 3 years, and we also look at projects to help the underprivileged.

This year we have 'adopted' a self-help centre run by one of the Catholic Sisters of a local community. Sister Marco has done exceptional work with very little resources and the one thing that convinced us to help in some small way was the assurance that what was given was passed on to those in need. The centre embraces youngsters

who attend crèche, school children's aftercare, and teaching handicrafts to the unemployed, caring for those who are HIV positive and have no means to look after themselves. They also run a soup kitchen and bake their own bread. Our Buddhist group was overjoyed to contribute in some way and our first offering came in the form of clothes, pots, pans, toys for the children, books for a virtually non-existent library etc.... since then one of our members has been able to arrange some foam mattresses from work to be delivered for the children, who up until that point in time slept on the floor. Another member who works for Dunlop tyres arranged a delivery of tyres to be cut up to make swings for the excited children who had limited playing facilities..... all adding to their needs, albeit in a small way.

And so in some ways, despite the violence and crime, which is raging throughout the world, and also in South Africa where there is a dynamic transformation taking place, Dharma can be practised in many meaningful ways.... it's a matter of looking at it from a different perspective and doing the best you can.

With love Elizabeth Gaywood
Durban



Pauline Mallabone from Lam Rim South Africa Buddhist Centre, sent us an ethnic beadwork photoframe. The craft was that of the women of the Ndebele Tribe of Mpumalanga Province. I understand that the beadwork was used as a means of communication, letters were sent in the beadwork of necklaces, bracelets etc. So I wanted something, some message which was also appropriate for the people of South Africa. Scanning the

frame does not do it justice, so it can be seen with this message in the frame in the lounge at Lam Rim Wales.

Margaret

*Be wise. Treat yourself,
your mind,
sympathetically, with
loving kindness.
If you are gentle
with yourself,
you will become
gentle with others*

Lama Thubten Yeshe

Hot Milk with Nutmeg



1 cup raw milk
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

Bring the milk to a boil, reduce heat & stir in the nutmeg. Simmer for 5 mins, strain.

A good drink for calming the nerves or relieving insomnia. It is also used to relieve diarrhoea in the summertime.

INTRODUCING PUDDHA (from South Africa)

THIS IS PUDDHA, THE ENLIGHTENED CAT!

DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT
THE MEANING OF HIS NAME
OR WHERE HE HAS COME FROM.
AND IF YOU'RE WONDERING ABOUT THE EARRING -
IT'S A THROWBACK TO HIS EGYPTIAN PAST.
AS FOR THE COLLAR,
THE YIN YANG IS THERE TO REMIND YOU
THAT LIFE IS A BALANCING ACT:
A LITTLE BIT OF THIS, AND A LITTLE BIT OF THAT.
FIND SPACE FOR HIM IN YOUR HOME
(BUT GIVE YOUR DOG A LITTLE EXTRA ATTENTION);
AND MAKE SURE YOU NEVER SERVE HIM MEAT IN A PLASTIC
BOWL,
FOR PUDDHA IS A VEGETARIAN
WITH A FONDNESS FOR ORIENTAL CHINA
(CHOPSTICKS MIGHT BE PUSHING IT, THOUGH...)
AND YOU'LL NEVER CATCH HIM KILLING ANYTHING -
BIRDS, BUTTERFLIES, MICE AND FAIRIES ARE HIS FRIENDS.
HE DOESN'T LIKE MILK - MILK IS FOR BABIES
AND PUDDHA IS AN OLD SOUL, A VERY OLD SOUL IS HE.
WATCH THE GENTLE LESSONS THAT UNFOLD BEFORE YOUR
EYES
AND CURVE YOUR MOUTH INTO A SMILE.
TRY NOT TO KILL YOURSELF LAUGHING
ALTHOUGH AT TIMES YOU MAY WISH TO,
BUT RATHER JUST ABSORB EACH PRECIOUS MOMENT OF JOY
THAT PUDDHA SHARES WITH YOU,
FOR THAT'S ALL THERE IS, REALLY - THIS MOMENT

Peppermint Beverage



Bring 1 cup of water to a boil in a small pot. Add 1 tsp of fresh peppermint or 2tsp dried, turn off the heat, cover & steep 15 mins or more. Strain and serve.

Good for the nerves, weak digestion & heart palpitations due to nerve imbalances.
Serves: 1

PUDDHA ... the Enlightened cat



PURRS FOR THOUGHT ...
*Meditation not only helps you,
but those around you, too*

Hirons-Brown ©

You've seen the **Purrs for Thought** and you've read his profile in the poem. But who is **Puddha, the Enlightened cat**?

Puddha's current adventures take place at the home of Clive and Josie, two interesting and ageing hippies, who inherited an old Gothic mansion and a new lifestyle, somewhere in suburbia (but that's another story). It was a dark and stormy night when a shower of cosmic fireworks announced Puddha's arrival and the residents of his new home realised that life would never be the same again.

Puddha is helped to present his Purrs for Thought by his four close friends – Mu the Pantry Mouse, Dogma (say no more...), Erg up in his tree and Titanium, a fairy of questionable attitude. Naturally he also encounters all kinds of other creatures and he persuades us to look at them, and at life, through different eyes. He's no new-age crusader – he just wants to make you smile, ponder a while, and feel a little lighter, somehow.

This is Puddha's first collection and there are more to come. Look forward also, to reading The Legend of Puddha, which tells his story and also hints at some of his other nine lives. And coming out this year – Titanium's very own fairy tale for grown-ups, a zany look at a fairy who just can't seem to get it right. Purrs For Thought (Book 1) makes an ideal gift for cat lovers.

We hope Puddha makes you smile. Don't question too much – just enjoy, and live with the mystery.....

For more info on how to obtain the book you can contact Puddha at: Email : puddha@mweb.co.za, Snail mail : P O Box 317, Plumstead, 7801, South Africa

May all my body,
possessions and virtues
become the cause of bliss for all my mothers,
and may all their suffering and its causes
whatsoever ripen upon me.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Another busy, busy, busy period - more tasks rolling down the hill - there was a bottleneck when Geshe-La was ill but now things are back on target. We are receiving so many compliments regarding how beautiful Lam Rim Buddhist Centre is looking. However, a party of 11 year olds from a local school asked me when we were walking on the prayer path - *"Why couldn't we keep the fields as tidy as the gardens?"*

I replied that it was all a matter of finances and availability of people. That was their first lesson - Buddhist Centres experience the same challenges as other households requiring both financial and people help.

Guardians of Lam Rim

Thank you. We now have 71 Guardians, however, we are still searching for a further 13 to complete the 84 Guardians of Lam Rim. We are investigating using Triodos Bank as they only invest in organisations that are making a positive contribution to a sustainable future - in organic farming, renewable energy, community housing, fair trade with developing countries. So, for 34 pence a day you can create such lasting benefits for even more people and the environment. Charities Aid Foundation will still administer the fund and reclaim Inland Revenue income where applicable.

Prayer Path

We were very fortunate to have a mature student, Kevin Davies, who was undertaking a BA Joint Honours Work

Notes on Progress at Lam Rim



Experience Placement for 4 weeks. We were also very fortunate to collect £750 from the Fiver for a Reviver poem. Yes, you have made the connection. Additional steps were put in on the steep incline and the lorry loads of bark & chippings were laid at Kevin's feet. With Edita's guidance the path was laid 'Madeira' style. Ask Edita. Marston Paget, who very kindly painted the LAM RIM road signs and also made our 21st key hanging in the shrine room, very kindly offered to paint the signs for the Prayer Path in our corporate colours to match the house.

School Visits

We have enjoyed further visits from local schools & colleges, some as far away as Somerset.

As we mentioned before, we had a successful 4 week work placement from the University of Wales College, Newport and we would certainly like to network with other Universities/Colleges who run work experience placements. It is so helpful to any spiritual organisation to have a student who is participating in religious studies to experience working in a spiritual environment and gain insight into the challenges that face small charities in our present economic/social climate. It

is also work - enhancing to start one's day with half - hour sitting meditation and finish work with a further ½ hour meditation.

Repairs

All the painting/repairs/ refurbishments are finished and it looks splendid. We expressed our gratitude by offering LAM RIM BUDDHIST CENTRE sweatshirts to Uncle G and his team who looked after the fabric of the Centre and looked after us too. Also Paul - who kept on the case, and showed care and concern for our well-being. We miss you all. Thank you so much for all your efforts.

Rates

Once again we are having to revise our rates by a £1 per day. As you all know all commodities have increased in price, together with labour charges.

Trees

We are marvelling at the different greens and rates of growth from the trees and have now planted areas of colour around the path.

- Daffodils & bluebells walk
- Azalea grove
- Hydrangea crescent

And now we are going to develop Buddha grove. There are 7 Buddhas sitting in the grove - five meditating and two laughing, sharing a joke - that seems to be the right mixture. Geshe-La always impresses one never to lose your sense of humour - it is essential to balance one's practice.



We are planning to plant a further display of rhododendrons in that area in memory of our dear friend Firouzeh who peacefully passed away on Monday 2nd July. Our new orchard planting now has 7 fruit trees. Well done.

The Coach House

It is very comforting to know that the



Coach-House is being used both for retreats and courses. We have Avril, an Anglican Nun enjoying the quietness of Lam Rim on her retreat due to the kindness of sponsors. That too is very good.

Driveways

On the 17th February we had 40 tonnes of gravel delivered for the driveways. Many thanks to the willing rakers and shovellers who responded to OPERATION GRAVEL - we had a very enjoyable day and it looked so welcoming when Geshe-La returned from South Africa on March 15th.

Please make a note of the date **Saturday 26th July 2003**. We will celebrate our 25 year party.

with love



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Spiritual Director and Resident Teacher
The Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten
