At Dhammasara Nuns’ Monastery, we feel extremely blessed to have received a sapling from the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. We are very grateful to Venerable Dr. Pallegama Sirinivasa Atamasthanadhipathi Nayaka Maha Thero for granting us this rare opportunity. We were deeply inspired by the kindness of this great Nayaka Maha Thero who gave recognition and respect to the Bhikkhuni sangha. He invited the Bhikkhunis to lead the procession and carry the sacred sapling from Bomaluwa to Mahavihara.

This rare and auspicious ceremony took place at the Bomaluwa temple in Auradhapura on Friday the 4th November, 2011. The Co-Abbots of Dhammasara, Ven. Nirodha and Ven. Hasapanna, as well as newly ordained Sāmaneri Kāruṇika and Mrs. Ber Sun, went from Australia to take part in this ceremony.

The Co-Abbots held the bodhi tree in unison and walked on a procession to the Mahavihara lead by traditional Sri Lankan drummers and trumpeters. This event would not have been possible without the kind and very generous support from a large number of Sri Lankan friends.

While we are not able to mention the names of all who supported this auspicious event, both financially and in kind, we would like to say a big thank you to Dr. Swarnasinghe and Mr. Leel Wickramasinghe, who mediated the communication with the Atamasthanadhhipathi Nayaka Thero and organized all the official documentation related to this event.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to Dr. Sarath Seneviratne, Mrs. Daisy Seneviratne and Methmal De Silva (lovingly known as Kancha) for taking the entire week off to look after the nuns as well as attend to our every need with much love, care and respect. To Mrs. Sujatha Weerathunga for arranging very nice accommodation for us and Mr. Asiri Dayan for providing us a very comfortable van for the entire period in Sri Lanka.

Special thanks goes to director general of Peradeniya Botanical gardens, Dr. Syril Wijesundara, who organized the careful preparation of the sacred bodhi tree sapling according to quarantine requirements. Last but not least, we wish to express our great appreciation to Prof. John Howieson, Dr. Graham O’Hara, Dr. Ravi Tiwari and Mrs. Regina Carr at Centre for Rhizobium Studies, Murdoch University for undertaking the responsibility for caring for the sacred Bodhi tree sapling at their Quarantine glasshouse for the next 3 months whilst its under quarantine inspection.

Some photos from the auspicious ceremony to hand over the sapling from the sacred Bodhi tree can be seen from the following links.
http://www.flickr.com/photos/67319631@N04/6336253794/in/set-72157628107638458/
http://www.flickr.com/photos/67319631@N04/6333702291/in/set-72157628103159696/

This is to commemorate that, a sacred sapling sprouted from a seed of the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi planted in 236 BC at the Maha Viharaya in the Maha Meghavana Uyana of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka, the southern branch of the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi of Bodhagaya, India which assisted ascetic Siddhatha Gotama in attaining Samma Sambodhi by providing shade and letting him be seated with his back against it became highly venerated and sanctified due to being honoured by the Lord Buddha through Animisa Lochana Puja for seven days in the second week after the Enlightenment; which has been protected similar to their own lives observing proper customs and traditions for 2,247 years with the same devotion and veneration as for the living Buddha by the venerable Bhikkhus of the Bomaluwa Tradition of the Mahavihara; has been donated to be planted at the Dhammasara Buddhist Nuns Monastery for the longevity of the Buddha Sasana as well as the goodwill of the world beings by Ven. Dr. Pallegama Sirinivasa Atamasthanadhipathi Nayaka Thero on this day with the firm belief that, this sacred Bodhi sapling will be looked after with the same devotion, veneration and care from today onwards. On this Friday, 4th November, 2011 at the Bomaluwa Temple, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.
We had a successful end of the Rains Retreat for 2011, ending with the Buddhist Fellowship retreat and Kathina day. Kathina went very smoothly with record numbers of the Buddhist community getting together to celebrate the event. They held a big Dana lunch for all the monastics. There were lots of activities for the lay community as well, such as seeing the sight of traditional Thai dancing.

The main achievements of the last few months have been the construction of the teachers' cottage and mulch distribution throughout the lower gardens. The teachers’ cottage is nearly complete with only a few minor details left to be done. Ajahn Brahm has impressively done a lot of work on it. The outdoor walkway cover extension to the teacher’s cottage still needs to be completed.

The next main project is to build a water treatment system since the acidic bore water is corroding the pipes, causing many water leaks around the centre. The proposed pH neutralizing device will be situated on top of the hill next to the current water tanks.

We had four new monks from overseas come to stay for the rains retreat. One monk has since left, shortly before the end of the rains. Another is staying at the retreat kuttis and the other two are trying to extend their visas and become long term residents of the monastery.

Venerable Nitho is again staying in Norway for health reasons. He plans to return for a 6 month visit to Bodhinyana next year. Ajahn Brahmali left after the end of the rains to travel in the USA and Norway. He took part in a Bhikkhuni ordination at Spirit Rock meditation centre in California and stayed with Ajahn Pasano at Abhayagiri Monastery. Later he spent time with family in Oslo and met with Ajahn Brahm and Venerable Nitho.

Venerable Sangharatana left the monastery to renew his visa. Unfortunately the process is not going smoothly and he has been stuck in Singapore waiting for the visa to be processed.

On November 9th, a group of Benedictine monks from New Norcia came to visit Bodhinyana for an interfaith gathering. We have been visiting each other for many years, but have had a hiatus of a few years since head of the New Norcia monks, Abbot Placid, passed away.

Dom Michael got in touch with us during the rains retreat to organise the meeting. The discussions centred around a text on the role of monks in society and their contributions to the public good. Several monks on each side spoke on their views. It was a lovely gathering and much enjoyed by all.

Much work is going on in the library. We have taken down several racks of mp3 CDs. All talks are now on the library computer, and the CDs are now stored in a compact folder. This gives us a lot more space for working at the computer. With that done we can now organise our collection of talks and ensure the mp3s are tagged properly.

We are now in a position where the accommodation for monks, anagarikas and lay guests are full for the foreseeable future. The current residents seem quite happy, and none have voiced any desire to go elsewhere. We get many requests from men wanting to ordain. The question is, “Where to go next?” Of course we have the funds to build more accommodation, but we only have one Ajahn Brahm! We have been brainstorming but have no fixed plans. Perhaps a branch monastery on the beach in Broome...
Community - The Pali word anāgārikā means the 'homeless one'. This is often the preliminary step of a monastic life aspirant where one leaves the life of a householder and joins a monastic community.

On 18th September 2011, Nadene Ng from Malaysia ordained as an anāgārikā at Dhammasara Nuns Monastery. We have submitted a nomination for her to obtain an occupational trainee visa.

Anāgārikā Kemanthi had her sāmaneri ordination on Sunday the 30th of October and will be known from now on as Sāmaneri Kāruṭṭika (or Sister Kāruṭṭika).

There are now two bhikkhunis, three sāmaneris and two anāgārikā in residence at Dhammasara.

Activities - As a bushfire safety measure, a controlled burn was carried out in the area close to stupa 2 site and around the kutis 5, 6 and 7 on the 11th of September. The official fire fighters of Dhammasara, Ven. Hasapanna, Anāgārikā Lin and Dulani wore their yellow fire fitting overalls and joined together with the Gidgegannup fire brigade volunteers. Abig “thank you” to the great effort of all the volunteers.

Pavaranas, an ‘invitation to admonish’, marks the end of the 3 months rains retreat (Vassa) and falls on the full moon day of October. This year it was on the 12th of October and Venerables Nirodha and Hasapanna did the pavaranas at Bodhinyana Monastery, fulfilling their duty as a Bhikkhuni (fully ordained Buddhist nun).

This year the end of rains retreat ceremony at Dhammasara was on the beautiful sunny day of 23rd of October and was attended by over 200 people, which exceeded our usual attendance on such occasions in the past.

We were also delighted to have the visit of tree Mahayana Bhikkhunis for this event. The Thai community donated a traditional money tree this year, adding to the overall donations received on this day and this was a first at Dhammasara. Many enjoyed the bush walk around the monastery and due to the bountiful rains this winter, the array of wild flowers was exceptional.

We were deeply inspired as the youths of the Kalyana Mitta group walked through the gates of Dhammasara after their fundraising walk, “A Walk for Womankind” in the evening of Saturday the 22nd of October. This 40 km walk started at 5 am from Dhammaloka Buddhist centre in Nollamara and Ven. Nirodha, together with two of our young lay guests Dulani and Analiya, joined the youngsters for their last lap.

Eddy Khoo greeted the tired walkers with waltzing Matilda played on his harmonica and Ah Hin provided a splendid dinner for the heroes of the day. This successful event raised over $5,000.00 for our new sala complex. We thank all the participants of this inspirational event.

Anāgārikā Kemanthi was ordained as a Sāmaneri on Sunday the 30th of October at stupa 2 site in Dhammasara Nuns Monastery. More than 250 people gathered to witness this auspicious event together with Kemanthi’s close family including her 92 year old, maternal grandmother.

This was the first time a Pabbajja (10 precept) ordination was held at Dhammasara. Ven. Bhikkhuni Satima from Minnesota, USA was the preceptor. Ven. Ajaahn Brahm and many sangha members from Bodhinyana Monastery as well as from the Perth Sri Lankan vihara attended this ceremony. Check the following link for photos. http://www.flickr.com/photos/673136631@N04/6338450919/in/set-72157628114610722/

We went to Sri Lanka to receive a sapling from the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi tree from Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. This rare and auspicious ceremony took place at the Bomaluwa temple in Anuradhapura on Friday the 4th November, 2011. Further details are in the accompanying article titled "The Sacred Bodhi Tree".

Furthermore, during our short visit to Sri Lanka, we were also very fortunate to get the opportunity to do a brief pilgrimage in the ancient city of Anuradhapura and other near by places. It was really inspiring to circumambulate the gigantic stupas Ruwanwelisaya, Abhayagiri and Jetavana which are supposed to be the largest brick structures in the world. It was so wonderful to meditate in the serene environment near these great stupas.

We also visited Alu vihara where the teachings of the Buddha were first written down as they were formally passed on by oral tradition. The weather was extremely kind to us as we climbed up to see the cave temple of Dambulla as well as Mihintale. We were amazed to see the ocean like Kalawawa, which is the largest man-made lake in Sri Lanka and the site of Aukana Buddha statue was simply breathtaking.

We were deeply touched to see the 2000 year old monastery near Kaludiya pokuna which to this day have forest monks practicing in this enchanted forest living is very simple rock caves.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to Mr. and Mrs. Seneviratne for making this wonderful pilgrimage possible. We will always treasure it in our hearts for a long time. We thank Ven. Bhikkhuni Susila Shobhani from Uthpalawanna Monastery, Nawalapitiya and Mrs. Chandra De Silva for taking us to the inner chamber of the temple of the tooth in Kandy and giving us the very rare opportunity to venerate the sacred tooth of the Buddha.

The last day of our Sri Lanka visit, 7th November, we were invited for the opening ceremony of the Nirodha city centre in Mirihana, Colombo. This meditation and yoga center conducts many weekly activities. Ven. Nirodha was the Chief Guest and guest speaker of this event. (website :http://www.nirodhatrust.org/NT/City_Centre.html).

On 10th November, Ven. Hasapanna spoke at a multicultural event at Carmel College and she was the only female speaker.

Ven. Nirodha and Ven. Satima attended Ajahn Brahm’s November 9 day retreat at Jhana Grove.

We are in the process of receiving proceeds of the Kathina Celebration in Singapore organized by the Buddhist Fellowship for our Sala Complex Project at Dhammasara. We appreciate the great support, efforts and commitments of the Buddhist Fellowship in Singapore. Ven. Nirodha was invited as the key note speaker over 4 days early October and came back with glowing reports of their activities. (Their website: www.buddhistfellowship.org)

Comings and Goings - Two bhikkhunis from USA, Ven. Satima and Ven. Sudhamma arrived on 24th October. Ven. Satima will be with us for four months while as Ven. Sudhamma left on 10th Nov. Bhikkhuni Shin from Singapore will be in Dhammasara on 6th Dec for one month.

Building and Maintenance - Two wooden meditation huts have been erected near stupa 2 and one near stupa 1. The sandstone wall to house ashes was completed and is situated near the visitor’s area around dam one.

Future Plan/Projects - Prem and Dennis worked out a required drainage plan for the new Sala complex and accommodation pods. The plan was submitted to the council. The planner has indicated that this is satisfactory and that the council expects to send the Planning approval soon.

The Co-Abbots of Dhammasara had a meeting with BSWA president Dennis and the builder on Wednesday the 19th of October to discuss about putting up a new 18m long carport to house our valuable mini bus. This is a priority as this recently donated near new mini bus is parked outside at the moment and is exposed to harsh weather. This new carport could have an alternate use as additional shelter during Kathina and other big ceremonies, eliminating the expensive hire of marquees as well as shelter our Fire Fighting Equipment/Pump and the Trailers.

A model of the Sala Complex at Dhammasara Monastery
So after months of planning, the day had arrived as a group of 11 set out on a spiritual pilgrimage unlike any other. Three Anagarikas from Bodhinyana and eight Kalyana Mitta (KM) Social Group members would undertake a 40+ km hike from Nollamara, through the hills of Gidgegannup, all the way to the Dhammasara Nun's monastery. The walk was promoted as a ‘Walk for Womankind’ to raise much needed building funds and promote spiritual equality. Much support had been provided even before one single step was taken. Months of preparation were required from the KM group coordinated primarily by Anusha. The night before, at the Dhammaloka Centre, Lynne Jackson ensured that Anagarikas Matthew, Daniel and I were well looked after by converting a meditation room into a three-bed dorm. Cassandra and Marcos pitched the tents at Dhammasara, Eddie Khoo kindly helped take our sleeping gear, Hin Teoh provided (much needed) last minute expert hiking tips and Veronica provided much support at the fundraising stalls. Anusha’s mother, Lakshmi also spent many hours collecting funds. However, the most incredible support was provided by the hundreds of generous donations including, to name a few, our Bodhinyana supporters, the Armadale Meditation Group, Dhammaloka members, the Buddhist Fellowship in Singapore (who were having their annual retreat here) and Jhana Grove retreatants. It was this generosity that inspired us throughout our journey. By the early morning, almost all the walkers had arrived bright eyed and ready, particularly Russell who had his very cool pith helmet on. There was one walker though who had to be given a wake up phone call. (We won’t mention any names here since there’s no one there to blame in Buddhism of course!) praying for the rain devas to hold off on the holy water until we reached the destination. Everyone was in good spirits with Guy setting a spritely pace to ensure we would complete the trip on time. The morning was spent walking mindfully, and also offered an opportunity for walkers to gain wisdom from the Anagarikas, who had recently completed their first rains retreat. Matthew imparted some wise words for the slowpokes in the group to practice the Middle Way by not lagging behind, reminding them of how (in horror movies) it is always the few at the back who are lynched first! After a few timely breaks, we arrived at our lunch destination in Middle Swan just after 10.30am to be warmly greeted by smiling supporters and somewhat more importantly, FOOD! Joanne Ling, Moon Lee, Suraj de Silva and David Roper with grand-daughter Chloe were all there to provide us with a feast fit for monks and nuns. Travis’s dog Marley was also there to join us for the second half of the walk. This was the highlight of my day as I think it truly reflected the spirit of our thriving Buddhist community. After stuffing ourselves silly (especially those on 8 precepts), we strove on with diligence. We knew the most demanding part had yet to come with a final ascent up Toodyay Road. The legs were burning, but thoughts of loving kindness from supporters kept us going. This walk was our opportunity to give back to a community that has offered so much. The last 10km was arduous, and exhaustion had set in when to our delight, Venerable Nirodha arrived with young monastics, Dulani and Analaya, to walk the last leg of the journey with us. The fresh reinforcements provided the battle-weary with a surge of motivation to complete the mission. And as if that wasn’t enough, Eddie soon arrived with his harmonica and dancing skills to enthrall us to the end. Daniel must’ve had a really good rains retreat, levitating to complete the walk a half hour before the rest of the group - he had already showered and rested by the time we stumbled in. The downpour of holy water fell from the heavens as we walked through the monastery gates, but it couldn’t drown out the heroes welcome we received by the whole Dhammasara Sangha. This was a poignant moment that made me forget about the severe fatigue and pain I was experiencing. Matt, Thira and Travis courageously limped to the finish line where the injured were swiftly tended to by a team of Dhammasara first
The Buddha taught the fundamental importance of good friends, fellowship with people who have a grounding in the Dhamma and encourage each other in practice. We were a group of 30 people: a combination of people who had attended Friday meditation for years, people who had participated in Living Buddhism groups, people who had just begun attending Friday meditation and some who were just curious about Buddhism.

The group all agreed to keep the five precepts which set the group up for a harmonious time. It was interesting that the conversation was quite unlike the “conviviality” of a party. Rather people were just happy to be in a respectful Buddhist atmosphere. People in casual conversation shared their understanding and curiosity with regard to the way of the Buddha. People just enjoyed each others’ company and joining in the activities offered.

Each morning began with meditation led by Rosemary Mero in the forest surrounded Roundhouse which was set aside for meditation. A Sunday conversation on stillness invited people to share their meditation practice for the benefit of others. Most people took their chances canoeing in pairs on the Murray River. Andrew and Louise made the most of theirs and did an extra few Ks! Good team work and fun! Thanks Chris, Glen and all.

Lynn Walters, assisted by Rosemary, laid a brilliant “clue walk” as teams worked together to find their way around the well forested property. Fortunately no one got bitten by the hidden plastic snakes! How did Kieran get so high off the ground?

Michele Ellis assisted by daughter Joelle did an absolutely superb job on the catering. There was much love and care in the preparation. Thanks so much Michele. Sharing nice food was another group building activity.

Our Saturday evening special was an informal conversation with president Dennis who together with Heidi joined the group for the weekend. Dennis, as usual, gave generously and warmheartedly of himself.

People had the opportunity to ask any questions they liked, and Dennis gathered feedback from the group regarding their perceptions of BSWA. At the end of the weekend there was a warm sense that this had been a beauty.

Thanks to each one for their contribution.
Ron Mutton

Walk For Womankind cont.

In the midst of all the festivities, I forgot that a lift back to Bodhinyana hadn’t even been organised. Luckily, Peng and Chee Way very kindly offered to take the anagarikas back to Serpentine, and even threw in a bonus 4WD tour around Dhammasara.

As I think back on this trip I remember that the Buddha declared that Kalyana Mittas aren’t just a part of the spiritual path but is the whole of this path. Without the strong support of good friends, including fellow KM members and the wider community, our walk would have been that much more difficult to realise.

To me, this walk represented a bigger spiritual journey that requires that we travel on the path together, and that is what made this experience so meaningful.

I’ve seen the old photos from the past and heard the stories from yesteryear that have created the high level of community connectedness seen in our unique Buddhist community today. However, this shouldn’t be taken for granted as it too will pass, and a lot sooner than we might think if we don’t nurture it.

The Walk has been such a wholesome experience to be a part of. However, I’m also grateful to be back at our peaceful monastery for much needed rest, as I can see more clearly why the Buddha stressed seclusion and solitude in the practice. With these thoughts I begin to close my eyes and I can’t help but smile.
Letters to the Editor

The Power of Mindfulness and Meditation

Recently I partook of the precepts and became a Buddhist after a long standing interest in meditation and mindfulness. I suffer from paranoid schizophrenia and have found mindfulness beneficial to my mental state.

As many are aware, mindfulness is about paying attention to a specific thing or action on purpose in a particular way in the moment non-judgmentally. This is a useful application in psychology as well as Buddhism.

Since taking the precepts, I am struggling to follow the virtuous path. I hope that with mindfulness, I will be able to achieve an honest, harm-free, drug-free life. Mindfully we need to realize that we are not perfect and aspire to live according to a moral code that benefits all.

So what exactly is good about mindfulness one may ask? Since I have been doing the practice and meditating, my anger has been slipping away and I have noticed myself becoming more tolerant of people’s foibles.

I don’t know exactly what caused the transition but it has been relatively fast and I personally am feeling a peace I have not experienced before. The voices and delusions I have become used to as a part of the schizophrenia have lessened and I believe that enlightenment will one day bring more than contentment but a silence I have long been looking for.

I have already after about two years of meditation experienced such a silence of mind and it is both gratifying and encourages me to follow the eightfold path.

Having come from a Taoist background, special attention was drawn to the breath and I have incorporated the energy of Chi into my meditation practice. I am finding that the two philosophies meld very well and the paranoia I once felt is a ghost that no longer haunts me on a daily basis.

I attend the Friday night guided meditation and Saturday mediation at Dharmaloka to ensure that I am meditating regularly when the fast paced lifestyle of the city would not give me much opportunity to do it otherwise.

As with anything, it is important to remember to make time for beneficial practice in one’s life and ensure that balance is achieved without any particular activity suffering as a result of obsessive thinking.

Mindfulness practice has also helped me to lose over thirty kilos in a year as I now pay attention to everything I eat but do it without judgment which ensures that obsessed thoughts do not take over.

Mindfulness is not just a practice to be performed during meditation, but something to employ into your life. Even whilst doing tasks it is possible to do them in a mindful manner and decrease the stressors one suffers in this modern society.

So the next time you think about losing weight, walking, talking or any other activity, pay attention as the benefits cannot be underestimated.

By Fiona Nichols

In appreciation of Moira Wallace - Who brought the light of Buddhism into our lives

Moira Wallace has been attending the prison for many years, catches public transport (2 hours each way) to attend the prison and volunteer her time to run the meditation class. I have been attending her Wednesday meditation class for 18 months now.

Moira is a lovely lady with a great sense of humour. We never fail to have a laugh with her every week.

I personally have got a lot of stress relief from the meditation, Ajahn Brahm’s DVDs and my Buddhist studies.

I find it a bit ironic that I lived in Nollamara for 7 years prior to being incarcerated and had no concept of Buddhism. It has been something that I’ve discovered in prison and it has helped me immensely. I will continue to practise the things I’ve learnt as it has helped me tremendously.

The world would be a much nicer place to live in if more people discovered Buddhism.

For introducing Buddhism to us and volunteering your time to teach us meditation...we thank you Moira. All of us - Vern, Danai, Jason and the Wednesday boys - remember you fondly.

by Vern Dilich
4 October 2011 - Denver, Colorado USA

Dear Ajahn Brahm,

I finished reading The Art of Disappearing, Ajahn Brahm's latest book published by Wisdom Publications, and want to share some reactions. I enjoy the book's colloquial "telling writing" style, tone, voice and diction--very refreshing and rare compared to other writers of Buddhist meditation. I also enjoy your humor, often laughing out loud, especially while reading the Preface.

Humor takes the edge off the peril we all share as humans in sams?ra. I appreciate your emphasis on cultivating joy, fun and bliss in meditation (Is there another meditation writer that does this?). Bringing joy, kindness, gentleness, forgiveness, acceptance and letting go (patinisagga) to the center of one's meditation practice is endearing and wonderful. Thank you.

Because The Art of Disappearing is a distillation of numerous meditative Dhamma talks (presented by somebody's khandhas), the writing mirrors speaking: "Sit down, shut up, watch, and don't get involved." (p. 85). Consequently, the diction is crisp, clean with punch and precision--a quality I enjoy in all your writing.

Kudos also to Ron Storey's khandhas for excellent transcribing and to Ajahn Brahmali's khandhas for excellent editing! Losing is "winning" and letting go is the most skillful means to liberation, freedom and contentment. Your ability to simplify (what other teachers make complex) is powerful and practical.

This especially hit home (my mind) in your in depth explanation of nibbid? , vir?ga and the ?savas in meditation practice (especially pages 8-14). Like you, my experience bears out that life is completely out of control, and what you can't control, you must let go.

This is easier said than done in both meditation and in life. Thankfully, in The Art of Disappearing you explore some new skillful means of how to let go in meditation which leads to also letting go in life. Your explanations and Glossary definitions of crucial Buddhist terms are far more lucid and understandable than other Pali translations.

When my meditation practice goes well, nibbid? does lead to vir?ga providing a "double whammy" to the ?savas. When meditation doesn't go well--when I'm thinking too much--the ?savas dominate. However, I gain by your concrete explanation of the intricate cause-effect relationship between revulsion (world weariness), detachment leading to dispassion and the elimination of the ?savas in meditation practice. In future, this insight will enable me to "see" more clearly the folly of thinking--leading to cessation.

As you know, ?sava is often translated as "cankers" and "taints." Shakespeare used "cankers" and "taints" to describe the corrupt "fallen" world of "nature," or the human realm.

Cankers and taints are frequently used by other Elizabethan dramatists and poets. In meditation practice, however, I only found these two words confusing when used to define ?savas. Like Elizabethan English, I find Pali-Buddhist words pregnant with numerous potential meanings, nuances and connotations.

I realize it is essential to become fluent in Pali which takes time and effort. I also realize how difficult it must be to translate Pali into English. Until I reach fluency, I find your explanations and definitions of essential Pali-Buddhist terms the most accurate and true to my own experience. I also find The Art of Disappearing a valuable new resource of skillful means to use going forward.

All the best--with metta,

Tom Green
The full moon day of "UNDUVAP", which falls in
the month of December, commemorates the arrival
in Sri Lanka of the Arahat Theri Sanghamitta,
daughter of Emperor Ashoka, who brought with
her a sapling of the Sacred Bodhi Tree under which
the Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment.

Her visit to this sacred island eventually led to the
establishment of the Bhikkhuni Sasana and the
planting of the sacred Bodhi Tree at
Anuradhapura, where it remains the oldest
historical tree in the world, having been planted in
245 B.C.

Women who were previously treated as inferior to
men, rose to the sublime height of spiritual glory
with the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Sasana by
Theri Sanghamitta.

The establishment of the Bhikkhuni Sasana by
Theri Sanghamitta also resulted in thousands of
women renouncing the worldly life and joining the
Nuns' order. Even the princesses from distant lands
were drawn to Sri Lankan Nunneries and sought
refuge in the triple gem. Arahat Sanghamitta has
been recognised as the first woman diplomat for her
services to the people of Sri Lanka.

The arrival of Theri Sanghamitta with a host of
architects, painters, sculptors and men and women
with medical knowledge gave rise to cultural
awakening. Young men and women of Sri Lanka
became students of arts and science and became
affluent in these fields.

The Bodhi Tree planted at Anuradhapura was the
greatest religious foundation in Sri Lanka. For over
26 centuries, this religious shrine has acquired such
intense spiritual devotions from Buddhists all over
there world. It is visited by the thousands each year by
devotees from Burma, Thailand, China, Japan and
also from western countries.

For us in Perth, it is a double celebration as a sapling
from this important Bodhi Tree has been brought to
Perth by the Bhikkhuni Sangha from Dhammasara
Monastery. May the light of Dhamma continue to
shine brightly in Perth, dispelling the darkness of
ignorance, just as when the Bodhi Tree was first
planted in Sri Lanka all those centuries ago.
President’s Report

by Dennis Sheppard

What a joy it is to be the President of BSWA. Every time that Jaipal rings to chase my copy, I am overwhelmed with stuff to write. There is just so much happening all the time inside the BSWA. There are so many extraordinary people who work to support our core business at the monasteries, the monks and nuns along with the men and women attending to them to make the whole process sing. Then there are the events and happenings at Dhammaloka all supported so generously by our membership.

Family Camps and Katina’s

The family camp that was organised by Ron Mutton and his committee was a wonderful event. This was the first camp that I have attended. What fun! There was the organisation of all the events, the camaraderie and the social interaction. If you have not been on one of these camps, don’t miss the next one. They are terrific. Ron and his committee are presently organising a youth camp/retreat that will be led by a visiting monk, Venerable Amarathatho, who is from our tradition and will be visiting from the UK. Venerable Amarathatho has made it somewhat of a speciality to lead camps for teenagers, youth and the young at heart. At this stage the dates are 3 – 5th of February 2012. If you are interested, keep tuned. As ever the Katina’s went well. There seems to be more and more of our membership attending these events. It is great to see, and the monks and nuns do appreciate the interest that is taken by the lay people when they come to support the efforts that everyone has put in over the rains retreat period. Special thanks to Prem who is the heart and soul behind the organisation of these events.

Food Fair

The Food Fair in November was a once again a spectacular success. The organisers raised well over $60K and put on a day that will be fondly remembered by all who attended. It makes me feel good when I realise that it is our own membership that buy and prepare all this food and then set up the wonderful array of stalls serving a full range of international cuisine. Heidi and I filled up our freezer and have already eaten most of it! The day is made very special with participation of the children from our Sunday school and many other talented members of our society who come along to sing and entertain for the crowd. The dancing, the costumes, the singing, the special items — it all makes for this Food Fair day to be very memorable in our Buddhist calendar. Special thanks to Michael Ngo for his organisation once again.

Buildings & Maintenance

Plans for the extension of our office at Dhammaloka (reported in the last ET) are well under way. We have builders pricing the job now and hopefully the committee will be able to give the final go ahead at its next meeting. Money is steadily flowing for the new Sala Complex and Accommodation Pods being planned at Dhammasara. Consideration is being given to possibly staging the development as the need for the accommodation pods have become quite critical. The council has passed the Planning Application that was lodged. We are all set to have a major painting job done at Dhammaloka over the January period. The No. 1 Ladies maintenance team (Sonja Lynne and Judi) have worked hard to make this happen. It has been some time since Dhammaloka has had this sort of attention, and it is wonderful to see the energy our members are bringing to this task. Well Done!

BCWA

I also wanted to report to our members about the happenings at the Buddhist Council of WA. (BCWA). For those members that do not know, this body has been set up as an overarching umbrella body for all the Buddhist groups in WA. It is a relatively new organisation but has been very successful in linking the different groups and setting itself up as a single voice to represent us all. This representation is very valuable for governments and media groups to take advantage of. Correspondingly, it is also beneficial for the affiliated membership to be represented as one voice as well. There is also a corresponding Australia wide umbrella group that has already made itself known federally. Anyway, I wanted to say that the BSWA is well represented inside the BCWA. The newly appointed president is our own Don Weerakody and the new secretary is a founding member of the BCWA and BSWA member Jake Mitra. Congratulations to you both.

Web & Committee

Work is progressing well on the changes to our web site to include a new mobile phone apps component. Peter Smith is overseeing this work with our web man Bo. Lincoln Mitchell is doing the hard work of designing the system. He has consulted quite widely. We look forward to the results. At the last committee meeting we welcomed Siok Can as a new committee member to fill the vacant Technical Services Coordinator’s role. This position oversees all the Technical aspects we employ at the BSWA. She has been working behind the scenes mixing the sound and recording our talks for the web for some time now. She is well qualified to represent all of this important work to the committee. Welcome aboard Siok.

Ordination Fallout

Following on from the last ET, I reported that all efforts were being made to heal the rift that has opened up between our society and the Wat Pah Pong group of monasteries, following the full ordination of our nuns. To this end I reported that Ajahn Brahm had been invited to have a cup of tea with Ajahn Amaro and Ajahn Munindo at Amaravati in the UK, when Ajahn Brahm was visiting his mother there in October. I am pleased to report that the meeting went well and even though a forgiveness ceremony may still be some way off, the Wat Pah Pong Sangha including Ajahn Anek and Ajahn Liam have agreed that there is no blanket ban anymore on Wat Pah Pong monks visiting or staying at Bodhinyana Monastery in Perth, nor is there any absolute ban on Bodhinyana monks visiting or staying at any branch of Wat Pah Pong. They may stay as long as the abbot of that monastery thinks appropriate and may join in the Patimokkha, again if the Sangha at that monastery agrees. With all of this in mind, we hope to see Ajahn Khemavaro teaching a retreat in Jhana Grove next year and Ajahn Dun from Wat Pah Pong teaching a retreat at Wat Buddha Dhamma and some of our monks attending that retreat. We would also welcome some old monastic friends giving a talk at Nollamara in Perth on a Friday night. We are all hopeful that the healing process is under way.

International Buddhist Conference in Perth

The last thing I would like to tell you about is an International Buddhist Conference that is being held in Perth this coming 2nd to 4th of February 2012. It is being organised by Venerable Vaartnou, head of Estonian Myingma. He has been organising International Buddhism & Nordland conferences since 2006. This conference will be free and boasts a cracker lineup of speakers. They are still expecting Robert Thurman from Tibet House in New York to attend. The conference is aimed at academics with the intention of promoting Buddhist studies and research in the field. Ajahn Brahm is supporting the conference and will be one of the speakers. The list of venerables that will be attending is quite inspiring. It will be held on the campus of Murdoch University and, if their money still stretches, also at the convention centre. For details see the flyer on our notice Board or contact Henry on 0401 039 311. Everyone is welcome to attend.
BSWA Announcements

BSWA International Food Fair

The BSWA International Food Fair fundraiser was held on Sunday, 27 November 2011. While it was held late this year, it was a big affair, with a fantastic variety of delicious food from different nationalities, including Thai, Malaysian, Singaporean, Sri Lankan, Cambodian, Burger/Sausage sizzles and many more.

The sights, smells and sounds were truly amazing. There was something for everyone, for those who like their food spicy to those who like it mild, for the vegetarian and the non-vegetarians.

The morning started with the president of BSWA, Dennis Sheppard, welcoming everyone to the fair followed by the official opening of the food fair by Ajahn Brahm. Besides the fantastic array of different cuisines, the crowd were also entertained by the many performances done by the Sunday Dhamma School Children’s choir, Thai dance performers and volunteer musicians.

The clockwork efficiency of the volunteers made everything run smoothly. A big thank you to all who volunteered, your time and efforts made the food fair a success. However, there is a need for more volunteers to man the car parking as the number of vehicles were too much for the few volunteers at the car park to handle. Without more volunteers, BSWA might have to discontinue opening the council park for cars.

Another issue regarding parking was brought up. During the food fair, several cars were parked in such a way that they blocked other cars, including in residents’ drive ways. This led to major traffic jams and very angry neighbours. There were at least 5 incidents of residents complaining to BSWA for not looking after the parking on their verges and drive ways.

Since this was an open event, we hope that it was not any BSWA members that contributed to these incidents. However, this might have been avoided if we had more volunteer car park attendants. The irresponsible few made the event unpleasant for others.

To a happier note, BSWA collected more than $63,000.00 from the Food Fair. The proceeds of the food fair will be used by the Buddhist Society of Western Australia (Inc.) to continue providing quality Meditation classes/retreats, Dhamma talks, Buddhist activities for its members, the Sangha and the wider Buddhist community in Western Australia and around the world.

Thank you for all your support!

By Jaipal Singh

A late birthday wish for Ven Ajahn Brahm on his 60th Birthday

Wishing you the best of health, happiness and courage to continue with your selfless service to Buddhism and to disseminate the Dhamma worldwide.

By the merit of all these great work, I hope that you will fill the vacancy left by the Tathagata.

By Chandra Abey
Upcoming Activities

Dhammaloka

- Chanting, Guided Meditation and Dhamma Talk - Every Friday, 7pm-9pm.
- Beginner’s Meditation Class - Every Saturday, classes starts 1st Sat of the Month, 3pm-4:15pm.
- On-going Meditation Class - Every Saturday, 3pm-4:15pm.
- Sutta Study Group - 2nd & 4th Sunday of the Month, 3pm - 4:15pm.
- Dhamma School for Children - Every Saturday, 9:15am - 10:15am.
- Living Buddhism Group – 2nd & 4th Friday of the Month, 5:30pm - 7pm.
- Sangha Dana - Every Weekend, 10am.

Armadale Meditation Group

Meditation Class - every Tuesdays, 7pm - 8:30pm

Dhammaloka Library Opening Hours

FRIDAY: 6.00 - 7.30pm (closes, then reopens) 9.00 - 10.00pm
SATURDAY: 2.00 - 3.00pm (closes then reopens) 4.15 - 5.00pm

Meditation Retreats at Jhana Grove Retreat Centre

Nine Day Retreats • 20 - 29 January (Ajahn Brahm), 5 - 14 April (Ajahn Brahm),
• 16 - 25 November

Weekend Retreats • 2 - 4 March (Sutta Contemplation retreat with Ajahn Brahmali),
• 1 - 3 June

BSWA Annual General Meeting

The BSWA AGM will be held at Dhammaloka on Saturday, 10 March at 4.30pm. All BSWA members are encouraged to attend.

BSWA Summer Youth Retreat

BSWA is organising a Youth Retreat in beautiful bush and river setting for Buddhist oriented youth (14-18 years old) who want to meet like minded people and explore issues that are important to them through a variety of activities including meditation, art, drama and Buddhist devotional puja. This camp will be held in Dwellingup from 3-5 February 2012.

For booking form, or to find out more about the retreat, please contact Ron Mutton on 08-9361 3696 or ronmutton@westnet.com.au

The activities are correct at time of printing.
Please contact BSWA (info@bswa.org) to verify the times closer to the date.