Everything changes, everything passes,
Things appearing, things disappearing.
But when all is over - everything having
appeared and having disappeared,
Being and extinction both transcended -
Still the basic emptiness and silence abides,
And that is blissful Peace.
Greetings for the New Year!

By the time you read this Newsletter it will be 1988 – 1987 will have passed. It was a momentous year for the Buddhist Society of W.A. We were very busy and achieved many things, in particular the purchase of the new City Centre. This new centre has made it possible to increase our teaching activities so that the Dhamma, the Teachings of the Lord Buddha – the Way to Peace – have been made available to a far greater number of people. All these extra activities, as rewarding and inspiring as they are for all of us, have meant a lot more work for the Committee of the Society and, of course, the Sangha, who are the spiritual guides of the Buddhist Community.

On behalf of the Sangha, I personally thank all the committee members who have given so much of their time and energy to make 1987 such a rewarding year for us all. For the Buddhist Society to function people need to give. The Society is administered by a committee elected by the Ordinary Members. The committee members volunteer their efforts, energy and abilities freely for the benefit of all to facilitate the Teachings of the Dhamma by the Sangha. This is a gesture of Dana, of giving, and is a very praiseworthy thing. It is an indication of their commitment and faith in the Teachings of the Buddha for, in fact, there is neither monetary reward nor power to be gained.

So, in the traditional way, I would like to "numodana" their efforts, which means well wish or rejoice in their meritorious deeds by wishing them happiness, good health and continued growth on the Path to Peace.

I think it may be appropriate for us to make 1988 a year of consolidation of our Teaching activities, our City Centre and the Monastery. We can make the goal of the New Year one of increased effort in practice.

What does "practice" mean? Why are we practising? What are we practising?
We are practising in order to realise peace and wisdom. The way to practise is simply by following the guidelines given by the Buddha – morality, concentration and wisdom. It is a way of cultivating our minds so as to realise greater peace, wisdom and freedom.

Ven. Ajahn Buddhadasa points out that there are three fundamental questions to be asked and the answer to these questions are to be found in the Dhamma.

The first question is: "Where do we come from?" The Dhamma answers that this existence, with its problems and its complexities, arises out of ignorance.

Secondly, we need to ask: "Where are we going?" We are going towards Nibbana, complete enlightenment, complete liberation, complete freedom from ignorance.

Thirdly, "How do we get there?" The Buddha has given us the tools the Path of training, the Path of Morality, concentration and wisdom, the Path to peace and insight. On this path we can transcend the limitations of an animal existence in which we operate out of instincts, desire and fear. We can live a responsible and sensitive life in accordance with the moral principles, not doing or saying anything at all to harm oneself or another.

Intending to live one's life within this moral standard brings a nobility to one's life whereby one can respect oneself and others. One's mind can rest in peace and not be over-ridden by guilt, remorse or fear. This is a good foundation for the higher training in concentration and meditation. Learning to still, focus and clear the mind through meditation means that the mind becomes a tool fit for work, beneficial to us and others.

The Buddha said there was nothing as rewarding as a well trained mind. A well trained mind can be used to reflect on our existence, to reflect on the nature of life, who we are, what we are and to reflect on the Four Noble Truths which is the essence and purpose of Buddhism.

We need to cultivate this clear, peaceful, sharp quality of mind in meditation so that we can use the mind to probe into the experience and nature of our lives. However, this is not just an exercise done in the
Meditation Hall sitting on a meditation cushion, because we can't be in that situation all the time.

For many of us who have responsibilities and duties it is a rare occasion when we get to meditate formally, so remember there is meditation in action. I am reminded of a book which I heard of many years ago (but never read!) — "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance". This is quite a catchy title with a very important meaning. I would like to recommend that for this new year we all endeavour to practise Zen and the Art of Speaking, Zen and the Art of Washing Dishes, Zen and the Art of Working with Others, Zen and the Art of Driving a Motor Car, etc. etc.

What 'Zen' implies here is a calm, clear state of mind that is aware and receptive and fully awake: a state of mind which can be realised when one is sitting meditation. However, it is even more important to cultivate the same clarity of mind in the familiar situations around our home and work. Our aim for 1988 should be to cultivate this state of mind in all that we undertake so that we are actually taking Refuge in the Buddha continuously throughout our lives. When awareness is present there is room for wisdom to operate; there is sensitivity and the possibility of insight in every moment of living. This will bring great fruit — greater peace and understanding which is our aim on the spiritual path.

With metta
Jagaro Bhikku
In contrast to the "Little Nothings" of the Rains Retreat reported in the previous newsletter we seem to have had "lots of everything" happen during the last few months. It seems to be true that when it rains it pours, but if one has a secure refuge one isn't overly concerned by drought or flood.

The end of the retreat saw a number of the eight precept members of the community taking their leave of us. Some had job commitments to go back to, while others may have had enough of "commitment" for a while. Dissatisfaction brings people to the monastery and it's dissatisfaction which takes some of them out because this monastery, like every other place, is unsatisfactory. At best it can offer a supportive situation to help one see the mind and free it, however what one does with the opportunity is indeed up to the individual. May all of us realize and abide in that where, as Ven. Ajahn Chah put it, there is no going, no coming and no standing still, which is the end of all "dissatisfaction".

Probably the biggest event of the year in the monastery is the End of the Rains Robe Presentation or the Kathina ceremony. This year, being the first official Kathina ceremony here, we were expecting it to be a rather grand occasion. So for a few weeks there was a flurry of activity as we tried to get everything ready. The stone path and stairway leading from the kitchen area to the main hall got off to an energetic start while the unfinished hall was electrified, cleaned out, painted and made ready for temporary use. After three months of quiet introspection it was a time of activity once again.

One could say that it is the same driver and the same vehicle, but a shift in gear.

Sunday the 1st of November was the day for the Kathina ceremony and the now familiar clouds bringing the gentle sprinkling of "holy water" hovered over the hills of the Monastery where about six hundred people of various nationalities gathered for the grand occasion. Eighty people had come all the way from Thailand especially for the Kathina, bringing with them Ven Luang Por Rian, a very senior and highly respected meditation master from North East Thailand.

In spite of the chilly weather and occasional shower it was a wonderful day of sharing and experiencing a two
thousand year old tradition in 20th century multicultural Western Australia. The unfinished hall was bulging at the seams and when a late arrival remarked, "You'll just have to build a bigger place!", Ven. Brahm went into temporary shock — or so it appeared.

Then on the 3rd of November, we had a re-run of the whole show, as a second group of forty Thai visitors had not been able to get a flight in time for the Kathina. This gesture of support from all the Buddhist communities gives us the material resources for building and running the monastery, but perhaps even more important is the genuine caring and rejoicing expressed on these occasions.

During November we had so many comings and goings of both monks and laypeople that the staff at the airport must have thought we were flight attendants for some rather exotic new airline. Our visitors included Ven. U Eindaka Biwoonsa from Burma, Ven Ajahn Maha Samai from the Thai Vihara in Sydney, Ven Ajahn Sakorn from the Khymer temple in Sydney and Ven. Ajahn Sumedho from England.

I am afraid that we worked Ven. Brahm right up to the day of his departure as he was one of the main
co-ordinators for the Inauguration of the new Centre, Dhammaloka, on the 14th of November. Just after the successful ceremony we drove Ven. Brahm, who was on his last legs, (well he was limping anyway), to the airport (again!) for his long overdue R & R leave to Thailand and England. As I walked and he limped towards the boarding gate I did suggest one last project, however he didn't seem very enthusiastic as his laboured face puckered considerably and he slipped away through the doorway to safety. Naturally we are all going to miss him very much and we look forward to his return in May.

Ven Thavaro also returned to Thailand on the same flight and we hope that all goes well for him there.

After all this activity it was wonderful to have a three week monastic retreat under the guidance of Ven. Ajahn Sumedho who had come especially for the occasion. The words of wisdom, inspiring presence and joyful smile of the Ven. Ajahn did much to uplift the whole community.
One afternoon during the retreat, just before the 2.00pm sit, a speeding car drove in with the driver shouting "FIRE! FIRE! GET EVERYBODY OUT!" Well, what followed was a rather confused and disorganized evacuation to the "Look Out" where the local Fire Fighting Unit had established their base to fight a fire which was coming up from the main road towards the Monastery. It could have been a very devastating day for the monastery but for the very efficient and immediate action of the fire fighters who contained the fire about a kilometre from our boundary. We were very fortunate this time, but we have taken the hint and we are acquiring a fire warning system and preparing a 'fire drill' before we are put to the test again.

Things are now settling back into a more ordinary routine of group meditations in the early mornings and evenings, communal work before lunch and free time in the afternoon. Most of our work effort will be directed towards completing the meditation hall and landscaping the surrounding area, but the pace will be a gentle one.

As I write this the newest member of our community is snoozing on my lap. It is a little feral kitten that we found in a hollow log in the forest. We asked Ajahn Sumedho to name it and he suggested a very nice Pali name which I can't quite remember, but it was something like Kit Kat. I guess I'll never be a Pali scholar, but I don't think it will bother the cat.

for Ven. Brahm

**CAN YOU HELP?**

We are calling for your support to come and help us at the Monastery on "Special Working Bee Days" which we hope organise during the coming months. With general lack of manpower at the monastery there's much to be done. Men, women, it doesn't matter – please lend us your support and time by coming to help. You will be most rewarded if not by a cup of tea then at least by simply feeling it's a good way to spend a day or an afternoon.

**Dates for your diary are January 17th and March 13th.** Please look out for reminder notices on the noticeboard at Dhammaloka nearer the day.

If you are concerned that you will be given jobs you can't manage, or if you have any queries about what type of work is needed, please phone the Monastery. You can rest assured that your time will be much appreciated by us all.
VENERABLE BRAHM ON HOLIDAYS

Respectful Greetings to Venerable Ajahn Jagaro, the Sangha of Bodhinyana Monastery and to the noble band of lay supporters in Perth.

I have been in Thailand over a week now and I am enjoying myself immensely. From the moment I entered the Thai Airways plane and got immediately ushered into the 1st class compartment, I have been treated like a King. I have been away from Thailand long enough — five years — to forget what it is like being a Western monk in this country. Even at Bangkok airport I was whisked through passport control and customs as if they didn't exist and then into a chauffeur driven, air conditioned, new white Mercedes and off to Kesree's. They don't allow monks to sit in croaky old Kombi vans here!

Then Ajahn, you know about the morning meal at the kuti in Kesree's garden. Having received a full bowl on alms round (and it is a pleasure to go on alms round again), lots of big hearted layfolk bring twice as much more, then they start bringing trays of food from behind the house, curries and sweets enough to feed a blooming army! Then, when you think it's all over and you have survived, the attendant brings the tray of toast with a choice of jams and coffee and then....it's not finished yet....he goes back for the icecream! People have so much faith and generosity here and they get so much joy out of giving you the best that you are obliged to go along and eat as much as you can — oh my poor stomach! Luckily I have now escaped to Wat Cholapratahn, Tan Jow Koon Pannyananda's monastery, where I only get, on alms round, about twice as much food as I can eat! If I stay in Bangkok any longer I'm not going to fit through the door of the plane to go to England — so tomorrow I'm going up to Ubon to pay my respects to Ajahn Chah, see old friends at Wat Pah Nanachat and to go on a diet of sticky rice and frogs.

While here in Bangkok I have been paying my respects to the senior Mahateras (very senior monks). Somdet Nyanasamvra (Abbot of Wat Bovoranives) gave me a great deal of time one evening. He is obviously very impressed and supportive of our efforts in Australia and his light
heartedness on the occasion, cracking a couple of jokes which is uncommon of a 74 year old Somdet, really impressed the lay entourage. Tan Jow Koon Prom (Abbot of Wat Sraket) was equally supportive, although he was very busy - I will spend more time with him after Ubon. Then Tan Jow Koon Sophon and Tan Jow Koon Rajavaramuni also gave me much time and sent their encouragement to the Buddhists of Perth. It is awesome and inspiring just how much interest and support we are getting from these very senior monks. I have also met many old friends in the course of my travels so far.

I have started to give talks in Thai again. I am amazed at how much Thai I can remember when put on the spot. By the way, the Kathina group from Bangkok were VERY IMPRESSED and FULL OF PRAISE of the way they were looked after while in Perth. Some have already given their names to be first on the list for the next visit to Perth! So please tell our noble committee and others who thought the arrangements may not have been quite perfect, that the Thais were just overwhelmed by their reception and can't wait to come again.

I can't fail to notice the great improvement in the building methods here! Well what do you expect of me? They use much concrete, much ingenuity and the final products are aesthetically lovely. The new Dhamma Hall at Wat Buddhhamonton is magnificent, but before you get ideas Ajahn, I refuse to bring back a copy of the plans! Thailand is much more prosperous than when I left.

To finish off, I am happy and well and enjoying the fruits of some good karma. May the retreat be enlightening to you all! I will write again from England. With respects, regards and much metta,

Brahmavamso Bhikkhu
OUR INAUGURATION CEREMONY

Our Inauguration Ceremony was truly an auspicious occasion. We have now officially named our new city centre, "Dhammaloka", (Light of Truth). The ceremony was well planned and very well attended by members of many communities.

Representatives from the Sangha included Monks and Nuns from Bodhinyana Monastery, from the Tibetan and Vietnamese traditions and other visiting monks. We were particularly pleased that Ajahn Sumedho had recently arrived from England and could join us for the occasion.

His Excellency, The Governor of Western Australia, Professor Sir Gordon Reid, gave the keynote address. (A slightly abridged version of his speech is included in this Newsletter.) Other notable guests included the Honourable Keith Wilson, MLA, Minister for Housing and Lands, Brigadier Bill Jamieson, Honorable Consul for Thailand and representatives from the Zen and Vipassana groups.

Highlights of the programme included a short discourse from Ven Ajahn Jagaro with a brief meditation on loving kindness, paying reverence to the Buddha, offering of flowers to the Buddha by visiting Monks and representatives of the various Buddhist groups within the Perth community and short presentations by some of the officers of the Committee.

It was pleasing to see members of different backgrounds coming together to share the Dhamma and welcome so many different people to our new Centre.

KELLY INGRAM, REPRESENTING THE BUDDHIST YOUTH
AND HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR
ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA,
PROFESSOR GORDON REID

The following is an abridged version of the address given at the Inauguration Ceremony of the Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre.

"A 'Centre' of any kind necessarily implies its fundamental importance. When we think of building or creating a 'Centre', we imagine a place which acts as a hub of activity – a focus for the energies and interests of those who meet within its walls or its boundaries. In this case, we hope that this building will play an essential role in providing a central gathering place for the Buddhist members of our community to meet, to learn, to reflect and meditate and to exchange views.

I fear I am speaking to the converted when I say that Buddhism, in this respect, is a relative "newcomer" to this State's religious scene; that Buddhism is one of the world's "great" religions, dating back more than 2,500 years; and that Buddhism has played a pivotal role in the spiritual, cultural and social life of the Eastern world.

I find as I read the teachings of Buddhism, that it demonstrates a deep consideration of the reality of human suffering, of compassion, of "mindfulness" and individual responsibility, of peace, and of the respect for all forms of sentient life – a love for, and a search for truth. Clearly, Buddhism warrants the attention of all people of religious persuasions.

It is fitting that, in the midst of a multi-cultural Australia of the 1980's, in the midst of a growing awareness – and recognition – of the great depth of human talent, of faiths, and of the human endeavour that surrounds us, we should welcome this evidence of spiritual and ethical depth within our community.

According to the 1986 census, there were 7,178 Western Australians of the Buddhist faith – ½% of the total population. Yet that ½% represents a remarkable diversity of ethnic groups. It includes members of our community from South East Asia – from Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka; and it also includes many "Westerners".

The noted Australian poet and writer, Vance Palmer once wrote that:

The unity of man is based on his infinite diversity".
And so, in this wealth of race, nationality, culture and professional background that is modern Australia, in these closing decades of the twentieth century— we must surely admit ourselves to be enriched by the human diversity we now have. In the words of the Indonesian national motto—"Unity in Diversity"— we as modern Australians should find similar inspiration. We are unified in the realisation of every person's ultimate individuality— and yet, we are unified by the fundamental accord of their interest, and through the similarity of their hopes, fears and aspirations as human beings. As the Buddha himself noted, we are all born, we must all grow old, we must all die.

It is in this then, in our common humanity—in our common "mortality"— that we find unity and a recognition of the advantages of mutual tolerance and respect of individual dignity. We can all share, too, as Australians, in a common concern for the fellow members of our wider community—and in the principles of peace and love which characterise all the world's great religions.

I am delighted to learn that this new centre is to be named Dhammaloka, meaning "The Light of Truth". As a University teacher I have been driven in life by a simple belief, which is also yours, and which is elegantly expressed on your programme today: "The light of truth dispels a great darkness of ignorance."

Our love of truth is embraced by the human race—from those people we call primitive to those we call modern. The great nineteenth century poet, Robert Browning, wrote in "Paracelus", "There is an inmost centre in us all where truth abides in fullness".

That is, there is the love for truth in all of us. But, as John Milton wrote in "Paradise Regained", two centuries before Browning: "Hard are the ways of truth and rough to walk".

Many have died for truth, many have suffered in its name.

I find it moving that in our fast changing and diverse Australian community there is now a centre called "Dhammaloka"— The Light of Truth.

Mrs Reid joins me in applauding the Buddhist Society of Western Australia in creating this new social asset in our midst.

In inaugurating this Centre, we wish all of you continued health, happiness and personal growth within the Australian community at Dhammaloka.
TWO DAYS YOUTH PROJECT

A Youth project is going to be held at Bodhinyana Monastery in February 1988.

This is an opportunity for young people between the ages of 12 and 18 to practise Dhamma during their stay at the Monastery. This will involve participation in Dhamma talks, meditation, video films and helping with work around the Monastery.

This is the beginning of a series of projects which are going to be held in the future.

If anyone would like to join this project, or would like more information please contact Madduma on 244 1047.

May we all be happy.

A CARETAKER FOR DHAMMALOKA

Our resident caretaker at our City Centre, Henry Eales, will be leaving us towards the end of January. Consequently we need another person to fill this role.

The person we are looking for must be male (as the monks live at the Centre when they are in Perth), a non-smoker and non-drinker. A practising Buddhist man who is able to be at the Centre most of the time to answer the telephone, greet visitors and to help to look after the garden would be most suitable.

If you are interested in living at Dhammaloka and performing these functions please talk to Ajahn Jagaro.
"Happy New Year". We offer special greetings of peace and well being to all our readers as 1988 unfolds.

For us 1987 came to a quiet close after an extremely active season of activities, visitors and public occasions. Between October and December we seemed to be witnessing the blossoming of Buddhism here in the West as a steady stream of esteemed visitors and local people paid their respects in the new meditation halls at both Bodhinyana and Dhammaloka.

The tireless efforts of the Bhikkhu Sangha are truly remarkable. Everyone gratefully appreciates how instrumental their presence is to this blossoming. We offer our heartfelt thanks.

As is the joyful way of the Dhamma, not long after we agreed to have an official inauguration ceremony in November auspicious guests from many Buddhist homelands spontaneously arrived on our doorstep in quick succession! They came bestowing blessings, well wishing and gifts on our small community. We thank you all once more.

As well as those visitors mentioned in the Sangha News, at the end of December we welcomed four Dhamma friends from Kyoto, Japan, Professor Watanabe, Professor Yamaguchi, Professor Tatsuguchi and Mr Nishio, who had expressed a wish to experience a Theravada monastery and meet 'Western Dhamma friends' during their brief visit to Australia.

Social Welfare:

Refugee Sponsorship: With many thanks to David & Ann Miller and their committee we are happy to relay that the Society's sponsorship of a Cambodian refugee family is going well. The family is now settled into their new home.

If you have furniture which you could offer to Cambodian families please contact David (459 3606).

Welfare Work: Since early November Wuneenatd Rangson has offered a voluntary social welfare service for our community. Wuneenatd is a fully trained Social Worker and is available for consultations each Monday evening at Dhammaloka.

FUND RAISING:
The Sri Lankan and Burmese dinners were extremely successful and gave many people a foretaste of the treats in store at the International Food Fair. The Food Fair was a wonderful evening when more than 600 people gathered under
somewhat threatening skies to enjoy the delicious cuisine and most professional entertainment. The rain graciously waited until five minutes after the final performance!

Niranjala Galahenege and the large team of energetic and hardworking people are offered our grateful thanks.

ONE OF THE MANY CULTURAL ITEMS AT THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FAIR

NOTICES:
Car Stickers: New car stickers of the Buddhist Society of W.A. are freely available at Dhammaloka. Please call in to collect one.

T.V. Documentary: The television film crew of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation spent many hours filming the activities of the Monastery and our Perth Centre. The screening is scheduled for Sunday 21 February at 11 a.m. (Check programme in case of alteration).

Tai Chi: Florence Hu, our well respected Tai Chi teacher has agreed to continue to offer classes at Dhammaloka. A beginners' class will commence on Monday 8 February and the continuation class on Tuesday 9 February. Both classes will run from 7.30 – 9.00pm and are $3 per class.

May you all be happy and well and realise peace.

Kathy Shiels,
President
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Buddhist society of W.A. (Inc) will be held at Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre on Saturday 20th February, 1988 at 4.00pm. Please offer the society your support by your attendance.

Nominations for committee members have been called in accordance with our constitutional procedures.

NEW VIHARA FOUNDATION

A number of our members have registered as members of the New Vihara Foundation, but have not requested their bank to begin deducting their contribution. If you are uncertain as to whether your contributions have begun, or you would like to begin making a monthly donation (usually $12 per month) towards the purchase of our new Centre, please contact Don Weerakody on 275 3138.
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Ven. Ajahn Jagaro will be conducting a four week course for people who wish to learn about Buddhist Meditation. It will be held at Dhammaloka from 4 - 5.30pm on:


This is an ideal opportunity for people who are interested in meditation practise to learn in a comfortable, peaceful manner. Please encourage as many people as possible to attend. It would be advisable for attendees to wear loose clothing and bring a sitting cushion.

A similar course is planned to be held in the Southern Suburbs in March. Further details will be given at the Gosnells evenings and information will be available at Dhammaloka when arrangements are finalised.

MEDITATION RETREAT

APRIL 23rd, 24th & 25th April, 1988

Ven. Ajahn Jagaro will be conducting a three day, 2 nights meditation retreat for experienced meditators at the Mt Helena Centre of Theosophy over the long weekend in April.

Further details will be given on the noticeboard at Dhammaloka a little closer to the date and will also appear in the next Newsletter.

DHAMMA SCHOOL

The Dhamma school will resume if there's sufficient interest upon Venerable Brahm's return.
REGULAR ACTIVITIES
AT DHAMMALOKA BUDDHIST CENTRE

FRIDAYS:
7.30-8.00pm Guided sitting meditation
8.00-9.00pm A talk on Buddhism by Ven Ajahn Jagaro

SATURDAYS:
9.00am Food offering (dana) to monks
3.00-3.45pm Meditation for Beginners. Instruction by Ven. Ajahn Jagaro
7.30-8.30pm Sitting meditation

SUNDAYS:
9.00am Food offering (dana) to monks
Afternoons Varying activities. See inside for details

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