‘Truly wisdom springs from meditation; without meditation, wisdom wanes; having known these two paths of progress and decline, let one conduct oneself so that wisdom may increase.’

Dhammapada 282
"Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa"

Dear Dhamma friends

As I sit in the peace of my quiet hut with the windows overlooking the forested valley, it is easy to have a right perspective on life with all its ups and downs. Within the confines of the monastic life, the simplicity of renunciation and the clarity of the empty mind, all the complexity and confusion of life dissolves away.

By not dwelling on things of the past, one can easily see that regret and longing begin to fade away and that by avoiding obsessive speculation about the future, the mind is freed from anticipation and fear. True peace, here and now, is found by resting in the emptiness of mind in the present moment without attachment to the countless variety of physical and mental conditions.

However, it is the habit of the unenlightened mind to forget its true nature and to get lost in life's various experiences. Habitually reacting with desire for the pleasant and aversion for the unpleasant results in confusion and conflict - and all this is suffering. So there is the need for the path and practice in order to free ourselves from our own foolishness. All the skilful means which support and strengthen mindfulness constitute the path while the cultivation of those skilful means is the practice. It is only through mindfulness that we can free ourselves from our foolishness. When the mind is clear and awake we can see all conditions according to reality rather than through our deluded biases.

The Dhamma is not limited to time and place and the Truth is always calling out to us to "come and see". Each situation and every sensation offers an opportunity for wisdom to arise. However, this wisdom is not an accumulation of knowledge about the world, but rather a seeing into the true nature of all things that we encounter. This wisdom cannot be cultivated just by having more experiences for that only makes one more experienced which may even increase one's confusion and attachment.

The number and variety of experiences to be had are endless because all conditions are forever changing. Thus one will never attain peace or satisfaction just through the accumulation of sensory experience. In fact, all of us have had more than enough experiences to help us become wise human beings and any one event offers sufficient opportunity for enlightenment.
What we need is not more experience, but rather the ability and interest to contemplate on our daily activities so that we can learn the lesson that nature has to teach. To be mindful is to have the ability to reflect. Mindfulness gives rise to a foundation of peacefulness and clarity of mind that allows one to objectify and observe what one encounters. Instead of just believing in, or habitually reacting to any incident, one begins to look into it - what is fear, what is doubt, what is love and what is hate? This is not an intellectual exercise in analysis, but of any one of our experiences - what are its physical and mental characteristics, what is the cause of its arising and is it possible to free the mind of this burden by learning to let go?

It is through this process of inquiry with gentle effort and patient alertness that one can free the mind from its own foolishness and begin to dwell in peace.

So as another year comes to an end, it is worthwhile to consider whether we are simply accumulating more experiences or are we indeed becoming wise human beings. The true purpose of life is for us to cultivate wisdom and realise peace. The Teachings of the Buddha are available to help us achieve this goal.

All of us are truly fortunate to have this Teaching and it is an even greater blessing to live as a monk in the conducive atmosphere of Bodhinyana Monastery. I cannot help but feel a sense of gratitude to the Buddha for his compassionate Teachings, to my teacher, Venerable Ajahn Chah for his skilful guidance and for the kind support of all the generous lay people who have made this monastery possible.

May the power of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha together with the merit of all of us practising at Bodhinyana Monastery help to make 1987 the year of more peace within the hearts of all human beings.

May you be happy and well.

Jagaro Bhikkhu
Man's passions are disturbing. The lust or craving of blinded beings has brought about hatred and all other suffering. The enemy of the whole world is lust through which all evils come to living beings.

This lust when obstructed by some cause is transformed into wrath, and man falls into the net which he himself has made of his passion for pleasure, like the spider into its own web. People, both in the East and in the West, seem to have become more and more materially minded and have almost ignored the mental realm, the world within. They seem to be lopsided and even ill-disposed. Slogans and political propaganda seem to mould man's mind, and life seems to be mechanical; he has become a puppet controlled by others and they, in turn, by forces they only dimly realize.

Modern man seems to be enmeshed in all sorts of ideas, views, opinions and ideologies, both wise and foolish. He is film fed, television minded and radio trained. Today what is presented by the newspapers, radio, television, some novels and pictures, by certain literature on sex psychology and by sex-ridden films, tend to confuse man and turn him from the path of rectitude and understanding. Today, more than at any other time, right understanding, calm and compassion are needed to guide mankind through the turmoil of life, to 'straighten the restless mind as a fletcher straightens his shaft', and to make it conform to justice and rectitude.

Refraining from intoxicants and becoming heedful, establishing himself in patience and purity, the wise man trains his mind. A calm attitude preserved at all times speaks a man of culture. It is not too hard a task for a man to be calm when all things around him are favourable, but to be composed of mind in the midst of unfavourable circumstances is hard, and it is this difficult thing that is worth doing; for by such control one builds strength of character. Psychological changes come very slowly. It is through training in quiet contemplation that a quiet mind is achieved. Can you also achieve it? Lord Horder's answer is interesting:

"The answer is 'Yes'. But how? Well, not by doing 'some great thing'. 'Why were the saints, saints?"
someone asked. And the answer came: 'Because they were cheerful when it was difficult to be cheerful and patient when it was difficult to be patient. They pushed on when they wanted to stand still, and kept silent when they wanted to talk.' That was all. So simple, but so difficult. A matter of mental hygiene...."

No amount of logic and argument on the perfecting of life leads us to our desired goal. No amount of speculation brings us nearer to our aim. We should learn to tame our fickle minds; for control of mind is the key to happiness. It is the force behind all true achievement. The movements of a person void of control are purposeless and unsettled. "A certain aloofness, therefore, from the busyness of life and withdrawal into the silence is helpful in contacting the power within and overcoming the weaknesses and limitations of ordinary experiences.

Reprinted from:
"Buddhism — A Living Message
by Ven. Piyadassi Thera

"As a lotus flower is born in water, grows in water and rises out of water to stand above it unsoiled.
So I, born in the world, raised in the world, having overcome the world, live unspoiled by the world."

... THE BUDDHA.
SANGHA NEWS

From my hut in the forest I see the day end in a brilliant crimson sunset over the western ocean. The day's energy fades into twilight and then rests in the awesome night. The coolness, the stillness, the deathliness of night makes it a good time for meditation. Just to gaze up at the stars, reminded of that infinity way beyond, unimaginably beyond the day's business makes the heart still. The blackness to the east trembles with the faint breath of a new light, a new day, a new arising, sweeping in freshness and power. This is why Buddhist monasteries are in forests or on mountains. These wheels of nature are powerful reminders of transience and transcendence, of peace and perfection.

Three years have now turned at Bodhinyana Monastery, Western Australia. The tiny sapling of meditative Theravada Buddhism planted in this virgin culture on December 1st 1983 is immensely stronger. For three weeks in November our monastery welcomed a group of senior monks from our parent monastery, Wat Pah Pong in North-East Thailand, together with a large party of devout Thai lay Buddhists. Over 25 people were living, eating and meditating in our young monastery and the facilities were sufficient. That we could manage so many when only three years ago there were only two or three of us, camping out, washing from buckets, eating under the trees, with not a building on the site, is an inspiring tribute to all the dedicated support of monks and laypeople in creating this ancient tradition, a Buddhist Meditation Monastery, within reach of the people of Perth.

RESIDENT SANGHA & VISITING MONKS & LAY-PEOPLE:
Ven Ajahn Maha Soopong and Ven. Ajahn Jun, the two visiting Thai monks, senior disciples of Ajahn Chah have now returned to Thailand. Adelaide born Ven Nyanadhammo who came with them as a guide also returned, slipping through our fingers once again! Next time we'll have a ball and chain, an old Australian custom for overseas visitors, ready for him!

Ven Ajahn Gunhah who arrived with the party from Thailand will be staying on here for about two years. He cannot speak much English yet, let alone "Orstrlyyun", nor can I help with the work. He seldom gives formal talks, but his serenity and compassion is immense. He is here to remind us that Buddhism is about becoming Enlightened and that building monasteries and inspiring laypeople is incidental. He is here to guide the inner monastery to shun the dead-end streets of fame, prosperity and success so that the aim of being a Buddhist, unshakeable Peace, may be realised. Only then can one say that Buddhism flourishes here.

Twice a year we surrender our peace and simplicity to allow Buddhist festivals and the exuberance of lay Buddhists into the monastery. In early November there must have been about 400 attending our "End of the Rains Alms Giving Ceremony". The name is a bit of a mouthful, but that is apt when on considers the amount of food we monks are offered on this day! It is a celebration of generosity and gratitude, a festive reminder of the interdependence of monastic Buddhism and lay Buddhism. Many people now look forward to travelling the 60km from Perth at least twice a year to get swept along in the joy and sense of 'spiritual fun', of monastery bells and money trees, of incense and Asian food, of the Ajahn's teachings and the monks' smiles. If the spiritual path is no fun at all along the way then many will soon give it up. We are
about refining happiness and gradually coming to realise that the deepest fullest happiness is that of listening to silence.

LAY PEOPLE OFFERINGdana to the SANGHA

"END OF THE RAINS" DAY"

An expensive 'main hall'(artist's impression is on the front cover) will soon be underway at the monastery. As a building project it is a few orders of magnitude beyond what we have constructed so far. It will serve as the home for our large Buddha statue and our venue for meditation and meetings. Its size reflects our support and its simple uncluttered spaciousness is a symbol for the mind in meditation. I doubt that we will complete this building within the year for our funds are not yet enough, but at least a good start will be made and there is no rush.

Novice Visarado is to take full ordination in March, bringing our community up to 6 monks, while Anthony Vella, currently the sole "driving force" of our monastery will give up the wheel of the monastery bus for the wheel of the Dhamma and become a novice. Hopefully, before we are marooned without a driver at least one more layman will have faith enough to stop mucking about amassing debts, chasing girls and developing a paunch to come and join us!

Seriously, this is a wonderful opportunity now for westerners to follow the monastic path laid down by the Buddha, as the most effective way to Nibbana, here in Australia. "The only purpose for being born", Ajahn Gunhah recently said, "is to be fully enlightened". Why not go for it!

Ven Brahmavamso
Twelve months ago we set our sights on a new city centre (Vihara) to cope with the increasing numbers coming to hear and practise Buddhism here in Perth. A "New Vihara Foundation" was established wherein 100 supporters were looked for to pledge $3 per week towards purchasing a new Vihara. Many fund raising activities were also organised. For those who had found joy in the teachings of Buddhism it was a chance to turn their thoughts to the welfare of others and make these teachings more accessible.

It is a measure of the kindness and generosity of our members that 70 supporters are regularly donating $12 every month to this fund. This time last year we were $17,000 in debt for the property in Magnolia Street. This debt has been repaid, there is nearly $33,000 in the 'kitty' and we are now in a position to purchase a suitable property (estimated cost $150,000 - $200,000). Even with the sale of our present Vihara (estimated market value $50,000) a large bank loan will still be required, so, while thanking those who have already pledged their support, we encourage others for further support. Should you wish to become a supporter of the "New Vihara Foundation" or make a donation please talk to our Treasurer or one of the committee members.

"The gift of Truth exceeds all other gifts"

...The Dhammapada

FORTHCOMING VISITS

In March we welcome once again Tan Jow Koon Pannyaananda from Thailand who will be here to conduct the ordination of novice Visarado. He will be travelling with Ajahn Pasanin, the Canadian born abbot of "The International Forest Monastery" of Northeast Thailand.

Also in March Ajahn Sumedho will be in Perth, together with one of his senior disciples, Ajahn Anando. Ajahn Sumedho will arrive on March 23rd and will depart on March 29th.

For further details of these visits please check the noticeboard at the Vihara.
COMMITTEE NEWS

It has been a wonderful Dhamma lesson this year observing the continual generosity shown by Ajahn Jagaro. Never concerning himself about his own tiredness, he is always thinking of others before himself, forever giving of his time for the benefit of other people.

Tremendous energy and generosity has been shown this year by our committee members and friends, culminating in the joyous occasion of the Society's International Food Fair and Cultural Evening on Saturday 22 November when approximately $5,700 was raised for our new Vihara. The Tropical Grove within the University's grounds provided a delightful setting in which hundreds of people generously gave time and effort. Thank you to all.

Although there isn't space to mention each of you by name our special thanks go to those who cooked and served food representing: Burma, Cambodia, China, Laos, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Thailand, The Mediterranean, Indonesia and Vietnam. We also especially thank all the performers who presented items representing: Australian Aboriginals, Bangladesh, Burma, Indonesia, Japan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

It was agreed by everyone that the significant amount of money raised was secondary to the sharing of our multicultural community feeling.
Also in November four distinguished monks, Ven Ajahn Jun, Ven. Ajahn Maha Soopong, Ven Ajahn Gunhah and Ven. Nyanadhammo visited our monastery along with 13 Thai lay Buddhists. For us Western lay Buddhists it was most beneficial to observe their gentle manners and generosity in action. We thank our Thai friends for their visit.

This year's Rains Retreat at the monastery was formally concluded with our most successful Alms Presentation ceremony yet. Not only did hundreds of people travel to the monastery and enjoy themselves thoroughly, but over $7,700 was presented for future buildings at the monastery. May the amazing generosity of the Cambodian Refugees, the Thai community and all others long be an inspiration to all.

During the last year a Buddhist friend, Helene Cotesworth has been offering yoga classes on a Thursday evening at the Vihara for the benefit of our Society. Also Suburb Delaney has been offering Thai language classes on a Wednesday evening. Thank you to these ladies for offering their skills for our benefit.

We extend a warm welcome to all on:

February 6th, 7th and 8th: A Weekend Meditation Retreat. (See information in this newsletter). Please help us by registering early to secure your accommodation.

May you all hear the gift of the Dhamma and grow in its Wisdom.

Christine Banks
President
MEMBERSHIP

A reminder to all that membership dues are payable on 1 January, 1987. It would be appreciated if these could be paid as soon as possible.

As a consequence of the changes made to our constitution earlier this year a member shall cease to be a member of the Society if membership dues are unpaid for a period exceeding twelve months, therefore if your dues were not paid during 1986 you will cease to be a member of the Society in 1987.

If you have any queries please contact our Treasurer/Membership person, Ron Storey.

Application forms for membership (associate and ordinary) are available at the Vihara.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Buddhist Society of W.A. (Inc) will be held at the Vihara on Saturday 14th February, 1987 at 4pm. Please offer the Society your support by your attendance.

Nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and six committee members for 1987 are now being called for.

In accordance with our Constitution, nominations shall be in writing and shall contain the name and the written consent of the member nominated. The nomination must be signed by the nominator and by the seconder, both of whom must be Ordinary or Honorary members of the Society. A person may nominate for more than one office, but may be elected to one office only.

Please address all nominations to the Hon. Secretary. Nominations close at 5pm on Friday 16th January, 1987.

All members are asked to consider lending their support to the Society by taking office. It is an ideal opportunity to show generosity and to give your time and effort for the benefit of others.
KNOW THE BAIT

Unlike today, in the time of the Buddha people understood Dhamma quite easily because there were not so many things to lead them astray. Now there are so many distractions to entangle us in the heap of suffering that when we hear about suffering we don't understand. We have an endless variety of fun and games to bait us and keep us entangled.

So try to help in this matter when bringing up children. Often parents only help to make children more foolish by encouraging them to get lost in all the distractions. If parents were to take their children to a shop selling beautiful toys, or into a shop full of delicious foods and tell them that these things are here to make us stupid then maybe the children would become quite wise. They would not be so easily deceived by beautiful appearances or delicious tastes.

Taken from a talk by Ven. Ajahn Buddhadasa

DHAMMA SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

The Dhamma School for children will commence again on Sunday February 8th at 4pm at the Vihara in North Perth and will then continue at fortnightly intervals. The hour long Dhamma Schools aims to introduce children between 6 - 13 to some of the basics of Buddhism, for example: who the Buddha was, what he did and the things he taught. The aim is not to indoctrinate, but to familiarise, to open some windows onto the warm and peaceful realm of Buddhism so that our young will at least know the theme which motivates their parents. Much time is given to discussing the noble ethics of Buddhism and relating these to a child's daily experiences in home and school. Human qualities of gentleness, kindness, consideration for others' well being, generosity and respect are all encouraged by stories from the Jataka and elsewhere, by question and answer and by example. A short meditation is included in each class and though parents are commonly aghast in their disbelief, little children can sit quietly for five minutes and enjoy it!

The future of our world is now a seed in the heart of our young and it is our task to nurture that seed. May this Dhamma School for children help, even in a tiny way, so that our children may blossom and be a blessing to the world of tomorrow.
WEEKEND MEDITATION RETREAT  
FEBRUARY 6th, 7th & 8th, 1987

MT. HELENA CENTRE OF THEOSOPHY  
Bunning Road,  
Mt. Helena, W.A.

The Buddhist Society of W.A. will be conducting another weekend meditation retreat at the Mt Helena Centre of Theosophy from 7.30pm on Friday February 6th to Sunday February 8th at 4.30pm.

This retreat will be a unique opportunity to practice meditation intensely in a relaxed and rural setting. Instruction will be given by Venerable Ajahn Jagaro, an Australian Buddhist Monk who is the Abbot of the Bodhiyana Serpentine Buddhist Monastery. You will be asked during the weekend to observe the 8 Buddhist Precepts and observe noble silence. There are 2 meals a day and they are vegetarian. There will also be periods of instruction in Hatha Yoga and deep relaxation techniques.

Please bring along bedding, a firm cushion suitable for meditation and a torch. Mattresses and head pillows are supplied.

Those who are attending the retreat should make an effort to be at the Mt Helena Centre before 7.00pm on the Friday so that they can attend the introductory talk in the meditation hall at 7.30pm.

PLEASE REGISTER AND SEND PAYMENT BEFORE FRIDAY 9th JANUARY.

Please pay the registration fee of $30 to:
The Treasurer, The Buddhist Society of W.A., 4 Magnolia Street, North Perth 6006. (Tel: 444 7013)

Please make cheques payable to: The Buddhist Society of W.A.

NAME..............................................................................
ADDRESS...........................................................................
..................................................................................Postcode...............Tel..............

Do you need transport to the retreat?.........................
Can you offer transport? Yes/No For how many...........

Please find enclosed my cheque for $ to confirm my accommodation.
### REGULAR ACTIVITIES
### AT THE BUDDHIST CENTRE (VIHARA)

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<th>DAYS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAYS</td>
<td>7.30pm-8.00pm</td>
<td>Guided sitting meditation</td>
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<td>8.00pm-9.00pm</td>
<td>A talk on Buddhism by Ven. Ajahn Jagaro</td>
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<td>SATURDAYS</td>
<td>9.00am</td>
<td>Food offering (dana) to monks</td>
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<td>3.00pm-3.45pm</td>
<td>Meditation for beginners. Instruction by Ven. Ajahn Jagaro</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7.30pm-8.30pm</td>
<td>Sitting meditation</td>
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<td>SUNDAYS</td>
<td>4.00pm</td>
<td>Dhamma School for 8-14 year olds</td>
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### ADDRESSES

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