THE KATHINA CEREMONY

Traditionally after the end of the three months Rains Retreat, lay Buddhists take the opportunity to make offerings of robes and other requisites to the resident sangha. When the sangha consists of five or more monks then this occasion becomes even more significant and is referred to as the "Kathina Ceremony."

For a Buddhist monastery the Kathina Ceremony is the most important annual event involving both Sangha and laity in a way which fosters harmony and co-operation.

Originally the Buddha established this tradition in order to help monks renew or repair their worn robes at the end of the rains retreat in preparation for the common practice of wandering from place to place during the dry part of the year. Thus the last month of the rainy-season became known as "the robe season" and also as "the robe giving period" and it would be at this time of the year when most monks would make up their robes.

In essence the Kathina ceremony simply requires that at the end of the rains retreat, a layperson or group of laypeople choose a day on which to offer cloth sufficient to make at least one of the monk’s three robes to the resident sangha of five or more monks. On receiving the cloth the monks then elect one amongst them to be the recipient of the Kathina robe, usually the monk with the worst robe. Then all of them must help make the Kathina robe, complete it before the next day and present it to the recipient monk. Having successfully done this the monks are then allowed to use the rest of the cloth and the other requisites offered on the Kathina day for many months.

When monasteries became better established the Kathina ceremony became a time for offering not only cloth but also funds to be kept by the lay stewards and used for developing and maintaining the monastery.
SUNDAY 22nd OCTOBER 1989

As the stewards of the sangha, the Committee of the Buddhist Society feel that the Kathina offering at Bodhinyana Monastery should not be reserved for any individual person or group. Instead we see it as an opportunity for all the Buddhist community to join in a harmonious expression of support for our growing Sangha. Thus we have chosen SUNDAY THE 22ND OCTOBER, 1989 for this year's Kathina Offering and take this opportunity to invite all of you to participate in this auspicious occasion.

The programme for the day will include:

9.30 am    Gathering at the Monastery
10.00 am   Receiving the precepts and chanting
10.30 am   Offering of food to the Sangha and sharing a meal
1.00 pm    Offering of the Kathina Robe, Blessing by the sangha and Dhamma talk

Rest of the Day - Enjoying the peace of the monastery

ALL ARE WELCOME
"Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa"

Dear friends,

While visiting the Buddhist group in Canberra, I was asked a very pertinent question; "What value is a Buddhist monastery to the lay community?" It was asked with sincerity and it reminded me of the very similar concern expressed here in Perth eight years ago when the possibility and desirability of starting a forest monastery was being debated.

By its nature a forest monastery is physically remote from the lay community and, as it is intended to be a refuge for the training of monks and nuns, it could be perceived as an exclusive training camp of little relevance to the public. However, my experience shows that this is not so.

You may have heard about something called "devotional practice" and more than likely associate it with chanting, ceremonial worshipping and various rituals. But there is far more to the "devotional practice" than these formal and specialized activities. This term includes all practices which cultivate the heart of compassion and loving-kindness, and nurture a mind which is uplifted and inspired through the power of all that is good and noble. It is indeed wonderful to see how the relationship between the lay community and the monastery helps generate these very qualities in all of us.

In jest I often tell people that the monks and nuns are just big babies! That is because, like a baby, we are so completely dependent on others for our material needs – even our daily food. And in the same way that the baby’s vulnerability arouses such love and compassion from the parents, the presence of a sincere monastic sangha seems to inspire great caring and sharing in our lay community.

Before the start of this year’s rains retreat we decided that we would try and minimize our teaching activities during this three months period. So there was quite a lot of joking(?) in the monastery about how the lay people would forget us and that we would have to ration our supplies of canned beans and white rice. But it seems that ‘distance does make the heart grow fonder’ because the support which we are receiving is quite overwhelming. Now I feel somewhat embarrassed when I say that we
eat only one meal a day at the monastery. The truth is that we have “one feast a day”!

The making of offerings and caring for the needs of the sangha is one of the oldest forms of devotional practices in Buddhism and continues to be a very beautiful and effective way of cultivating joy. Also it is the one devotional practice that the western Buddhists have really taken to. Thus the meal time at the monastery is always a joyful time – and not only for the monks!

So what is the value of Bodhinyana monastery? Well it helps to bring out the best in all of us – both sangha and laity.

With Metta,
Jagaro Bhikkhu.

The resident community at Bodhinyana Monastery for the rains retreat of 1989
"STAY WITH THE KNOWING"

Adapted from a translation of a Dhamma talk given by Ven Ajahn Fun.

In meditation when the mind becomes peaceful and still its nature will be pliant, gentle and refined. You will feel extremely light and experience a profound sense of well being. All feelings of pain disappear here and even sitting long on a hard floor is no longer a problem. All becomes still as your attention settles immovable on the object of meditation. You do not want for anything else because you have seen the source of all that is skillful and unskillful and so now you know the remedy. It is like a wise doctor who having understood the ailment can then prescribe the right medicine.

The cause of all that is unskillful is simply the mind which will not stop, which refuses to rest. This mind is lost in ambition and hence is in a flurry of activity. It is busily creating all sorts of kamma much of which is unskillful and perpetuating your being in the cycle of birth and death.

Do you see this mind? You try to still it but it will not stop. You try to instruct it but it will not learn. It is like an obstinate, delinquent child who will not obey anyone. Such a mind that is untrained cannot be a refuge for you. However if you train this mind until it becomes pliant and obeys then it can be of real benefit to you and it can be your refuge. It will be as if you have the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha come together within your own mind. This mind will be radiant and having realized the Dhamma your practice will naturally be pure and kind resulting in a peaceful and gentle state of being.

This is tranquillity of body and mind where peacefulness pervades throughout. It can only be achieved by careful attention and persistent introspection. Whenever the mind moves from this point it will lead you into creating kamma resulting in more becoming and more birth. If you want to stop creating endless kamma and suffering then train yourself to cut this habitual mental activity. Learn to stay with the knowing. Take note of this knowing, where it is, and keep your attention there. There is nothing else to do, just stay with the knowing. Whatever it is that arises, simply know it. The Buddha is this ‘one who knows’. If you don’t attach to any of the things that arise, they won’t stick to you. When you simply observe them then you don’t get caught
by anything and so there is no suffering. Let it all go and the mind becomes empty. Non-attachment is just this seeing and letting go.

But how to let go? When you clearly see the suffering which results from attachment then letting go happens spontaneously and the mind becomes still. There remains only a feeling of lightness and contentedness with clarity and purity. This is the happiness that the Buddha spoke of when He said that the happiness can equal that of a peaceful mind.

So practise until you encounter this state within yourself. In meditation turn your attention inwards and focus on that ‘knowing’. This knowing is not a self or ego, it is just knowing. ‘The one who knows’ does not die nor does it break up; it lacks nothing, it is not suffering, it does not want, it is not difficult, it does not irritate. From beginningless time this knowing has been; before the Buddha’s Enlightenment it was and after the Enlightenment it was just the same. It is only a question of whether you realize it or not!

When you do not fully know this you attach to whatever arises as being self and so you suffer accordingly. In ignorance one gets lost in mental creations thus grasping at them. But when there is wisdom then you do not attach to anything that arises, you do not make anything of it. By seeing clearly and knowing according to truth nothing can deceive you. All that is needed is to establish your attention at the point of knowing and stay there.

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**10 DAY MEDITATION RETREAT**

This retreat will be conducted by Ven Ajahn Jagaro and is suitable for people with previous meditation experience.

| **Venue** | Centre for Theosophy  
Mount Helena |
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ONE FOR THE ROAD

The following story is taken from the Books of Discipline which form part of the Buddhist canonical scripture.

At one time, while wandering in the Cetiya country, the Buddha was warned many times by the villagers of a fierce and dangerous naga (a serpent like being with magic powers – not dissimilar to the dragons of yore) which dwelt in the hermitage of Ambatitha. Ven Sagata, who was then the Buddha’s attendant, went to Ambatitha, entered the hermitage and sat in meditation. The unsociable naga, angry at the intruder, used its magic powers and blew forth smoke. The Ven Sagata used his psychic powers and also blew forth smoke. The naga was incensed and blazed forth in flames. Then Ven Sagata, again using his powers, blazed up in flames conquering the nagas heat with his own heat.

Word of Ven Sagata’s psychic battle with the terrible naga soon reached the nearby city of Kosambi where the Buddha had gone with Ven Sagata. The laypeople of Kosambi were very impressed and wanted to offer some appropriate gift. They asked “Honoured Sir, what is hard for the monks to obtain, and liked by them? What may we give?”

As it happened, a notorious and shameless group of monks were within hearing distance and they quickly answered the laypeople’s question, “Alcohol is hard for monks to obtain and liked by them, give that.”

So the next time Ven Sagata entered Kosambi on almsround he was given alcohol, in house after house, and as he was going back to the monastery Ven Sagata collapsed, drunk, at the town gate. Just afterwards the Buddha, together with a large company of monks, came to leave Kosambi by the same way and he happened upon the sozzled monk lying insensible by the town gate. “Monks, take up Sagata”, he said.

Having carried Ven Sagata to the monastery they laid him out, unconscious, with his head towards the Buddha. In his stupor, Ven Sagata turned round so that his feet came to be pointing towards the Buddha.

“Monks, formerly Sagata was respectful to the Tathagata (i.e. the Buddha)...now he is not. Monks, formerly Sagata could conquer with his psychic power the mighty naga of Ambatitha...now he could not even conquer a little lizard. It is because of drinking what should not be drunk” the Buddha said, and laid down the rule prohibiting the consumption of alcohol. Henceforth this became a rule of training for all monks, nuns and novices as well as for the lay Buddhist followers.
SANGHA NEWS

You know what it’s like on a Monday morning when you have to heave your uncooperative body out of bed and go to work again – well, I feel just like that now that I have to write this article for the newsletter! It is the middle of the annual 3 month winter retreat, my brain is on holiday and it resents being disturbed. In this world of ours, though we have but two choices – like it or lump it, so I had better stop complaining and get writing.

It is indeed a treat to be on retreat! It is a rare thing in the world today to take time off to be quiet, to have a lifestyle where one can put aside one’s duties, abandon activity, subdue one’s speech and contemplate within. In the world one is a prisoner of activity; in the monastery one is free to be still. I hope that our example of stopping once a year will encourage our supporters outside to stop now and again, to take time off to reflect and to rest without feeling guilty. We don’t feel guilty, we just get blissed out.

So what’s been happening in the monastery? One could answer “Nuffin’ much”, especially if you were born in London like me, “just sitting around”. But, in truth, one would be underestimating enormously the effect of sitting many hours in meditation, of walking tens of kilometres on the walking meditation path, and of developing consistent reflective awareness around all the other gentle activities of the retreat routine. It is these things which are the life-blood of a Buddhist monastery, these are the trainings for the Sangha, it is what Bodhinyana is all about.

There are 11 residents here for this the sixth Rains Retreat at Bodhinyana. There are 6 monks, Venerable Ajahn Jagaro, Venerable Nyanadassi, Venerable Aryasilo, Venerable Abhinyano, Venerable Sudhammo and Venerable Me; 2 novices, Jayanto and Narado; one nun, Sister Rocana; plus Barry and Claudia. We did start of the Rains Retreat with 13 of us but I should have known that that was an unlucky number because two of our anagarikas did a bunk in the first week of the Retreat. Ajahn Jagaro lamented that he should have got the tall iron gate on the entrance way installed earlier and padlocked, then they wouldn’t have escaped! But of course, a monastery is not a prison, my word no – in a prison you get 3 meals a day, a comfy bed, television, music, sport..... One is allowed to leave a monastery, as long as its
done in the right way. I explain the ‘right way’ to anyone keen to grow their hair again as follows: “when you are really desperate to leave then it is better to wait a while, because if you leave at that time you just reinforce your compulsive habits”. They wait about a week before requesting again to leave, adding that this time they aren’t so desperate.” “Well then, if it is not so important to you now, you might as well stay!” This faultless logic bamboozles them for a while – then they do a bunk!

In November we will be saying cheerio to Sister Rocana who will be going to the frozen wastes of England to ordain as a 10-precept nun under Ajahn Sumedho. 10-precept nuns don’t handle money, nor do they cook or drive, so it is a further step in renunciation for her. These nuns wear dark brown robes and are called ‘Ayya’ – so you can say that Sister Rocana is going to England for the Ayya-ordination! (Maybe if I crack another pun like that, I’ll get sent away to England too). Sister Rocana has been a great asset to both the monastery and to the members and friends of the Buddhist Society. May she take with her many warm memories of Perth...and many warm beanies, jumpers and socks as well!

Now to stretch my overworked brain back, way back, a long long looong while back, when I last had a hammer in my hand, in July, to report on the building projects then underway which have now undergone(!). This year I resolved not to finish all the projects. In past years, we have worked so hard just before the Rains Retreat begins that it has been touch and go as to what would get finished off first – the buildings or the workers. So this year we were more sensible. You may notice that the entrance wall lacks cappings on the pillars, the verandah of the abbot’s hut extension has still to be paved, and interior work is needed there too. But what matter, they’ll be completed after the retreat. This year, the one important thing we did get out of the way was the compulsion to always have to get things out of the way!

After the retreat we intend to construct a workshop plus storerooms. At the moment we have a ‘tool shed’ in which not even Sherlock Holmes could find the whereabouts of the hammers. It’s a mess. It’s a rats nest. No, that’s being derogatory to the rodents – no self respecting rat with any shame would descend to reside in such a lowly domicile! Seriously, we need to look after the equipment we use in building and maintenance and there will always be jobs around the place requiring a well set-up little workshop.
Also on the drawing board are plans for two lovely brick kutis on the nuns' side of the monastery. With Sister Rocana's departure imminent, we have thought deeply about the future of women monastics staying at Bodhinyana. We would indeed like to encourage the growth of a strong women's Sangha here as there are no such facilities elsewhere in Australia. So Ajahn Jagaro has contacted Ajahn Sumedho to seek his compassionate assistance and hopefully, sometime in the future, Ajahn Sumedho will judge the time right and the situation appropriate to send to Bodhinyana 'on loan' two senior 10-precept nuns to serve as teachers and examples to other women wishing to lead the Theravadin Buddhist monastic life. Building two comfortable secluded kutis in the forest on the nun's side will be the start of the present Sangha's efforts to foster this growth.

One of my own reasons for encouraging a women's Sangha here is the hope that one of our future nuns might be able to write - an author would do but I'd settle for an ex-journalist - and then my poor old brain won't be disturbed during its annual 3 months rest, it can just stay with the breath where it belongs, which is where it is going now 'cos this article is complete.

Ven Brahm

The New gateway into Bodhinyana Monastery
HELP NEEDED FOR THE KHMER SANGHA

The following is taken from a letter written by Phyllis Robinson who is the Programme Coordinator for the Khmer Buddhist Educational Assistance Programme.

I have recently returned from a trip to the Cambodian border camps in Thailand.
During our eight days on the border, we found that amongst 320,000 Khmer in the three camps, there are approximately 500 monks and novices and 200 nuns. The average age of the male Sangha is between 17 and 22 and the nuns are older; average age 50.

There are 5 wats or temples in Site II, and one each in Sites B and 8. We found minimal participation by the immense camp population in temple activities. We interviewed many Khmer and a common opinion is that the people don’t respect the monks because of their low education and lack of discipline. There is a lack of adequate leadership; a gross lack of qualified teachers.

To understand the collapse of such an integral part of Khmer culture requires an exploration into the roots of Khmer Buddhism and also a look at the recent history of the Khmer under Pol Pot. My reason for sharing this with you and other Buddhist Centres across the country is to gather support for a program of educational assistance to the Cambodian Sangha in the camps, in temples located in the U.S. and eventually in Cambodia.

In 1973, there were 60-80,000 monks and nuns, 2850 wats or temples, and eighty-five percent of the Khmer population were Buddhists. Even in 1975, when Pol Pot took power, nearly one percent of the Khmer population was in the monkhood. Scattered documentation and eye witness reports indicate that in the first year of the Pol Pot reign of terror, all monks were disrobed.

The leading and most venerated monks were executed along with many others. A report from the 37th session of the Commission on Human Rights published in 1981 stated that, “in the years between 1975 and 1979, in their effort to destroy the Sangha and any of its remnants, the Khmer Rouge discarded old religious scriptures and books from storage, libraries and universities. Most of these existing texts were burned or thrown in the rivers or ponds. Those that were kept were used as rolling papers for cigarettes.”
It had taken the Khmer centuries to build and strengthen Buddhism; it took the Khmer Rouge only a few years to destroy it. Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1979. A government backed by Vietnam was installed and remains in power today. Buddhism was allowed to re-establish itself. According to a report of the First National Buddhist Conference in 1982, 700 monasteries were restored accommodating a total of approximately 3,000 monks. Among these, 800 were former monks. This figure indicates that between 59-79,000 monks had been eliminated under the Khmer Rouge period resulting in a significant loss of a generation of educated monks. And perhaps an entire generation of Khmer people had lost the foundation of their spirituality and culture.

Recent political developments have indicated that the Vietnamese-backed government in Cambodia is preparing to withdraw all troops from Cambodia by September of 1989. The Coalition of Prince Sihanouk is struggling to organize a transitional government. There is talk of repatriation and the camps are bustling with activities to prepare people for resettlement. It is the general opinion amongst the Khmer leadership that the revitalization of the Khmer Sangha is a key ingredient to restoring balance and stability in the process of reconstruction. How this will be done is a matter of discussion amongst Sangha leaders in exile, government leaders, and relief agency officials in the camps.

From our trip to the camps we were able to detect a genuine effort to restore a system of discipline and education amongst the young Sangha. We interviewed head monks and lay Buddhist leaders to discover what educational materials might be needed. It is the intention of our program, to produce audio and video taped lectures by leading Khmer monks resettled in the U.S. and Canada. We will then take these tapes to the border and work with lay Buddhist leaders in implementing them as teaching tools. We also have access to Khmer Buddhist texts that could be used to supplement the tapes. We envisage that both tapes and books are reproducible in large quantities and could be used in Cambodia as well. We anticipate that with the help of concerned people, we can begin production of the tapes by the Fall of 1989.

The Khmer people’s story is a story that must be told. Perhaps it will help us better understand the potential destructiveness of blind adherence to a particular belief system or ideology, the extremes of which could have led to the destruction of the culture and religion of a whole nation of people. A valuable lesson for us all.

*If you would like to help support this worthy project please contact Ven Ajahn Jagaro.*
VINAYA

This is the fourth article in the series about VINAYA, that body of monastic rules and traditions binding on every Buddhist monk and nun. In this article I will discuss ‘WRONG LIVELIHOOD’.

Buddhist monastics are called bhikkhus (monks) and bhikkhunis (nuns), which literally means men and women who rely on alms for the necessities of life. That is, they depend solely on the generosity of lay supporters. However, some monks, dissatisfied with the amount and the uncertainty of alms, have tried to secure a more comfortable life style by practising various crafts or trades and expecting a fee. This is called WRONG LIVELIHOOD.

An exhaustive list of examples of wrong livelihood can be found in the discourse of the Buddha called ‘Brahmajata Sutta’ which is in the section of the Tipitika called ‘Digha Nikaya’. It includes such “priest-craft” as: palmistry, fortune-telling, interpreting dreams, determining propitious dates or sites, exorcism, reciting protective charms, incanting malevolent spells (!), foretelling a persons remaining life span, running errands for laypeople, casting astrological charts and so on.

Even earning a living in, what would be for a layman, a good way such as practising medicine is for a monk wrong livelihood. There is a story in the Dhammapada Commentary of such a monk who did very well out of practising as a doctor. One day, this monk received the most delicious almsfood from a man whom he had just successfully treated. On the way back to the monastery, he met Ven. Sariputta, one of the leading disciples of the Buddha, proudly told him of his doctoring and offered some of the delicacies to him. Ven Sariputta was dismayed and walked away without saying a word. Ven Sariputta loved the simple tradition of depending on alms and he would not eat what was obtained by breaking the precepts, in this case through practising a craft for personal gain. When he returned to the monastery and related this incident to the Buddha, the Buddha recited the following stanzas:

"Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu who is shameless is coarse in thought, word and deed. He is arrogant like unto a crow. He will secure a comfortable living through unlawful means. On the other hand, life for a monk who has a sense of moral shame is not easy"

Dhammapada 244/245
It is allowable for a monk skilled in medicine to treat people staying at the monastery, even to help those visiting – but he is not to make a business of it.

In the texts there are several stories where the Buddha, seeing an occasion to be of service, stopped while on almsround to give an inspiring teaching to a layman. The layman would then run into the house and get some food to offer as a ‘reward’ but the Buddha would always refuse it. He explained that Enlightened Ones do not teach for a fee. Teaching for personal gain is also wrong livelihood. Teaching is a monastic’s way of giving, of serving, and it should never be regarded as a profession, selling the teachings for material gain.

A corrupt monk who tells fortunes for money, gives talks in exchange for gifts or practises any similar form of wrong livelihood has a special name in Buddhism – he is called allajji (rhymes with apache and is just as dangerous!) – meaning ‘shameless’. Good monks are advised to shun shameless ones and if a group of allajji monks congregate in a neighbourhood the good monks are to go there and send them away (as in Sanghadisesa 13).

To emphasise the seriousness of the offence of wrong livelihood there is a well known quote from the Suttas. (The quote should be well known, anyway, for it was printed in our newsletter two issues back!)

“There are, monks, these four stains because of which the sun and moon glow not, shine not, blaze not. What are these four?

Rain clouds....snow clouds....smoke and dust....and an eclipse. Even so, monks , there are these four stains because of which monks and nuns glow not, shine not, blaze not. What are these four? Drinking alcohol....indulging in sexual intercourse....accepting the use of gold or money....and OBTAINING GIFTS THROUGH WRONG LIVELIHOOD.”

Anguttara Nikaya 2.53

It is clear, then, what the Buddha thought of ‘alajji’ monks who predict lottery numbers, give astrology readings and so on, for personal gain. They are grouped along with a monk who gets drunk, has sexual intercourse or keeps money. Monks who practise wrong livelihood are a stain on the Sangha and should be known as such by the laypeople.

Ven Brahm
COMMITEE NEWS

Teachings
Since the time of the Buddha, the three month period from mid-July to mid-October has been the time of the monastic retreat, the Rains Retreat. Even so, in every past year our Sangha has always been willing to relinquish the peace and quiet of their retreat at least twice every week in order to keep up the regular teachings at Dhammadloka Centre, in Armadale and elsewhere. This year we tried an experiment wherein the entire Sangha spent the whole month of August at their retreat in the monastery so that, uninterrupted by official duties, they could devote all their energy to meditation and study. This has been their first extended break as a community in 7 years. It was a sign of the depth, strength and confidence of our Buddhist Society that such a step could be taken without too much protest! The regular duties of the monks such as teaching at Dhammadloka and at Armadale were taken over by some of the more experienced of our members and they performed so magnificently that Ajahn Jagaro considered extending his break another month! However, he was prevailed upon to return to ‘work’ and normal service has been resumed since the start of September. Well done indeed to all of those who taught or assisted during the month of August.

Office
The old cluttered office in our city Vihara received major alterations in August when we installed new storage cupboards, shelves and desk spaces - what modern jargon calls ‘work stations’ - so that up to three people can work in the office simultaneously without falling out because they get in each other’s way. This upgrading of our office, the ‘nerve-centre’ of our operations in Western Australia (!), has been long overdue. Now more members can work more efficiently and more comfortably - but will more get done? Let us see.

Welfare
One important future user of our swish new office will almost certainly be our own, part-time, government funded, social worker. Lauree McLeod has already lodged an excellent submission to the government for funding such an important job and the signs are that the grant will be approved. The social worker is to serve ALL who make up our Buddhist Society irrespective of ethnic origin. For the present, Mr Muny Chhea, who is a social worker specifically for the Khmer refugee
community, will be making use of our office one day each week, preparing the way for our own social worker next year.

Our small social welfare group already works very hard, especially within the heavily disadvantaged refugee community. I am sure you will agree that it is a rare and wonderful sight to see people dedicate so much of their time and energy to serving others less well off. Of course, our volunteers neither ask nor expect any material reward, but they work so hard just to see one anguished face transform into a beaming, grateful smile. One can never praise this work enough nor can we cease from encouraging others to join in this work of the heart. There is much to do and so few to do it, so if you have the heart to join our welfare group please phone Lauree at the Vihara.

By the way, our free clothing pool for all folk in need remains open every Saturday from noon until mid afternoon.

Communal Land close to Bodhinyana
In the previous newsletter, we mentioned the possibility of a small number of Buddhist Society members joining together to purchase a block of land nearby to the monastery to be developed as a residential lay Buddhist community. As a few members have already contacted the Society to express their keen interest, we shall soon be arranging a meeting of all those who are interested to discuss possibilities and procedures. So, if you are interested in this venture but have not yet contacted one of the Committee members, then please let us know soon in order that you may be invited to the meeting as well. Contact the Vihara or else our President, Dennis Sheppard, on 367 3918.

Buddha Statues
The Buddhist Society has recently received a supply of small, but very beautiful, Buddha statues which are intended for members and friends of our Society. As it was felt inappropriate to sell such things, it was decided to allow each person who takes some of these statues to give whatever amount he or she thinks suitable as a donation to the Buddhist Society. More important to us than any money donated is the assurance we will require that whoever takes one of the statues will treat it with respect and care, appreciating its meaning as a religious symbol. The statues can be obtained at the Vihara by contacting Eddie Khoo.

Eddie is also masterminding the fund-raising scheme of producing clothing and other merchandise bearing the ‘logo’ of our own Buddhist Society for sale at the Vihara. Although our little logo will never give
you quite the same prestige as one of the more fashionable designer labels, the tee-shirts, wind-cheaters etc made available by Eddie will be much much cheaper and, more to the point, will help pay off the mortgage!

Bell for the Vihara

We have recently received a beautiful bell from two of our most generous supporters in Thailand for use at Dhammadloka. The Committee are still considering the best way to make use of this bell and would welcome ideas (brilliant ones) from members.

Mining

A couple of years ago, the Buddhist Society was very concerned to discover that a Mining Company had initiated the legal procedure to obtain rights to mine in the hills along the Darling Scarp, a large tract of beautiful bush-land that includes our monastery! At present, the company is in the long drawn-out process of applying for an exploration licence. To date, we have taken the following precautionary measures:

a) We have sought professional legal advice to find out how we stand, what could happen at worst, and what we should do to protect our monastery.

b) As a result, we have lodged a formal objection to the granting of such a licence in Perth Warden’s Court.

c) We have offered to negotiate directly with the Mining Company with the aim of having the land of the monastery together with a surrounding ‘buffer zone’ exempted from all mining-related disturbances.

d) We have held a meeting with the M.P. responsible for the area of Serpentine, Mr Bob Pearce, who also happens to be the Minister for the Environment.

At present there is no danger to the tranquillity of the monastery and its surrounds but we are remaining cautious. Jay Meddin has been handling this issue for us with laudable competence and he will keep us informed of any future developments in these newsletters.

Fund-Raising Dinners

Last July saw a return of the fund-raising dinners held at Dhammadloka. These now have the undisputable reputation of being wonderful occasions for all of us to come together socially, have a chat, eat
delicious food and, in so doing, help pay the bills of the Buddhist Society. This last dinner in July was presented by the Burmese Buddhist community and they did a magnificent job. The food was such a gastronomical extravaganza that the delicious aroma of all the exotic dishes drew in a large crowd of members, friends and (I am sure) passers by! Well done to the Burmese community. In September the Sri Lankan community will be presenting the fund-raising dinner (Sunday 24th September) an event not to be missed!

Another group of 90 Thai pilgrims will be coming in late October specifically to visit Bodhinyana Monastery and Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre. As in previous years, the Buddhist Society will extend a welcome to our guests by presenting them with a dinner on MONDAY NIGHT 23RD OCTOBER at Dhammaloka. Please come and help us show our visitors how warm, friendly and hospitable Australians can be - details will be announced at Dhammaloka or else ring 345 1711.

Tail piece
Finally, we welcome back to our Vihara our diligent caretaker, Peter Richardson, who spent some time very sick in hospital undergoing major surgery to his ‘plumbing’. May our care-taker live up to his title and take care of himself and get well soon.

Ven Brahms (for the committee)

**YOGA**

Our popular yoga classes continue on, stretching far into the future one could say. Christine Banks’ class is held every Thursday morning at 9.30 am and includes meditation and relaxation. The cost of each class is only $3.00 and for an extra dollar you can bring your kids who will be looked after in an expertly run creche in the house next door while you stretch at ease. On Wednesday evening at 6.00 pm Mark Wilshire conducts another Yoga Class and this also includes meditation and relaxation. Both these classes are held at Dhammaloka and new ‘twisters’ and old ‘benders’, i.e. beginners as well as experts, are welcome alike.
The Legend of the Buddha and the Golden Vixen

by Samanera Jayanto
Part Three and Final

With a laughter that sounded like harmonizing bells, the Buddha said to the Vixen. "What a charming deluded vixen you are. Investigate and you’ll see that what you call ‘Thought’ can be but verbal parroting with memory. Separate memory from the structure of thought, and then let me know what remains."

"You also seem to identify ‘Knowing’ with that which is learned, if that is the case, from whom or where have you learned or purchased that precious jewel called Awareness?"

"To answer your question - Yes! Thought and knowledge are interdependent, but ‘True Knowledge’, that is Awareness. It transcends both thought and knowledge. If that wasn’t the case, you may as well cover yourself with feathers and join the parrots on the trees!"

Imitating the Buddha’s laughter, but with less of a harmonizing sound, the Vixen began jumping about exclaiming “I’m aware! I’m aware! Therefore I am.”

Smiling, the Buddha replied. "I would rather say, Awareness! Awareness! Therefore it is. Because Awareness is not yours nor does it belong to anyone. Try to abandon your egocentric tendency to appropriate anything that you cognize or enters through your senses. Can’t you see that your attitude of thinking in terms of me and mine, limits, alienates, and condemns you to live as a puny entity. Abide instead in Awareness and the self-created bonds of your personality will dissolve."

With fire in her eyes, the Vixen spoke with calculated calm. "Who do you think you’re talking to? Such terms as limited, puny, and alienated do not apply to me. Have you failed to notice that you are in the presence of a magical being? I can fly, predict the future and many other wonders. Give me a task and I’ll prove to you that there is nothing that I can’t accomplish."

"Very well “ said the Buddha, “if you insist. Try to stop feeling hurt and angry with me. Take your time.”
The impatient Vixen couldn’t wait, and instead began shouting, “I can not! What have you done to me? I swear that you’ll pay for this humiliation.”

Formulating some magical words, the Vixen caused the ground to shake, and the earth opened at her legs pouring gushes of smoke that smelled rather fishy.

“What are you celebrating?” Asked the Buddha.

With rage in her voice the Vixen replied. “For the celebration I have in mind, I need to invite to the party certain hosts from down below that I’m sure will delight you with their presence. Just wait.”

Jumping inside the abyss that had just opened at her legs, the Vixen made her disappearing act look like the stage exit of an enraged Prima Donna.

Hours later, upon reaching the realm of Hell the Vixen saw the familiar sight of hordes of hellish creatures occupied in all sorts of activities. Some were banging their heads against the walls, others seemed to be plotting revenge plans, and the not so subtle were having plain temper tantrums.

What appeared to be high officials carried out more sophisticated tasks such as sticking pins and needles on little dolls that represented their hated ones.

As soon as the hellish creatures saw the Vixen, they gathered around her, for she used to go often to that place so as to exchange gossip for magical spells.

Feeling a bit overpowered by the fishy smell of the creatures, the Vixen spoke thus. “Hey fellows, have you noticed that you’re a bit heavy on the nose? A shower from time to time will not make you less hateable - you know? But never mind, I bring you some juicy gossip in return for a hit.”

“What is the name of the target?” Asked one of the hellish bosses.

“His name is the Buddha” answered the Vixen, “and I want you to drive him out of his wits.”

“You must be joking” exclaimed one of the creatures dropping his jaw, “Our Unvenerable Supreme Nastiness and unholy Boss Mara gave us the task to endarken the Buddha, and instead he enlightened some of our troupes. Abandon your plans you silly Vixen, that man is totally and irreversibly deluded by compassion.”
“You are a bunch of smelly cowards, that’s what you are”, said the Vixen. “I’ll ask the Mighty Naga for help, I’m sure that he is not afraid of the Buddha.”

Laughing their heads off, the hellish creatures said to the Vixen, “don’t you know that the Naga has also been reformed by the Buddha? It has now become the Guardian of the Buddha, and if it hears of your plans, it’ll bite your head off. Try the Gods, they may be feeling envious of the Buddha, and lend you a hand on your worthy task.”

As soon as the Vixen heard that statement she staged another disappearing act, this time heading to the Realm of the Gods.

On her way to heaven, the Vixen stole some fire crackers from a Chinese merchant, and upon arriving to that saintly abode, she set off the fire crackers making the place look like a Fourth of July celebrations.

Waving an unexploded fire cracker on her paw, the vixen began shouting. “Waky waky” blissy heads - I bring threatening news from the realm of the ignorant mortals. The Buddha is taking you out of business, if you want your daily prayers and sacrifices from those ignorant folks down below, you had better do something with the Buddha.”

“You insolent and misinformed quadruped” said a heavenly creature spreading his aura like a peacock, “do you think that all those roasted goats the mortals sacrifice in our name ever reach us? All we get here is the stench of burning flesh. It’s about time someone tried to stop that practice, and what about having to listen to millions of laments every day? Do you think that’s conducive to bliss? The Buddha is stopping all that noise by telling humans that they are responsible for their lives. Our only problem over here is that we are getting overcrowded with gods and radiant creatures. Leave the Buddha alone! You ignorant quadruped,” shouted the auric creature, “He is our only hope to all this madness - go away! Go away!”

Having lost all hope for revenge, the Vixen pondered until she realized, that the one thing she had not tried yet, was to use her powers of foreseeing the future. Concentrating herself as she had never done before, images began to appear. All the Vixen could see was countless deaths and rebirths until she got sick of seeing bones. But suddenly, the Vixen became transfixed staring at the emptiness of space with eyes that looked like ‘Black Holes’.
Through those ‘Black Holes’ like eyes, the Vixen saw herself swallowing the entire Universe, and when nothing remained but her own desire to keep swallowing, her body exploded giving birth to a new universe, which she immediately swallowed again. Horrified by her vision the Vixen ran for her life in search of the Buddha.

From here onwards, the legend of the Vixen is full of unauthenticated reports. Some say that the Vixen faithfully followed the Buddha wherever he went. Others say, that she retired to a cave, never to be seen again. There are also those who believe that on the wind she still rides.

The End

LIBRARY NEWS

Come and browse in our Library (next to the Hall). We have an excellent collection of Buddhist books for borrowing and for sale. Such popular titles as ‘A Still Forest Pool’ ‘The experience of insight’ etc., numerous books on Buddhist meditation and all aspects of the Dhamma, the Buddhist texts and their Commentaries, and books on all schools of Buddhism.

Our tape Library of over 500 tapes includes recordings of all the Dhamma talks given here as well as teachings from other monks and well known meditation teachers.

Copies of any of these tapes may be purchased for $2 each.

You do need to be a member of the Society to take items out, but it costs nothing to browse, look and chat.

Hope to see you there! ...Jan (Librarian)

OPENING TIMES: Fridays 3.00 pm - 10 pm
                  Saturdays 2.30 pm - 5 pm
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<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fridays</td>
<td>7.30-8.00pm</td>
<td>Guided sitting meditation</td>
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<td>8.00-9.00pm</td>
<td>A talk on Buddhism by one of the senior monks.</td>
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<td>Saturdays</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Food offering to the Sangha.</td>
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<td>3.00-4.00pm</td>
<td>Meditation and discussion</td>
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<td>3.00-4.00pm</td>
<td>Dhamma School for Children</td>
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<td>Conducted by Chris &amp; Jill</td>
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<td>Sundays</td>
<td>8.30-9.30am</td>
<td>Sitting Meditation</td>
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<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Food offering to the Sangha.</td>
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<td>Mondays and</td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Tai Chi classes</td>
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<td>Tuesdays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
<td>6.00-7.30pm</td>
<td>Hatha Yoga, meditation and relaxation classes.</td>
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<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Meditation for those south of the river at the Community and Health</td>
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<td>Development Centre, Armadale Kelmscott Hospital, Albany Hwy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursdays</td>
<td>9.30-11am</td>
<td>Yoga with Christine Banks costs $3.00 per class plus $1.00 extra for creche.</td>
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**Addresses**

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