THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF W.A.

NEWSLETTER
April - June BE 2539 (1996)
VESAKHA DAY

Sunday 2 June, 1996

The full moon day of Vesakha is an event of the utmost importance as it commemorates the Birth, Enlightenment and Parinibbana (final passing away) of the Buddha, who through his own efforts, was able to reach the pinnacle of perfection and wisdom. This gives us all much encouragement and inspiration in that, if we make the necessary effort, we too can attain the same enlightenment.

The unique and profound knowledge which arose in the Buddha on the night of his enlightenment is of great significance to human destiny as it provides a way by which all could cross to a world free of superstition, hatred and unhappiness to one of true love and happiness.

The Vesakha Day celebrations will be held at Dhammaloka Buddhist centre on Sunday 2 June and all are invited to attend.

PROGRAM FOR THE DAY

9.00am Gathering at Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre
9.30am Group chanting, taking of the Three Refuges and the Five or Eight Precepts, auspicious chanting and a Dhamma talk.
10.30am Offering of food to the monks and sharing of a meal together
2.00pm Taking of the Three Refuges and Five Precepts for new Buddhists, meditation and discussion for others.
4 - 6.00pm Tea and biscuits
   Meditation and discussion
6 - 6.30pm Traditional Sri Lankan Buddhist devotional songs
6.30 - 8.00pm Evening Ceremony including chanting, Dhamma talk and circumambulation of the shrine
NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMASAMBUDHASSA

Listening to Thought

In opening the mind, or ‘letting go’, we bring attention to one point on just watching, or being the silent witness who is aware of what comes and goes. With this vipassana (insight) meditation, we’re using the three characteristics of anicca (change), dukkha (unsatisfactoriness), anatta (not self) to observe mental and physical phenomena. We’re freeing the mind from blindly repressing, so if we become obsessed with any trivial thoughts or fears, or doubts, worries or anger, we don’t need to analyse it. We don’t have to figure out why we have it, but just make it fully conscious.

If you’re really frightened of something, consciously be frightened. Don’t just back away from it, but notice that tendency to try to get rid of it. Bring up fully what you’re frightened of, think it out quite deliberately, and listen to your thinking. This is not to analyse, but just to take fear to its absurd end, where it becomes so ridiculous you can start laughing at it. Listen to desire, the mad “I want this, I want that, I’ve got to have - I don’t know what I’ll do if I don’t have this, and I want that...”. Sometimes the mind can just scream away, “I want this!” - and you can listen to that.

If you are really frightened of something, consciously be frightened.

I was reading about confrontations, where you scream at each other and that kind of thing, say all the repressed things in your mind; this is a kind of catharsis, but it lacks wise reflection. It lacks the skill of listening to that screaming as a condition, rather than just as a kind of ‘letting oneself go’, and saying what one really thinks. It lacks that steadiness of mind, which is willing to endure the most horrible
thoughts. In this way, we're not believing that those are personal problems, but instead taking fear and anger, mentally, to an absurd position, to where they're just seen as a natural progression of thoughts. We're deliberately thinking all the things we're afraid of thinking, not just out of blindness, but actually watching and listening to them as conditions of the mind, rather than personal failures or problems.

So, in this practice now, we begin to let things go. You don't have to go round looking for particular things, but when things which you feel obsessed with keep arising, bothering you, and you're trying to get rid of them, then bring them up even more. Deliberately think them out and listen, like you're listening to someone talking on the other side of the fence, some gossipy old fish-wife. "We did this, and we did that, and then we did this and then we did that..." and this old lady just goes rambling on! Now, practise just listening to it here as a voice, rather than judging it, saying, "No, no, I hope that's not me, that's not my true nature," or trying to shut her up and saying, "Oh, you old bag, I wish you'd go away!" We all have that, even I have that tendency. It's just a condition of nature, isn't it? It's not a person. So, this nagging tendency in us - "I work so hard, nobody is ever grateful" - is a condition, not a person. Sometimes when you're grumpy, nobody can do anything right - even when they're doing it right, they're doing it wrong! That's another condition of the mind, it's not a person. The grumpiness, the grumpy state of mind is known as a condition: anicca - it changes; dukkha - it is not satisfactory; anatta - it is not a person. There's the fear of what others will think of you if you come in late: you've overslept, you come in, and then you start worrying about what everyone's thinking of you for coming in late - "They think I'm lazy". Worrying about what others think is a condition of the mind. Or we're always here on time, and somebody else comes in late, and we think, "They always come in late, can't they ever be on time!" That also is another condition of the mind.

I'm bringing this up into full consciousness, these trivial things, which you can just push aside because they are trivial, and one doesn't want to be bothered with the trivialities of life; but when we don't bother, then all that gets repressed, so it becomes a problem. We start feeling anxiety, feeling aversion to ourselves or to other people, or depressed;
all this comes from refusing to allow conditions, trivialities, or horrible things to become conscious.

Then there is the doubting state of mind, never quite sure what to do: there’s fear and doubt, uncertainty and hesitation. Deliberately bring up that state of never being sure, just to be relaxed with that state of where the mind is when you’re not grasping hold of any particular thing. “What should I do, should I stay or should I go, should I do this or should I do that, should I do anapanasati or should I do vipassana?” Look at that. Ask yourself questions that can’t be answered, like “Who am I?”. Notice that empty space before you start thinking it - “who?” - just be alert, just close your eyes, and just before you think “who”, just look, the mind’s quite empty, isn’t it? Then, “Who-am-I?”, and then the space after the question mark. That thought comes and goes out of emptiness, doesn’t it? When you’re just caught in habitual thinking, you can’t see the arising of thought, can you? You can’t see, you can only catch thought after you realise you’ve been thinking; so start deliberately thinking, and catch the beginning of a thought, before you actually think it. You take deliberate thoughts like, “Who is the Buddha?” Deliberately think that, so that you see the beginning, the forming of a thought, and the end of it, and the space around it. You’re looking at thought and concept in a perspective, rather than just reacting to them.

Say you’re angry with somebody. You think, “That’s what he said, he said that and he said this and then he did this and he didn’t do that right, and he did that all wrong, he’s so selfish... and then I remember what he did to so-and-so, and then...” One thing goes on to the next, doesn’t it? You’re just caught in this one thing going on to the next, motivated by aversion. So rather than just being caught in that whole stream of associated thoughts, concepts, deliberately think: “He is the most selfish person I have ever met.” And then the ending, emptiness.
"He is a rotten egg, a dirty rat, he did this and then he did that," and you can see, it's really funny, isn't it? When I first went to Wat Pah Pong, I used to have tremendous anger and aversion arise. I'd just feel so frustrated, sometimes because I never knew what was really happening, and I didn't want to have to conform so much as I had to there. I was just fuming. Ajahn Chah would be going on - he could give two hour talks in Lao - and I'd have a terrible pain in the knees.

So I'd have those thoughts: "Why don't you ever stop talking? I thought Dhamma was simple, why does he have to take two hours to say something?" I'd become very critical of everybody, and then I started reflecting on this and listening to myself, getting angry, being critical, being nasty, resenting, "I don't want this, I don't want that, I don't like this, I don't see why I have to sit here, I don't want to be bothered with this silly thing, I don't know...", on and on. And I kept thinking, "Is that a very nice person that's saying that? Is that what you want to be like, that thing that's always complaining and criticising, finding fault, is that the kind of person you want to be?" "No! I don't want to be like that."

But I had to make it fully conscious to really see it, rather than believe in it. I felt very righteous within myself, and when you feel righteous, and indignant, and you're feeling that they're wrong, then you can easily believe those kinds of thoughts: "I see no need for this kind of thing, after all, the Buddha said... the Buddha would never have allowed this, the Buddha; I know Buddhism!" Bring it up into conscious form, where you can see it, make it absurd, and then you have a perspective on it and it gets quite amusing. You can see what comedy is about! We take ourselves so seriously, "I'm such an important person, my life is so terribly important, that I must be extremely serious about it at all moments. My problems are so important, so terribly important; I have to spend a lot of time with my problems because they're so
important.” One thinks of oneself somehow as very important, so then think it, deliberately think, “I’m a Very Important Person, my problems are very important and serious.” When you’re thinking that, it sounds funny, it sounds silly, because really, you realise you’re not terribly important - none of us are. And the problems we make out of life are trivial things. Some people can ruin their whole lives by creating endless problems, and taking it all so seriously.

If you think of yourself as an important and serious person, then trivial things or foolish things are things that you don’t want. If you want to be a good person, and a saintly one, then evil conditions are things that you have to repress out of consciousness. If you want to be a loving and generous type of being, then any type of meanness or jealousy or stinginess is something that you have to repress or annihilate in your mind. So whatever you are most afraid of in your life that you might really be, think it out, watch it. Make confessions: “I want to be a tyrant!”, “I want to be a heroin smuggler!” “I want to be a member of the Mafia!”, “I want to...” Whatever it is. We’re not concerned with the quality of it any more, but the mere characteristic that it’s an impermanent condition: it’s unsatisfactory, because there’s no point in it that can ever really satisfy you. It comes and it goes, and it’s not self.

from Mindfulness: The Path to the Deathless - The Meditation Teaching of Venerable Ajahn Sumedho
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VINAYA

This is the third article in the series about the Vinaya, the body of monastic rules and traditions binding on every Buddhist monk and nun. In this article I will discuss the four Parajika - the disrobing offences.

The core of the monastic discipline is a list of rules called the Patimokkha. In the bhikkhu-patimokkha (for the monks) there are 227 rules, while in the bhikkhuni-patimokkha (for the nuns) there are 311 rules. The first four rules in the patimokkha, for both monks and nuns, are the four Parajika. The word parajika (in the ancient Indian language called Pali) is usually translated as ‘making the doer defeated’. In effect it means that the offender MUST DISROBE. No ceremony or trial is required. From the instant the transgression is completed, the perpetrator automatically loses his or her status as a Buddhist monk or nun. Obviously these four rules were considered by the Buddha to be extreme violations of the spiritual ethic and a major obstacle in the path to enlightenment. They considered such gross behaviour on the part of a monk or nun that the penalty of disrobal was for life! Such a one could not simply re-ordain after a period of grace.

The four transgressions which incur a Parajika, the penalty of automatic disrobal, are as follows:

1. Engaging in sexual intercourse with another being of either sex.

2. Stealing something of value (which includes smuggling, cheating or deliberately avoiding payment of a tax).

3. Purposely killing a human being or encouraging him or her to commit suicide (this includes inciting another to murder somebody and it also includes convincing a woman to have an abortion.

4. Boasting that one has realised a high spiritual attainment, knowing that one is lying. For example, claiming to be enlightened, to be Maitreya Buddha, to have entered Jhana (deep meditation-ecstasy) or that one can read minds when one knows that one hasn’t reached any of these states.
Should any monk or nun do any of these then you may know them as no longer holding the status of Buddhist monk or nun. They must disrobe. Should they attempt to hide their transgression and not disrobe then it is said that the bad karma produced is extreme indeed!

In these four disrobing offences there is no excuse for ignorance. In a story related in the Buddhist scriptures\(^1\), a newly ordained monk who had not as yet been instructed in the Vinaya was cajoled by his former wife into having sexual intercourse with her. When he told the other monks of this they approached the Buddha and asked what should be done. The Buddha decreed that the offending monk had to disrobe and in future all monks were to be told of the Four Things Not to be Done, the four *Parajika*, immediately after they have been ordained. Indeed, instructing the new monk in these four rules has now become part of the Ordination Ceremony itself, So there can be no excuse!

References


*Ven. Brahm*
SANGHA NEWS

We haven’t had a good scandal in this monastery for years. That is, not since one of the residents was caught in the act, not only secretly stealing from the kitchen storeroom at night but also shamelessly cohabiting with the opposite sex! We dealt with the disturbing case quickly and most severely, only letting a few trusted people know. The impudent offender, a recalcitrant mouse, was soon captured along with many of its accomplices and later released outside of Karnet Prison Farm, just up the road. I expect it is still there, serving time as a result of its enor-mouse bad karma.

Isn’t it so that the mention of ‘scandal’ grips our attention and makes us read on? This fact makes it difficult for me to write an interesting article about a monastery like ours which is the nearest thing to a scandal-free zone. The closest that I can offer, still being truthful, is to report “MANY BIG SANDALS AT BODHINYANA MONASTERY THIS YEAR!”, for it is true that some of the novices have very big feet. You may appreciate, now, how hard I have to try to make the uneventful an event arousing some interest.

For instance, the day before I left for Thailand in mid-January, at a dana ceremony for a Sri Lankan family, I performed the custom of blessing some ‘auspicious thread’ according to the old tradition. It happened that the Sri Lankan cricket team were in Perth that day and were due to play an important match with the Australian side later that afternoon. Before I thought carefully about the consequences of my actions, I blessed eleven pieces of thread to give to the Sri Lankan cricket team, many of whom were devout Buddhists. It reached them and they wore the thread during the match. Oh my goodness! A little thought showed that if the Sri Lankan cricket team beat the Australians and it was found out why, then I would be in BIG TROUBLE with my fellow Australians who regard cricket as a major religion and would charge me with treason or something worse! Then, if the Australian side won, I would be in BIG TROUBLE with the cricket loving Sri Lankans who’d lose their faith in the monks and stop coming to the temple! The only thing for me to do was to quickly leave the country,
which I did as soon as possible early the following morning. The fact that I was due to go anyway was just my good fortune.

Which brings me to my trip to Thailand in January and February, which was most successful. Not only did I manage to avoid the heat, in more ways than one, I also managed a long visit to Head Office - my name for Wat Pah Pong, the central monastery of our tradition where Ajahn Chah lived. I feel that it is very important for our monks to keep in good contact with the source of our tradition and for the senior monks in Thailand to have no apprehension over this ‘branch office’ in Western Australia. Moreover, it was personally reassuring to receive from the senior monks of our tradition so much good will and support for my new role as the abbot. Thanks to their wonderful kindness and understanding, they formally granted permission for me to perform ordination ceremonies in Bodhinyana Monastery, thereby eliminating the recurring problem here in Australia of finding a suitable preceptor to conduct the ordination ceremony. Our first All-Australian ordination ceremony, with me as preceptor and our four home-grown novices as

Blessing the "Dragon boat". One of the many tasks of our monks.
candidates, will take place on Sunday 31st March. By the time you read this article, the ceremony will be over, there will be four new monks at Bodhinyana Monastery and the historical event will truly be history.

Talking of history, our monastery is so delightfully behind the times that it is somewhat ‘stone-age’. I say this since we have just completed one of the ramp-paths leading to the new dining room by building it in stone. Following the ancient religious instruction “Let them without sin cast the first stone” the monks cast the first stone in concrete and then let the remainder be done by a professional stone mason. It is not that we monks are lazy, but that we were afraid of the gossip were it known that some monks were enjoying the sound of hard rock, and of the even worse scandal were there to be an accident on the job and I had to report that “due to high spirits one of our monks was found stoned!” Anyway, the pathway was stoned, not one of the monks, and it now provides easy access to the higher realms at our monastery. Beneath the stone path we have built two small closets but, in this scandal-free monastery, the closets are not for hiding skeletons. Instead, our skeletons are hidden in the monastery wall, or rather, we install the ashes of the departed in the stone piers of our monastery boundary wall. This is becoming increasingly popular. I mean, not that dying is becoming increasingly popular (for most, it still remains the last resort), but that depositing the remains of the departed loved ones within the monastery grounds, in a useful and beautiful structure, is becoming ever more popular. So popular, in fact, that people are dying to get in our wall! There is still plenty of space left in our wall so please do not think that, to be sure of your place, you need to hurry up and die! There’s no need for you to go up the wall, as it were, to get into our wall.

Despite our wall, some of our monks ‘escaped’ in the past three months. ‘Departed loved ones’ included Ven. Nyanavisuddhi who went to Adelaide, Sydney and then to Melbourne to help with some teaching. However, Ven. Nyanavisuddhi is due to return here in late April. Then I went to Thailand on the run from the law. The Law of Karma, that is, for blessing that thread. As for visiting monks, there have been very few since the new year. All in all, it has been very quiet out here in the monastery.
Indeed, keeping quiet and out of trouble is the profession of a Buddhist monk. Some people in Perth told me that they had visited this monastery one afternoon when no-one was here. In fact at the time there were many monks here, but we were all keeping quiet, meditating in silence, to the point that our visitor concluded no noise meant no people. It is a sign of a good Buddhist monastery that when there are many monks resident, it still appears as if deserted. You see, when monks meditate, they disappear into silence and just fade...

Faded away for now,
Ajahn Brahm

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'GRANT-IN-AID' COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Buddhist Society's 'Grant-in-Aid' services plays an important part in the community services of the Buddhist Society. The GIA service is funded by the Dept of Immigration, Ethnic and Multicultural Affairs.

Among the services offered by the GIA workers, Ying and Karu, are information on services for the newly arrived migrant, aged care, cultural and spiritual services for youth, women's issues. They also help clients gain access to mainstream services, and advocate on behalf of the Buddhist clients to raise awareness among other service providers such as legal, health and welfare etc on the importance of providing culturally appropriate services.

These services are offered to all communities with particular emphasis on services to newly arrived migrants.

Our GIA workers have been asked on several occasions to provide crisis accommodation for needy children from a Buddhist background and are looking for potential foster homes if this need should arise again. If you would like to discuss this further, or if you need help or advice, please contact either Ying or Karu between 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday on 344 4220.
MEDITATION RETREATS

We are fortunate that we are regularly offered the opportunity of attending meditation retreats with skilled and compassionate teachers. Those who attended the weekend retreat in March which was led by Ajahn Brahm and held in the lovely location of Safety Bay, were grateful for the opportunity to work on their practice under his skilful guidance.

There will be a number of retreats held during this year and registration forms will be available from Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre four weeks prior to the start of each retreat.

June 21 - 23  
*Weekend Retreat* at St Joseph’s Retreat House, Safety Bay

Mon July 15 - Sun 21  
*Seven day Retreat* with Ven Gunaratana at the Redemptorist Retreat House, North Perth. We are very pleased that Ven Gunaratana has accepted our invitation to return to Perth to take this retreat.

November 22 - 24  
*Weekend Retreat* at St Joseph’s Retreat House, Safety Bay

December 13 - 22  
*Nine day Retreat* at the Redemptorist Retreat House, North Perth. This is an excellent opportunity to gain meditation experience in peaceful surroundings.

If you have any queries regarding these retreats, please phone Ron or Bianca on 299 7185
SOCIETY NEWS

The Annual General Meeting on 24 February marked the official end of another year of the Society and saw the confirmation of the new committee, an amendment to the Constitution and the passing of a motion giving a life membership.

Reports of the year’s activities were presented by the outgoing Committee and included the following points:

- membership is now 560 - 150 full members and 410 associate members. Membership fees are an important part of the Society’s income and are used for the library, maintaining Dhammaloka, the printing of the newsletter, power, water etc.

- there were a number of purchases and improvements during the year including a bore which was connected to the reticulation, additional chairs for the hall, new tables for the community hall shrine, new curtains and pelmets in the community hall and donations boxes

- there are now two official marriage celebrants for the Buddhist Society, Dennis Sheppard and Jill Hanna, enabling the Society to offer a service to people who wish their wedding ceremony to be conducted in the context of the Buddhist teachings.

- the outgoing committee and other long standing members of the Society, participated in several strategic planning sessions during the year to begin the process of developing a longer term plan for the Society. This work will be handed over to the incoming committee for further developments

- the Society has now established a ‘Nun’s Monastery Account’ which has been approved for tax deductibility for donations. This is the first step towards the long term goal of establishing a female sangha in Western Australia

- the library continues to provide a much appreciated service. During the year the hard working volunteers have introduced a ‘new
meditators' section, packaged the Essentials of Buddhism tapes and increased the tapes and books available for loan and for sale.

- the Introduction to Buddhist Meditation classes have continued throughout the year and are always well attended. The Advanced Dhamma Classes are continuing and, in the words of Ajahn Brahm 'will continue until everyone is enlightened'!

- four retreats were held during the year - 3 weekend retreats and one nine day retreat, giving meditators a wonderful opportunity to do some intensive practice under the guidance of a senior monk

- for the first time, a citizenship ceremony was held at Dhammaloka giving a number of our members the opportunity of receiving a blessing from a senior monk and taking the five precepts just prior to becoming an Australian citizen.

- the welfare work which is made possible by the grant received from the Dept of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, continues to provide a welcome service to members of the Buddhist community with particular emphasis on newly arrived migrants, youth and the elderly. It was noted that throughout the year several approaches were made by the Dept for foster homes for Buddhist children in need. If you may be able to offer help in this way please contact Ying or Karu at Dhammaloka

- The outgoing President thanked all who had helped in any way throughout the year, commenting that a great number of people offer help in many ways - through physical help and financial donations. All of the efforts of members and friends are greatly appreciated.

The incoming committee was confirmed as:

President                Don Weerakody
Vice President           Michael Ngo
Secretary                Sally Lee
Treasurer                Ananda Thilakasiri
Assistant Treasurer      Rodney George
Committee Members
Shirley Jackson
Linda Stevenson
Chay Hua
Bronwyn Murphy
Craig Manning
Ainsley Haslegrave

Since the Annual General Meeting Ananda Thilakasiri has had to resign due to work pressure and we are grateful to Rodney George who has agreed to fill the role of Treasurer. Rodney will be assisted by Ainsley Haslegrave.

During the meeting it was unanimously agreed that Life Membership be conferred on John Cianciosi in appreciation of his many years of dedicated service to the Buddhist Society of Western Australia as Venerable Ajahn Jagaro. Members expressed their thanks and abiding gratitude to him for his teachings, achievements and wise counsel which has left the Society with the ability to continue practising the Dhamma and spreading it to others.

If you are hard of hearing, or know someone who is, please note that we are now able to offer a special service to people who wear hearing aids. The Society has installed an audio loop system in the meditation hall at Dhammadhoka under the chairs to the left of the hall when entering. If you sit in this area you will find it easier to hear.

The new committee are keen to hear from any member who has some ideas or suggestions regarding the running of the Society. If you have any comments at all, or would like to offer help please call the new President, Don Weerakody on 326 2987 or leave a note in the suggestion box at the Vihara.

With metta
The Committee
A TRIP THROUGH TIME

It was a trip from hell. The road was impossibly narrow and continuously winding, much of it was being dug up, it was impossible to see around corners and the driver seemed oblivious to the danger of passing on blind corners - he simply put his hand on the horn and passed anything in his way. We’d look out the window and see no road whatsoever - simply a straight drop down the side of the mountain. Well, we decided, if we started to go the side of the mountain (which seemed highly probable) we’d concentrate our minds and chant “Namo tassa ...” But it seemed the devas were looking after us, for we eventually arrived safely in Bhairahawa, about four kilometres from the Indian border in Nepal. We were here to visit the birthplace of the Buddha, Lumbini.

The following morning we arranged a jeep and driver to take us out for the day, and off we set on our pilgrimage. After a month in Nepal we’d become accustomed to terrible roads, and the road to Lumbini was no exception. As this part of Nepal is very flat, there are many bicycles, carts and pedestrians everywhere, but eventually we arrived at the gates of the site of the area where the Buddha was born. Apart from a few roadside stalls outside the gates selling poor quality trinkets, there were certainly no signs of commercialism here - no one could ever accuse the Nepali Government of cashing in on the tourist aspects of this significant place! Many millions of dollars from all over the world have been poured into the restoration of the archaeological remains of the stupas, pillars and associated buildings at Lumbini, but its difficult to see where it has been spent. Fortunately there have been no elaborate reconstructions, nor interpretations - what has been uncovered has only been repaired and restored.

The Buddhist scriptures tell of how the Buddha’s mother, Mayadevi, was travelling to her parents home to give birth when she stopped at the beautiful flowering grove of Lumbini, bathed in the pool and the future Buddha was born as she held onto a large tree. Unfortunately there is no sign of the beautiful flowering grove as in this area, as in much of Nepal there are now very few trees, however the pool and what is thought to be the original tree, is now there for all the world to see. There are quite a number of other remains too - the pillars built by Emperor Ashoka and the ruins of
many stupas which date back to the time of the Buddha, Theravadan and Tibetan temples, and pilgrim accommodation of a very basic nature.

Eventually we persuaded our guide to take us the 25kms to Kapilvastu which is thought to be the site of the palace where the (soon to be) Buddha grew up. We didn’t understand the reluctance of our guides until we were on our way. The 25kms took over two hours to cover as the road was unbelievable bad. The road, or rather the potholed track, was narrow, very rough and teeming with bicycles, carts and the inevitable people carrying enormous loads. The further we travelled the more entertainment we provided for the local people - two middle aged western women travelling in the back of a jeep is apparently an uncommon sight in that part of Nepal and they seemed to find us extremely amusing. We stopped to buy oranges in a little village and were immediately surrounded by curious and amused locals!

Carving found at Lumbini depicting the birth of Prince Siddartha.
As we neared the site of the palace we began to wonder just how much had changed since the time of the Buddha. The scriptures speak of many groves of trees and this has certainly changed as the land is completely cleared, but we wondered if the people now lived very differently than they did two and a half thousand years ago. Near the western gateway of the palace there is a small village of mud walled, thatched roofed huts, with no apparent sanitation and the wooden wheeled carts laden with hay are still drawn by oxen. The surrounding fields provide crops of rice and wheat and people work the land by hand. Although there is very little to see here except footings of the palace walls and gates, we were quite overawed by a sense of history - it was here that Prince Siddartha made the decision to leave the worldly life in search of the ultimate truth - a decision that was to have such profound implications for the world.

The day we spent in this area will long be remembered by us both and was undoubtedly the highlight of our trip to Nepal. It sometimes seemed that the whole of the country was steeped in ancience and tradition, but for us these places, more than any others, were especially awe-inspiring. The trials of the journey were forgotten, and we felt privileged to have had such an experience.
DHAMMALOKA LIBRARY UPDATE

The library at Dhammaloka has a bookshop with many titles available that are suitable for the beginner to the experienced. Many of these books are probably only available in Perth from our bookshop as we purchase them from a number of overseas publishers and we are then able to sell them at a very reasonable price. If you are not in Perth we can supply you with a prepared book list with prices and will take mail orders. If you'd like to receive this please drop a note to: The Bookshop, Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre, 18 Nanson Way, Nollamara 6061.

Among the titles on sale are a number of beautifully illustrated children's books. Some of those are:

Prince Siddhartha - the story of Prince Siddhartha and how he became Buddha, the Awakened One. It is a story of peace and fearlessness and love and is an inspiration to children of all cultures and ages. $21.

The Lord of the Parakeets - this is one of the Jataka Tales, stories of the Buddha's many lives on this earth as a Bodhisattva. They illustrate that everyone's life is determined by their own actions of body, speech and mind. $1

Rahula Leads the Way - a lovely book illustrating many situations in a child's day and the value of acting with compassion and mindfulness. $6.

Can you help?

Dhammaloka library provides a wonderful service in having available audio tape copies of the many Dhamma talks which have been given at the Centre and on retreats for many, many years. These tapes are available for loan and for sale and bring many hours of teachings to our members and friends. Over the years a number of the master tapes have been either lost or damaged and we are seeking to replace these. If you have any of the tape numbers listed below, it would be greatly appreciated if you would loan them to the library so that copies can be made. The numbers required are:

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

DHAMMALOKA BUDDHIST CENTRE NOLLAMARA

Friday
7.00 - 7.20pm  Chanting
7.30 - 8.00pm  Guided sitting meditation
8.00 - 9.00pm  A talk on Buddhism by one of the senior monks

Saturday
10.30am  Food offering to the Sangha
3.00 - 4.15pm  Instruction, meditation and discussion. Separate classes for new and experienced meditators. A four week Introduction to meditation course begins on the first Saturday of each month

Sunday
8.30 - 9.15am  Sitting meditation
9.15 - 9.45am  Walking meditation and interviews
9.45 - 10.30am  Sitting meditation
10.30am  Food offering to the Sangha
12.00 - 1.30pm  Dhamma school for children is on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month
3.00 - 4.30pm  Advanced Dhamma class (2nd & 4th)

Wednesday
7.30 - 8.30pm  Unguided meditation followed by an informal discussion

SOUTH OF THE RIVER

Tuesday
7.00 - 9.00pm  Meditation Instruction
Meditation and Dhamma talk at Armadale-Kelmscott Hospital
Enquiries to Dave Reed, 399 1411

ADDRESSES

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