



# One Heart- One Mind

*The Newsletter of the Association  
of Engaged Buddhists*

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## Meditation & Dhamma Teaching

7.30pm every Monday night.

- Join with others in sitting practice.

7.30pm every Wed night.

- Meditation evenings include a Dhamma talk followed by around half an hour of guided sitting practice. Beginners or more experienced meditators are equally welcome.
- There is no charge for the teachings although donations are welcome as this is Sangha Lodge's only means of support.

## Dana Days

*Dana Days are held on the first Sunday of each month. Attendees bring food to offer to the Sangha and to share with each other. This is a great way to show respect for the Sangha and enjoy a delicious meal with others in the lay community.*

*Please note that we must start promptly at 10:30am in order for the Sangha to finish eating by noon. The next Dana Day will be Sunday 6th February 2016*

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## Living Buddha, Living Christ

Dear Friends,

As we come again to the end of yet another year we approach the festival of Christmas for 2015. This is meant to be a time of peace and goodwill and yet the world in which we find ourselves dwelling seems filled with anything but peace and a great deal of violence, ill-will and hatred. All over our world people are being killed and maimed in the name of one ideology or another or out of sheer hatred, ignorance and frustration. The recent terrible attacks on innocent civilians in Paris and the now regular occurrence of yet more gun violence in the United States of America are but two examples. Terrible murders and hostage taking in Africa and the ongoing torment in Syria and many other parts of the Middle East keep erupting into our consciousness and

bring us more fear, dread and perhaps despair.

Religion as the Buddha warned is like a venomous serpent which if not held properly will turn around and bite us producing either death or great harm. We have even witnessed the distressing phenomena of Buddhist monks in Burma encouraging or inciting others to violent acts against certain ethnic minorities. Truly we find ourselves in a sea of suffering, the ocean of dukkha tossed on the waves of samsara. Many people feel that there is no safety to be found anywhere.

Surely this is a time to really reflect on the most basic aspects of our Buddhist practise and to try to bring the gift of Dhamma to our fellow sufferers. The gift of Dhamma I am talking about is not a collection of books, texts or doctrines but rather the impact that a personal embodiment of the core of Dhamma, the heart of the Buddha's way can have on others when we truly embody it ourselves. In order to do this we have first to have taken and continue

to take real refuge in the Triple gem of the Buddha, Dhamma and Arya Sangha. This then needs to be manifested in our Sila or ethical, moral behaviour with regard to others and ourselves. The way we behave is the real proof of our commitment to refuge and our walking the path toward the ending of suffering. How we think, speak and act out of a heart filled with Dhamma speaks more eloquently to those around us than any amount of preaching or lecturing. This will then open up the heart of Panna or Wisdom in others and ourselves. The inevitable fruit of this according to the Buddha himself is the movement toward and the manifestation of the deepest peace of Nibbana.

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During this Christmas festival and holiday season it would be a great thing if we could try to make an effort to do this; to practise this heart Dhamma. We will not always succeed but we can always recognise with wisdom our mistakes and shortcomings and begin again our efforts trusting in the Wisdom and goodness of the Buddha Dhamma. If ever there were a time when the world needed the peace at the heart of the Christmas story it is surely now. As disciples of the Buddha we can help to manifest this peace by practising with appamāna (the removal of boundaries or limits) and developing the four Brahmaviharas of Loving Kindness, Compassion, Joyfulness at the well-being and good fortune of others and Equanimity.

The very popular and well-known Vietnamese Buddhist Monk, Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh, wrote an extremely popular book titled "Living Buddha, Living Christ" which helps explain how both traditions can understand each other.

A Bodhisattva is one who forgoes their own benefit to help others and has compassion, kindness and love for all beings. Jesus definitely helped others in ways we still experience today by showing the world immense compassion, love, kindness, and beauty and how to incorporate that into their lives and help others. So for Buddhists, we can see Jesus as a blessing to this Earth. Many of you will recall this wonderful passage,

"Beings are numberless; I vow to liberate them.

Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to end them.

Dharma gates are boundless; I vow to enter them.

The Buddha Way is unobtainable; I vow to obtain it."

On a happier note on December 2nd we celebrated the 96th birthday of Mrs. Win Parry (the mother of our just retired President, Sue Toohey). We celebrated with some special chanting of blessings for Win and by offering her a special gift of a small portable wooden carved shrine featuring the Buddha and the two great Bodhisattvas, Kuan Yin Pu'tsa and Mahasthamaputra. The carving is beautiful and very intricate and all at Sangha Lodge and the Association wish that Win will continue to receive the blessings of the Buddha and all the Bodhisattvas. Win is a most loving and loved elder filled with wisdom and loving-kindness. She said that she was blessed to have her Sangha but we are truly blessed that she brings her presence to us. May she be well and happy and may she continue to be a source of happiness, love and blessing for all other suffering beings. Happy Birthday Win! What an achievement! Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu!

A special thank you to our retiring committee members, Sue, Caroline, John and Russell for all their work and especially to Sue for such a long commitment as President. May they be well and happy now and always. Welcome also to our new committee members. Thank you to all of you who have contributed so much to the Association over the past twelve months. I wish all of you a very happy and peace-filled Christmas and a New Year filled with contentment.

With metta, great gratitude and every blessing,

**Bhante Tejjadhammo**

## Walk for Wellbeing

On Sunday October 25, 33 members and friends participated in to 2015 Walk for Wellbeing. These walks were regular events in the Associations calendar some time ago and it was felt we should start them again considering how enjoyable they were.

The day was comfortably warm and clear, just the right kind of weather for a comfortable seven Km walk around Iron Cove. We were hoping that the walk would be a family affair so it was wonderful to see that several of our friends had brought their children along. The circuit is well laid out and there are beautiful water views for the entire stretch. At one point, our group merged with the much larger one for the Cancer Council's fundraising walkathon so it was obviously a popular time and location for such events.

By the time walkers returned to the starting point, our numbers had been joined by several others who brought extra food and Meng had sausages ready ready to serve as the participants signed back in.

Thank you to all those who supported the Walk for Well Being, through their registration fee and, sponsorships and to those who contributed food.

You can see more photos from our walk at the Association website:  
<http://www.engagedbuddhists.org.au/gallery/walk-wellbeing-2015/>

## CLOSING DATES FOR SANGHA LODGE

Sangha Lodge will be closed from Thursday 17 December and open again on Wednesday 27 January 2016.





# Association News

*K K Lim*

## Annual General Meeting

The Association's annual general meeting was held on 1 November 2015 with a large number in attendance. Sue Toohey, the president, spoke of the many events held during the year including another successful Food Fair, fund raising projects and numerous retreats. Vejjasala has also progressed well, thanks again to the efforts of volunteers, with improvements to the buildings and support in cleaning and cooking. The tireless work of Lean Lee and generous donors has helped to keep finances in good shape to meet ongoing expenses at Sangha Lodge and Vejjasala.

A new committee was also elected, with four new members replacing Sue, John Wagner, Caroline Lurie and Russell Bastock who have decided to step down after many years of invaluable service. We should all be grateful for their generous dana which will continue to be offered by their volunteering work in AEB – Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

The newly elected committee members for 2016 are K K Lim, Lachlan Warner, Lean Lee, Meredith Tan, Robert Ljubcic, Lily Koo and Patricia Mcloughlin.

## Feeding the Homeless

The volunteer group under Jim Teoh catering for the homeless at Loaves and Fishes in conjunction with Exodus Foundation celebrated its 20 anniversary in November. Through the tremendous efforts and tenacity of the volunteers, thousands of needy people have benefitted from the work of unseen helpers as well as countless donors. One story of the joy people have received is the little boy who ran with a plate of noodles screaming "mum - I have meat!"

Sangha Lodge had at the start been instrumental in pushing forward this

initiative with Reverend Bill Crews as one of engagement with the wider community. We celebrate the continuing Dana of Jim and the many volunteers through the years.- Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

## Happy Birthday Win!

Happy 96th Birthday to Win Parry on 2 December. She is a great elder of the AEB who has been tireless in attending dharma talks, retreats and helping out at various activities particularly the food fair. We have shared in the guidance Sue Toohey has received from her mother's example and certainly look forward to many more years of Win's good practice.

## Youngest Member

Congratulations to Natasha and Noel Humphrey who welcomed Harry into their family. The birth of their son in November has brought lots of joy to the loving couple, two of our wonderful supporters helping to make Vejjasala into the place envisaged by the AEB.

## NSW Buddhist School

PAL Buddhist School held a fund raising dinner on 27 November at a function centre in Canley Vale. A group of about 20 AEB members were amongst the estimated 500 people who attended the dinner. The only Buddhist high school in New South Wales has been growing steadily with good academic results. We hope to be able to help expand dharma teaching through students.

## An Actor in our Midst

On 29 November, some members went to the New Theatre, Newtown to see the performance of Dinkum Assorted. This musical comedy featured Patricia Mcloughlin, our committee member, in a prominent role. Everyone appreciated the professionalism of the actors and

thoroughly enjoyed the show. The group capped a great night out with a fabulous meal at a Thai restaurant!

## New Year Picnic

The Association invites all members and friends to our New Year Picnic on Sunday, February 28, starting at 11am. A special invitation to all our stall holders and cooks from the Food Fair – we hope that on this day you will not have to do any cooking! We hope to have 'Satay Lady' Zaidah again to provide the satay sticks, plus a sausage sizzle on the barbeque. Feel free to bring a salad, drinks, or dessert

We will be in the same place as last year – Bellamy Picnic Area, Cumberland State Forest, 95 Castle Hill Rd, West Pennant Hills.

## In Memory of Richard Bernard Phillips

Richard Phillips passed away on 1 November 2015. He was one of the earliest supporters of Sangha Lodge and helped draft the constitution of the Association of Engaged Buddhists. After incorporation, he was elected as the first secretary of the Association. Many of the older members recall his exuberance and generosity as well as the joy of working with him. He contributed to the establishment and expansion of activities in those early days.

Richard was suddenly taken seriously ill some months ago, resulting in him needing home care. Bhante and some of our members visited him during the period. However, he could not recover and passed away peacefully.

The funeral ceremony on 6 November at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium was conducted by Bhante. His family, friends and several AEB members present to celebrate his life and say their final goodbyes.



## A Reader Recommends

The recommendation for an enjoyable and beneficial book this month comes from Molly Lim, who distributes our weekly update emails. Molly recommends: *Not About Being Good: A Practical Guide to Buddhist Ethics* by Subhadramati (2013) Published by by Windhorse Publications

While there are numerous books on Buddhist meditation and philosophy, there are few books that are entirely devoted to the practice of Buddhist ethics. Subhadramati communicates clearly both their founding principles and the practical methods to embody them.

Buddhist ethics are not about conforming to a set of conventions, not about 'being good' in order to gain rewards. Instead, living ethically springs from the awareness that other people are no different from yourself. You can actively develop this awareness, through cultivating love, clarity and contentment. Helping you to come into greater harmony with all that lives, this is ultimately your guidebook to a more satisfactory life.

[http://windhorsepublications.com/not\\_about\\_being\\_good](http://windhorsepublications.com/not_about_being_good)



## Children's Dharma Class

Our Children's Dharma Class started in November this year at Sangha Lodge. It is held on the first Sunday of each month to coincide with our monthly Dana Day. This effort has long been in my mind – as a way to expose the children to the Dharma – and something I have done before in Malaysia. Finally with the help of the AEB community we were able to make a room upstairs in Sangha Lodge available for the class.

Maybe calling it a Children's Dharma Class might be a bit of a stretch. We are not 'teaching' Dharma as yet but rather planting the seed of Dharma in the young kids and hopefully that seed will flourish as it is continually nourished with Dharma fertiliser. Perhaps we should call it Dharma Buddies? – representing the budding of the lotus?

Another purpose of this class is to encourage more parents with young children to participate in our Dana day. The young ones will be occupied and looked after while the adults can listen to Dharma talk and have meditation practice with minimal distraction between 10.30 to 11.30.

Most of the activities will be Dharma related and include paying respect to the Triple Gem, story telling, colouring-in, simple meditation learning to focus. I also incorporate a simple Brain Gym exercise at the beginning as a warm up and for them to be more comfortable with one another. These activities will be adapted and modified to suit the size of the class and the age groups.

We hope with the support of the members and friends, this small

effort will go a long way to nurturing the seed of Dharma.

**Meredith Tan**

## Member Profile: Win Parry

**When did you first encounter Buddhism and where?**

My first personal contact with Buddhism was in 2005 when I came to live with my daughter, Sue Toohey. Through her I began to read the work of several well-known Buddhist teachers. Their understanding of the Five Precepts and their personal experiences with suffering people impressed me greatly.

**What is it in Buddhism that appeals to you?**

The Five Precepts and the Noble Eightfold Path offer a philosophy for living that promises peace and calm but to reach this goal requires that one needs to be continually mindful of how one is thinking and acting throughout the day.

**Where to from here?**

I still have a long way to go to achieve that goal and at my age (96) I regret that I didn't find Buddhism earlier in my life. Meditation practice for me is a bit patchy. I do feel that yoga practice also gives me a good opportunity for mindfulness and I intend to keep on practising both, hopefully on a daily basis, as long as I am able.





# Kyosan - Japan's Holy Mountain

*K K Lim*

The great Buddhist monk Kobo Daishi Kukai established on Koyasan in Wakayama Prefecture a monastery for Buddhist learning deep in the mountains where monks could practise and pray for the welfare of people. This place has grown to become the main centre of Shingon Buddhism with more than one hundred monasteries and temples. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site which marked its 1200th anniversary in 2015 amidst strong continued support from devotees worldwide.

Molly and I visited the place at the end of September 2015 as one of the destinations in our ongoing pilgrimage to Buddhist sites. We found out about Koyasan from enquiries at the Japan Travel Bureau and searches over the internet. As I arranged our own travel, it was challenging language-wise trying to organise a temple stay (no hotels) even though more than 50 monasteries provided such facilities. We had already decided not to walk the unique Kumano Pilgrimage walk to Koyasan as the expected week-long journey across mountains would exceed our perceived capability.

We flew into Osaka from where we travelled to Kyoto and Takayama (an old country town in mountains in the middle of Japan). On the appointed day, we took an early train from Takayama travelling some 7 hours by wonderfully efficient trains changing at 6 stations before arriving at the beautifully located tiny Gokurakubashi station. From here, it was a short trip by cable car up forested slopes to Koyasan station and

then bus to Sekishoin Temple. We were greeted by the Abbot and checked into a room with balcony overlooking a tranquil forest and pond of swimming koi.



The temperature was an unseasonal 30 degrees but did not deter us from taking a walk through the village to Kongobuji, the global headquarters of Shingon Buddhism and to Danjo Garan, a complex of large wooden buildings originally set up for monks' training. Along the way, we passed centuries-old temples that we did not have time to explore. The beautiful changing colours of autumn leaves to gold, orange and red on trees shading the walking paths added to the calming atmosphere.

That night, as the entire town settled down and streets emptied, all residents at Sekishoin sat in rows on tatami mats to a light vegetarian dinner eaten in silence. After dinner, Molly and I sat down in the main shrine room to meditate in darkness. For both of us, the experience was exceptional!

The following morning, we walked a few minutes to cross a stone bridge and

commence one of the shorter of the famed pilgrim walks. Okunoin is a beautiful flat trek along an avenue of tall tree-lined path of only 5 kms passing by the memorial tombstones of some 250000 dead. One memorial had the flags of Japan, Malaysia and Australia honouring the dead who fought in Borneo. The path ends at Kobo Daishi mausoleum, the religious heart of Koyasan where Kukai is interred in eternal meditation surrounded by thousand year old cedars and a clear mountain stream. It was wonderful as we shared the paved path with millions of others over a thousand years who experienced the feeling of the same walk.



After two nights in a place with thousands of people yet so much silence to contemplate, we reluctantly took the bus to leave this wonderful site to make our way down the mountain to the bustle of the Kanto plains. Koyasan is not possible to describe in words. It is an individual Dharma experience that you can only feel in the heart.

# Quotable Quotes

*"Every day may not be good, But there is something good in every day"*

Alice Mores Earle

1851 – 1911

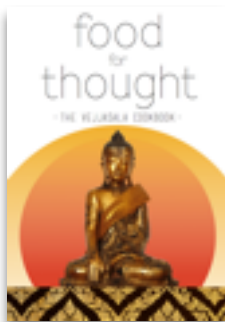
Author and Historian

## Food for Thought

The Association is pleased to have produced Food for Thought, a recipe book written by Jan McCarthy who does the catering for our retreats at Vejjasala. Food for Thought is an A5 (150X 210 cm) spiral bound book of 128 pages, with many photos in full colour. It features 10 chapters and over 100 vegetarian recipes. All proceeds for the sale of the book go to The Association.

Copies of the book can be bought from Sangha Lodge (see Gus Real) for \$25. You can also purchase copies by mail order. To do this please arrange and electronic funds transfer for \$30 (\$25 for book and \$5 for postage and handling) to the Associations bank account. The details of this are:

**Association of  
Engaged  
Buddhists  
St George Bank  
BSB: 112 879  
Account number:  
131328823**



Please put FFT and your full name in the reference box for the transaction and email a copy of the transaction confirmation along with your full postal address to Jan McCarthy at janmccarthy.1@gmail.com and Cc to kahrenwhite@iprimus.com.au. Alternatively, you can pay by cheque, forwarding this and your full address (printed clearly) to Jan McCarthy, 10 Carysfort St, Blackheath, NSW, 2785.

## Dhamma Blossoms

Better than ruling this world, better than attaining the realm of the gods, better than being lord of all the worlds, is one step taken on the path to nirvana

**Dhammapada -verse 178**

## Taking Refuge

During October and November, Bhante used the Wednesday night meetings to give teachings on what we mean by taking refuge. As well as introducing us to the formal chant for the Triple Gem, he also gave us a very nice version by Thich Nhat Hanh. This is reprinted here for the benefit of those who were not at the meeting where it was given out.

### Refuge Prayer

At the foot of the Bodhi tree, seated beautifully, peaceful and smiling, the living source of understanding and compassion, to the Buddha I go for refuge.

The path of mindful living, leading to healing, joy and enlightenment, the way of peace, to the Dhamma I go for refuge.

The loving and supportive community of practice, realising harmony, awareness and liberation, to the Sangha I go for refuge.

I am aware that the Three Gems are within my heart, I vow to realise them.

I vow to practice mindful breathing and smiling, looking deeply into things.

I vow to understand living beings and their suffering, to cultivate loving kindness and to practice joy and equanimity.

I vow to offer joy to one person in the morning and to help relieve the grief of one person in the afternoon.

I vow to live simply and sanely, content with just a few possessions and to keep my body healthy.

I vow to let go of all worry and anxiety in order to be light and free.

I am aware that I owe so much to my parents, teachers, friends and all beings.

I vow to be worthy of their trust, to practice wholeheartedly, so that understanding and compassion will flower and I can help living beings be free from their suffering.

May the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha support my efforts.

## Watering the Garden

Water and sun

green these plants.

When the rain of compassion falls even the desert becomes an immense green ocean.

Thich Nhat Hanh

*Present Moment. Wonderful Moment.*

## Donations

You may or may not realise that Sangha Lodge is solely funded from your donations. Following the teaching of the Buddha, we do not charge for teachings or meditation evenings, preferring instead to rely on our members' generosity. Unfortunately, this often means a shortfall when it comes to meeting our weekly expenses from the donation box on a Wednesday night. It would be much easier for the Centre to function if we were able to rely on regular donations from more members and guests of the centre.

One easy way to arrange for funds to be regularly transferred is via Internet Banking. Most Banks now offer a 'pay anyone' service whereby you are able to set up a regular monthly transfer to any nominated account. If you would like to set up this kind of regular donation to Sangha Lodge you will need the following account information - Bank: St George BSB#: 112 879 Account#: 131328823 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to the Building Fund please make your direct transfer to the following account: Bank: St George BSB: 112-879 Account Number: 430589986 Account Name: Association of Engaged Buddhists.

In order that we can budget our funds effectively and where appropriate supply you with a receipt for tax purposes we would appreciate it if you would email [office@engagedbuddhists.org.au](mailto:office@engagedbuddhists.org.au) with the details of your regular transfer or tax deductible donation. Your Dana (generosity) is greatly appreciated by the many people who come to the centre or are served by it in the wider community (hospitals, hospices and private visits by the Sangha). Please help, even a small monthly donation can make a big difference to Sangha Lodge.

## Association Membership

If you would like to become a member of the Association and thus receive this newsletter (if you don't already!), please fill in a membership form and leave it with a Committee member. You can pick one up from Sangha Lodge the next time you visit, or ring our office and get one posted to you. Membership is due for renewal each September and costs \$50/year.

## For Those in Need

Please keep our brothers and sisters who are ill or struggling with some other distress in your thoughts during the day. This short prayer for freedom from suffering may help you be mindful of their needs.

### Prayer for Freedom from Suffering

May all beings everywhere plagued with sufferings of body and mind quickly be freed from their illnesses.

May those frightened cease to be afraid, and may those bound be free.

May the powerless find power, and may people think of befriending one another.

May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness--the children, the aged, the unprotected--be guarded by beneficent celestials, and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood

If you know of someone who would like to be remembered by our community, let Bhante know and we can mention them in future issues of the Newsletter. Even when there are no particular friends to remember, we ask you to send thoughts of good will in general to those who are experiencing hardship or pain.