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New Parinirvana poster at Wolk-en-Water Hermitage
[\[see Wolk-en-Water Hermitage news\]](#)

Correction:

A correction to the first endnote on page 47 of the Autumn 2017 Journal:

Although the deceased master of a monk who establishes a temple is usually recognized as the Founder of the temple, this is not always the case, as with Rev. Master Jiyu, who is celebrated as the Founder of Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey.

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*Kanzeon Statue on Fearlessness Peak
(see [Lions Gate Buddhist Priory news](#))*

When Mountains are Mountains and Rivers are Rivers

Rev. Master Daizui Macphillamy

Former Head of the Order until his death in 2003

This article is an edited transcript of a Dharma talk given by Rev. Master Daizui in autumn 2001 to members of the Aberdeen group and to the Sangha at Portobello Buddhist Priory.[minor edit]

There is an old saying in Zen:

In the beginning, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers; later on, mountains are not mountains and rivers are not rivers; and still later, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers.¹

My own master, Reverend Master Jiyu-Kennett, put it this way, “In the beginning, all is different; later on, all is one, and then again, all is one and all is different.” These sayings refer to the course of our Buddhist training over long periods of time. In other words, things change; they change profoundly over the course of a life of training. These changes take time, and they only occur to the extent that we actually do the practice. Though they take time, and time is necessary, time alone is not sufficient. It takes time and great practice.

What is meant by “mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers?”, or “all is different”? Well, this is the “place” from which most of us start. This is the place in which we “know what is real”: the way our minds describe life to us is “how it is”. One could sort of summarise it by the thought “I think it and I feel it, therefore it is so.” Here, things are really quite obvious: I’m me, you’re you, this is a chair; what’s all the metaphysical fuss about? What is this stuff about people in Buddhism saying this world is simply a dream, and there is a greater reality behind that dream?

I know when Reverend Master Jiyu would say things like that, I would think to myself, “What a lovely metaphor, but surely she doesn’t actually mean it?” (Laughter) “I know what’s real, and it’s this right? That is a cat (and a very fine cat I might well add), but I am not the cat, and the cat is not me – come on now! ‘All is one’ is a very nice thing to say, and I understand and feel its truth at some levels, but it’s basically a metaphor.” Such is the place where “mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers”.

Now, this state is really quite necessary. Some of us in this room, it would appear, are mental health professionals. (There usually are a few; most priories have ‘em) (Laughter) I can say things like that, by the way, because in a ‘former life’ I too was a mental health professional, a ‘former life’ not so long ago! We mental health types know that if a person has the misfortune of never getting to this state of being, they can’t really deal with life. You have to get to this place over the course of your development. It’s how we

function in the world; it's how we cross the street without being hit by a bus.

Let me take a moment and look at some of the implications for life and training of the state of being in which mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. From this position, we tend to define responsible living as “taking charge”: taking charge of our life, planning ahead, sitting firmly in the “driver’s seat” of life with a grip on the steering wheel, and guiding our life to where it should go.

Zen training is therefore a tool, a means to an end. And seen as a means to an end, a number of questions naturally arise. The obvious first question is, “Does it work?” That is the first question to ask about any tool. “Will this tool do the job? Is this the best tool for me? Is this particular teaching, a particular tradition, or particular teacher valid? And if it is a proper tool, a valid teaching, how long does it take to work? How long, in other words, does it take to ‘get enlightenment’?” And, of course, we have ideas, usually very nice ideas, about what it means to “get enlightenment”.

Then there are some more complex questions which arise. Training is actually not simply a tool, it seems to be a whole toolbox. Now are all the things in the toolbox really necessary? For instance, those pesky Precepts – are they really needed? “I mean, do I really need another set of rules?” Or are they simply cultural baggage that has come along for the ride? The same doubts arise with some of the scriptures. There’s usually one that rubs a person the wrong

way. “Do we really have to recite it this way? Do we really have to use that word?” And then there’s all this emphasis in Zen practice on teachers – not only teachers, but the inconvenient, live sort. (Laughter) The dead ones in books are much more convenient, but we seem to place an emphasis on live ones that do awkward and inconvenient things. “Do I really need people telling me how to practice? Why can’t I just read about it and do it? Why do teachers dress funny and act special, and why should I respect them?” There are a million questions like these.

These are good questions; they’re honest questions. I think that any honest question is good Buddhism. One of the things which, to me, is a great joy about Buddhism is that it does not require a priori beliefs; it does not require that we stuff things into our heads. Training is the honest search for the Truth and therefore any honest question, being part of that search, is a good question. And in the state of being in which “all is different”, and “mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers”, those questions never quite get answered. You can never quite get a completely satisfactory answer out of one of those books; they are full of paradoxes. And those inconvenient live teachers never quite answer the question either. Heaven knows we try, but it never quite satisfies.

There is reason for all this, and that is that while there are answers to these questions, the answers do not lie in the place of “all is different”. They come from a different place.

Now at this point, a minor miracle occurs for some of us in our Buddhist training. That miracle is that, right in the midst of unanswered questions and doubts, some of us actually keep doing the practice. I don't know whether that means that we unknowingly have faith, or whether we are simply stubborn, or perhaps we're a bit dim in the head. (Laughter) But some of us keep practicing anyway. And because of that minor miracle, and because of the fact that what is in this toolbox actually does "work", over time change does occur, it occurs right in the midst of these doubts and unanswered questions. For some people the changes occur gradually, for others they seem to occur in small or large jumps, sort of like quantum leaps. I've never known why it goes one way with some people and the other way with others, and frankly it doesn't matter. The point is that change does occur, with time and practice.

And, with time and practice, we come to a realisation that all is one. In this place of being, mountains are no longer mountains and rivers are no longer rivers. This is the place in which mountains flow and rivers are as diamond, the place where the life of the river is the mountain, and the expression of the mountain is the river, the place the scriptures describe when they say that the wooden figure sings and the stone maiden dances.² And here, "you", and "me" and "the chair" and "the cat" are merely convenient functions. They're thoughts: thoughts which have a purpose and yet are also self-imposed limitations on the Unborn Buddha Mind within which there is no me, there is no you, there is no chair and there is no cat. There simply is a flow that we are all one

with, and that flow has characteristics of love, and of compassion, which are quite literally awe-full to behold. This is seen to be the True Reality. Indeed, what we thought of as “real” in the “all is different” truly is a dream. It is a set of mental constructs that only have as much reality as reflections in a mirror.

Here, what it means to live responsibly is no longer to “grip the steering wheel and sit in the driver’s seat of life”, but rather to give up those things, to set aside being in charge, to get out of the “driver’s seat” and allow Buddha Nature - which is far greater than our abilities to know and to control things – to take Its proper place and do Its work. Our work at this point is to learn to trust in Something Greater than the mind which wishes to grab hold of things, no matter how intelligent and competent that little brain of ours may be. This is the place that Dōgen talked about when he said “Training is enlightenment.” Thus training is no longer a means to an end: the means and the end are one.

And, in the face of all this, all of our previous questions are meaningless – they simply drop away. Indeed that is their true answer. The answer to the question is that the question itself was unreal, though it was the honest expression of our best training at the time. Here Precepts, for example, are no longer rules, but they are seen as glowing descriptions of the Buddha Mind in operation in the world. They are descriptions of how the love and the compassion of the universe manifests itself in this human life. And it is quite incomprehensible why we would do anything other than

follow in those footsteps. Here also, the teacher and the student are one; they are one Heart, one Buddha Nature, one Mind. One can see the unbroken line of masters and disciples going back to Shakyamuni Buddha. And when one does that, one's eyes well up with tears of gratitude.

Then another realisation occurs, and that is that we are all teachers and always have been, and we are all students and always will be. As students it our responsibility to remain open; as Dōgen put it, "Always be disturbed by the Truth." This doesn't mean that one is forever going around in a state of upset; it means one always has the door open to new things and is willing to learn from everything. As teachers, we have no choice about whether we are teaching other beings. Just by going about our lives, we teach all around us, although not in a deliberate or planned way. We actually have no choice about this; our only question is, "What am I teaching at this moment?" And that is the most sobering question, a most sobering realisation.

Now, gradually one gets used to the state of being in which "all is one", and aspects of self re-emerge, as is necessary in order to function in this world. And a new set of questions therefore appears. To give a couple of examples, let us take the same topics of Precepts and teachers. Since Precepts are clearly seen to be descriptions and compassionate guides, and since people waste so much time mistaking them for simply rigid rules and either following them out of fear or fighting against them, wouldn't it be best to simply meditate and have nothing like Precepts,

temple rules, religious structures, etc. to get in the way? Since they can distract us from knowing the True Source, isn't it better simply to eliminate them and go directly to the Source? As for teachers, since all are teachers and all are students, why do we make distinctions between people at all? Distinctions can lead to discriminations and judgements, so why make them? Why discern and recognise any difference between teacher and student, monk and householder, congregation member and lay minister, novice monk and senior monk, etc.? These questions, too, are good questions; they are honest questions – they can lead one's training onward if asked with an open mind. And these questions, too, will never be totally answered from the point of view of "all is one".

Before, it was a bit of a miracle that training continued despite all the unanswered questions, but now there is no doubt as to whether or not it will continue. It is clear that there is nothing else to do but train. And so, we do continue the practice, though if someone were to ask us why we do this, we might be rather hard put to come up with a sensible answer. It's just the only thing to do. And, if we do continue to do that, and do not mistake "all is one" for the end of training – for that is the danger here – then over time and training further changes occur: as before perhaps gradually or perhaps in small or large chunks; again it doesn't matter.

And we come to a place of being in which once again "mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers", but this is not the same place as the one we started from: it is a place of

“all is one and all is different”. Here, things are ever so much simpler than we made them out to be.

This is the place of which the scriptures speak when they ask, “If from the experience of the senses basic Truth you do not know, how can you ever find the path that certain is?”³ It’s a place where there’s nothing special. As one gives up more and more attachment, and as little bits of self are dropped away, there’s simply less to get in the way. There’s less chatter going on inside, less turmoil, less need to make the universe “behave itself”, and so we can trust our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our body and mind to sense what’s simply there.

But this simplicity comes at a price, and the price is that nothing is to be held onto – and nothing means nothing. Not even the experience of “all is one”, not even the compassion and the love and the certainty, as we understood them, can be held onto. They most surely are not pushed away or rejected, but neither can they be “ours”. We simply have to let go, at each moment, of every attachment of which we are aware. This is the beginning of a new sort of wisdom. It’s a rather odd sort of wisdom, given our usual definitions of the term, because it is a wisdom of not knowing. And as to what we call a “self”, in this place, yes, it will arise from time to time: it’s inevitable; we are human beings. Not only are we human beings, but it would seem likely that we shall remain so for this lifetime. (Laughter)

To fully accept one's humanity is not so much to get rid of a self as it is to not take it totally seriously, to not quite believe what it tells you. And so, we can take our own actions and those of others, and our own illusions and delusions and those of others – our own human limitations, in other words – with a certain degree of good grace and good humour, whilst at the same time not acting upon them more than we have to.

Here, responsible living can be summarised by an old Arabic proverb that Reverend Master Jiyu was fond of quoting: “Trust in Allah, and tie your camel.” (Laughter). To me the “trust in Allah” part is the “all is one”. Camel tying behaviour, however, is not the same as what we did from the one-sided “all is different”. Rather it is simply doing the obvious. And by “the obvious”, I mean what you see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and sense with your body and mind as being simply what needs to be done next. This is actually quite different from trying to figure these things out and trying to control them. To be sure it is an active place, and yet it is not stepping back into the “driver's seat and grasping the steering wheel” of life. In fact, it would seem at this point that one realises that there never was a steering wheel or a driver's seat, or at least it wasn't what we thought it was.

When I was a very small child, on my little car-seat in my parent's car there was a small, white plastic steering wheel, and it had a red rubber centre that went ‘beep beep beep’ when you pushed it. I suspect that I drove my parents

half daft, because I would grab the little steering wheel tightly and swing it around and ‘beep’ on the little red rubber thing while we were driving down the road. And, do you know what? That little, white plastic steering wheel was not connected to the steering mechanism of the car! (Laughter) I wasn’t what was in charge of where the car was going. From this perspective, life is seen to be somewhat like that. The choice, in fact, does not appear to be whether we are in or out of the driver’s seat. It appears to be whether we are in or out of the ‘beep beep’ seat. (Laughter)

In this place, also, we can take Dōgen’s statement, “training is enlightenment”, and because it is indeed an equation, we can turn it round and say that enlightenment is training, the very acts of training itself are enlightened acts. After all, think of what the Buddha did after the Bodhi tree, and Bodhidharma did after nine years facing a wall, and Hui-Neng, and Dōgen, and my own master - all of them. They didn’t just go to bed and eat chocolates for the rest of their lives. (Laughter). They appear to have continued with the very same training and practice that we do, and there is a very good reason for that.

Whether we understand it or not, whether we feel it or not, acts of training are enlightened acts, and the training itself is enlightenment itself, and enlightenment itself is training itself. Training, therefore, is not a finished thing, and that is all right. We tend, in the beginning, to want a finish, an end, maybe because we are so tired of samsara – it’s understandable. But training and enlightenment are not

finished things. There is no end. And perhaps that is what is meant when the scriptures speak of the “goal of goallessness”.⁴

So what happens to those questions of ours? Take, once again, our question about Precepts, temple rules, religious organisations etc. Alright: are these things necessary? Well, from this place I would say the answer is, “Of course not. And I’m very glad they’re there.” Because I’m a human being and I am not always in a state in which self is out of the way, and I do continue to have blind spots in my training. I can’t tell you where my blind spots are, because they’re blind spots. You can help me, I can help you, because we have different ones. We can help each other. Indeed it is the case that over time those blind spots do become fewer, but there’s always one or two.

And because I am human I’ll take all the help I can get. Precepts and the like may not be necessary, but they are a great help. The fact that they can be misunderstood and be causes of fear, judgement, limitation, rebellion etc., does not mean that they have to be misunderstood. Every wise way of helping things can be misunderstood. Yet we have to act; we have to do something; we have to be of benefit to beings, ourselves included. We cannot simply sit inert, for that is clearly something which is not to be done. When wise ways of helping one another are misunderstood and lead to harm; that is sad. And that is human. And, that is a fertile place for training to do its work, if we give it a chance; it is a place of opportunity as well as of sadness.

We live, as the Morning Service says, in the actual: “With the ideal comes the actual.”⁵ So, we do that which is of help, understanding that inevitably it will, from time to time, be misunderstood and it will even do damage. The same goes with all those distinctions: senior-junior, teacher-student, etc. Are those necessary for training? No, and again I’ll take all the help I can get, thanks. Distinctions do not have to lead to discrimination. Discernments do not have to lead to judgements. Again, the fact that sometimes they do lead to these things is sad, but distinctions in and of themselves, and discernments in and of themselves, are not the problem; they are of use and of benefit in this world. Lord Buddha distinguished between monks and householders, and He respected both completely. It was a helpful distinction, because all is different and all is one. There is no problem here.

Lord Buddha also discerned, for example, the difference between His drinking water and the insects that were floating in it, and prescribed the use of a water filter for His monks to separate the one from the other, to drink the one and liberate the other. That is a discernment, and it is an act of compassion for both self and other. Wherein lies the problem? To live, therefore, with wise discernment is simply to be aware of the “all is different within the all is one”, and to act accordingly. It is possible, particularly within the simplicity mentioned above, to refrain from engaging in the useless mental activities which turn distinctions into discriminations, discernments into judgements. Just let go of that useless nonsense. Just don’t quite believe it, don’t

follow it, and let it go. Then the eyes will show you what is real, and the ears will tell you what is real, and the body and the mind will sense what is real, and they do not judge.

Many questions could still be asked from the “all is one and all is different”, but why would we bother? It would appear that Truth does not manifest by the process of questions being answered. It happens through ongoing training and practice – in unknowing. We do indeed take refuge in Sangha, in each other, as part of this training. We take that refuge by entrusting our teachers and fellow trainees with the honest state of our being. And sometimes that indeed does take the form of asking a question and receiving an answer. But it is not the question and the answer that are fundamental here: it is the entrusting, and the reciprocal entrusting that occurs in the response. In other words, the so-called “question” and the so-called “answer” are doors to a meeting: a meeting of heart to heart. Thus it is good to ask and good to answer, but the “answering of questions” is not the important aspect of what is going on.

Why do I say all of this? It is not to get you to think yourself into a different frame of mind, indeed it is just the opposite. First of all, it is to encourage you to be exactly who you are, to accept what is at this moment. It is essential to accept what is, because “what is” is what you have to train with. It is truly your door, your opportunity for training. To wish it were different is simply to waste the opportunity of “what is”. All of these states of being that I have described are fertile fields of training. Just to go onwards and practice

and train within any of them is an act of courage and honesty and faith, and it will produce good results.

Second, I say it to encourage a gentleness with yourself and with others. Let the mind be gentle. In none of this is there any need for evaluation or judgement or criticism, be it of your own training or others. I suppose if those things actually helped there might be a point, unpleasant as they are. But they don't; there is no point to them, so let your mind be gentle and accepting.

I say it, also, to encourage you that, if you do find yourself in what appears to be the "driver's seat" of life grasping onto a "steering wheel" try at the very least to keep a light touch on that wheel. And let it be in the back of your mind that simply because we believe something, or feel it emotionally or think it, doesn't necessarily make it so. Just because it appears that life requires that we "drive" it, and control ourselves and what is around us, doesn't mean that we are actually able to do this, or that it is the wise way of proceeding.

I say it also to encourage patience. All of this takes time, a lot of time. And it takes training, a lot of training. Naturally we are sometimes impatient, that is part of our humanity and we accept that. It helps to remember that this Zen training of ours, this "tool box" actually does "work", but it is not magic and it does not happen overnight. It's like the ripening of fruit: there is no point whatsoever to sitting under an apple tree "willing" the fruit to ripen. Given sufficient sun and rain,

and time and nourishment, it will ripen – all in its own good time.

I say it to encourage you to be thorough in your training. Training does not have profound effects if it is half-hearted. A partial or provisional commitment to training is a place where many of us, including myself, start: we experiment with Buddhist training, with Zen practice; we do a little bit and see what happens. As a starting place, that is good, but one cannot stay there forever. If, for instance, one merely comes to retreats once in a while, or meditates once a day, and then forgets about training the other days of the year or the other twenty-three and a half hours of the day, the results will not be what we might hope for. Buddhist training is meant to be one's life, and one's life to be Buddhist training: in the end there can be no separation between life and practice. So be thorough, let training be your life and let your life be training.

And, above all, I say this to encourage you to keep going: simply and honestly doing the best training you know how to do at this moment. In the end, that is all that is required, because to do that will lead to everything else. Such was the simple and profound advice given to me by my master, and to her by her master, "Do the best you can. The Buddhas ask for nothing more, and nothing less." Everything that I have spoken of today is brought to fruition, simply and inevitably, by honestly doing the best you know how, and keep doing it – moment by moment, day by day, year by year. It is not a coincidence that the great mantra of *The*

Scripture of Great Wisdom says: “O Buddha, going, going, going on beyond, and always going on beyond, always becoming Buddha.”⁶

Notes

- [1.](#) Rev. Master Daizui refers to *Mountains and Waters Sutra*, a chapter from *The Shōbōgenzō*, written by Great Master Dōgen, in various places throughout the article (probably from memory). There are now various translations of this Chapter available.
- [2.](#) Reference to an analogy in *The Most Excellent Mirror Samadhi*, written by Tung-shan Liang-chieh (Japanese, Tōzan Ryōkai). There is a translation on p.14 in the booklet *Scriptures and Ceremonies*, available at all temples and meditation groups of the Order.
- [3.](#) From *Sandokai*, a poem by the eighth Chinese Zen ancestor Sekito Kisen, (700–790). *Scriptures and Ceremonies*, p.10.
- [4.](#) Great Master Dōgen. *Rules for Meditation, Scriptures and Ceremonies*, p. 20.
- [5.](#) From *Sandokai*, *Scriptures and Ceremonies*, p.10.
- [6.](#) *The Scripture of Great Wisdom*, *Scriptures and Ceremonies*, p.8.

The Question

Rev. Master Kinrei Bassis MOBC

— *Berkeley Buddhist Priory, Albany, CA–USA* —

This article first appeared in the Berkeley Buddhist Priory Newsletter July - September 2017

It is a basic human desire to seek happiness and satisfaction in our lives. The question we all face in life is how do we find this happiness and satisfaction? The way we answer that question is the way we will direct our lives. Our volitional choices, the way we conduct our lives, the way we direct our longing, is our answer.

Sometimes our answer to the question is confusion – I do not know what to do. Sometimes our answer is despair – nothing we do seems to work. Sometimes our answer is blind desire. We allow our lust to control us, our greed to control us, our fear to control us. When I was a young man, travelling to exotic places enticed me. Then, in my travels, I was living my image of an exciting life. Yet my underlying purpose in travelling the world was simply to have a good time. But having a good time is actually not that easy and even exotic places can easily be boring. I eventually realized travelling was not an answer to what I am looking for.

People are often driven by blind ambition because they are not looking at the reality of what they are trying to grasp but just following some deep seated desire. I remember talking to someone who had finally become a neurologist after many difficult and exhausting years of education and medical training. He was now surprised that even though he finally attained the success and financial rewards that he had been seeking, his heart was still looking for something more. It like the line from the popular song of the rock group U2, “I still haven’t found what I’m looking for”.

Our lives are a demonstration of our choices and what has meaning in our lives. I remember hearing someone speak of his wife asking him, “what in the past year meant the most to you?” The husband said, “I maintained daily distance running and ran a marathon.” The wife looked at him with disapproval. He had three children and a wife and what mattered most to him was his running. The marriage soon fell apart.

We all have the tendency to believe that, “If I had this job, or this experience; if I could be with this person or have this lifestyle, this would make me happy and satisfied.” We keep answering the underlying question in our life by all the various ways we attempt to fill the emptiness. Our life answers our inner longing by drawing us into patterns of pursuing and avoiding, of attainment and failure. And as we chase our dreams, we keep experiencing disappointment and frustration. Whether we fulfill our dreams and goals or fail,

we will still eventually keep finding ourselves in the place of “I still have not found what I am looking for.”

Rephrasing U2, I have found what I am looking for. The question of our lives has an answer, the deep longing of our hearts can find the wholeness it seeks. Yet we miss seeing the answer to our question because we are looking the wrong way. The normal worldly mind keeps asking life and the world to give us what we want. Mostly we are asking with demands and expectations. We are filled with wants and needs, and their automatic partner, fear and aversion. Since we never fully control the conditions in our life, we are always both getting what we want and getting what we do not want. The more we answer the question of our lives by filling ourselves with more demands, more wants, the more we keep getting what we do not want.

All of our various longings of our heart are an effort to be whole, to fill the sense of emptiness in our heart. Yet, if we keep asking the wrong question in life, a compassionate aspect of the law of karma is that life keeps giving us serious problems and we keep confronting suffering. The Dharma is pointing to the mind of all acceptance, to put the Buddhist teaching into practice and work at having an open and willing mind and heart. Instead of trying the worldly way of obtaining happiness by controlling the conditions within our life, we learn to be inwardly still, with an open heart. We need to try our best to let the waves of desire and strong emotions flow through us without grasping anything or pushing anything away.

The real question is not why we are not getting what we want; the real question is why we are not practicing all acceptance and seeking the Buddha Heart. Letting go in faith and trusting that there is nothing to fear is the way we learn how to ask the right question. To recognize that all of our difficulties are not coming from the world's failures or my personal failures but what I am asking for. We begin to liberate ourselves from suffering by realizing nothing, neither our suffering or our happiness, is our own. We are looking in the right direction when we bow to our suffering and have faith that points us to look up with gratitude.

The difficulty in life comes from the fact that we care deeply about what happens to us. This provides overwhelmingly powerful motivation, driving people to put tremendous amounts of energy into whatever it is that deeply matters to them, whether work, family, friendship, recreation, art, collecting, etc. When we care deeply enough about something, we are even willing to risk our lives.

Sometimes our lives are relatively empty of much meaning and all that person cares about is being comfortable and not suffering. They are just trying to get by, to survive and grasp a little bit of happiness.

The Buddhist path requires that you make the Buddhist practice the central aspect of your life. And naturally this is difficult and goes against the normal human motivation we have to maximize our comfort and avoid suffering. Yet each act of Buddhist training, whether it is meditation, mindfulness, studying the Dharma, ceremonial, practicing

with the Sangha, are all ways to help us to look in the right direction. Every time we turn our hearts in the right direction – whenever we think, speak and act with kindness, compassion, generosity and gratitude, we are helping to free ourselves from our defilements. Within us is a fire of a deep longing, and this fire will burn away all obstacles when we feed it with our faith and acts of Buddhist training.

We need to accept that we do not control how our life will unfold and we can trust that what we really want, the true Treasure, lies within the stillness of our hearts. If we live this Truth, it can and will free us from all suffering. When we sit still, the stream of compassion turns within and we can hear the call of the Buddha. Let us be willing to do all that we can so that we will hear and answer that call.

Day and Night

Rev. Master Willard Lee

—*Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, Northumberland—UK—*

In the early morning quiet, with an aching body and befuddled mind, I get out of bed. Groping around, taking care of early morning matters, still half asleep and scarcely aware of anything - tears well up; how can I go on? Even if I were too weak to move a muscle - that too would be incomparable life - that's the 'how'. While getting dressed the day is not waiting; there is no preparing for something.

Stepping out into the dark, I am greeted by an infinite chill. Grateful both for my fleece's warmth and for the cold air, in an instant it's clear that all things and all beings are exactly here and did, do, and will, make wearing this jacket possible; both the living - whatever they are doing, wherever, no matter their state of body and mind - and the dead. The past is not buried under layers of time and the present has the weight of a flame. Nothing is isolated, all is unblemished, and I am just shuffling along in this old fleece. My jacket is always playing its part without hesitation; there is no need for me to try to recall putting it on.

It's light now; walking, delving into generous boundless day, I notice that I'm wearing odd socks. If I meet

someone in passing, perhaps we will smile and joke about it before parting and going on with our business.

Evening finds me with my feet up - music burbling in headphones, tears welling - filled with joy for the profoundly detailed, compassionate and subtle teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha; of his descendants, of this world; and on. Devoted zazen is always open for everyone: everything is the broad reliable highway.

Then in the depths of the night

silence.

On Practice in Old Age and Infirmary:

An old geezer's view

Val Lilof

—*Gattonside—Scotland—UK*

I'm seventy seven and in ill health. This affected my posture in meditation until I changed it. I then realised that my apparent reluctance to alter my position had been due to pride; having sat with a straight unsupported back, I was the 'real deal'.

Seven years ago I began zazen and I took refuge at Jukai in 2015. During this time insights arose which have kept me aware that change is continual and inevitable.

Yet behaviours, believed by me to be obsolete, would pop up accompanied by momentary dismay and speedy recognition. I show off. Oh dear, how sad. Never mind.

Twice during spiritual counselling the suggestion was made that I "listen" during meditation, but initially nothing appeared to happen.

Later at home the value of "listening" made an immediate difference and showed me how to increase my attention span during meditation. It also helped me to

question concerns I had expressed about the depth of my practice.

How my life has brought me to this point and further develops, I contemplate and meet with deep gratitude and utter bemusement!

I recently read an article in the Annual of Articles 2015, which included the line “we can view everything with the still and yet kaleidoscopic mind of meditation”¹ which seems to me a most suitable place to pause...

Notes

1. *Conserve, Preserve, Respect and Revere*. Rev. Master Oswin Hollenbeck in *The Journal of the OBC Annual of Articles 2015*, p.13.

Treat Yourself as You Would Others

Rev. Master Phoebe Van Woerden

—*Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple, CA–USA*—

This first appeared on Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple website.

Almost always when we talk about how our meditation practice can really not be separated from working with the Precepts, someone will lament how hard that is. And we all agree, it is hard if you wish to label it that way. But what does that actually mean? Why do we think of it as hard? Or, perhaps, why do we make it hard for ourselves?

How about if we say; **using** the Precepts to help ourselves make and experience less suffering? The Precepts are not there to make life hard, but to point us in a different direction, sometimes called a ‘safe direction’. They are not forced upon us, but rather we turn to them in times of confusion or pain, and they arise naturally from our own meditation. To feel regret over an attitude or action is painful and with that comes the resolve to try something better, to press reset, to take ‘safe direction’.

It turns out that often very good and kind people make their own lives harder by getting very upset when they find themselves going against what they know in their hearts is in harmony with their meditation. This is perhaps where it

may be good to see how we need to apply the Precepts to ourselves first, in the sense of treating ourselves as though we were our own friend, as the Buddha recommends we do. When a friend tells us that he or she has made a mistake, we are sympathetic and encouraging, rather than harsh and unforgiving. We can try the same attitude with ourselves, though it may take some practice, and using the Precepts to re-evaluate how we treat ourselves may be helpful.

Here is another way to look at the Precepts in this light:

Do not kill yourself with too much work, too much or not enough food or exercise, too little relaxation or enjoyment in life. Rather nourish and protect your own wellbeing, health and spiritual practice so that you make most use of your time and energy.

Do not steal from yourself by over-committing, not giving yourself enough time to do well what you need to do, multi-tasking or ‘burning the candle at both ends’. Rather take care to be realistic with your expectations and grateful for what the day brings.

Do not covet or wish to be other than who you are. The Buddha says “Know your own capacities and be content with them.” This points to both our limitations and our potential, and we each have to explore in depth for ourselves over time what that means and how we fully express Buddha Nature in the form we call “me”.

Do not lie to yourself about yourself, sell yourself short in your own mind or gossip about yourself to yourself. Instead, be willing to sit up straight and keep coming back to what is next.

Do not sell the wine of delusion to yourself, cloud your mind with distractions, denial or justifications, but on the contrary look to the wisdom that arises from your own heart and allow it to guide you.

Do not speak against yourself in your mind; watch the way you discourage yourself by thinking negative thoughts and devaluing your own efforts. Nobody is perfect and in a friend we will see the good intentions and many ways in which they find fruition. The small mistakes can be accepted with kindness and addressed with a friendly attitude, and ingrained personality traits can be treated with more patience and encouragement.

Do not be proud of your ‘good’ self and devalue your ‘bad’ self. This should be obvious, and not need talking about, and yet it seems to be so pervasive that it is probably good to reflect on it regularly. Both our strengths and our weaknesses are part of our own mind, and can be used for practice if we wish. It may be liberating to think of one’s potential as just that, to be used for whatever we decide to use it, rather than as a dark force that we are unable to resist. Energy can be redirected, once we see more clearly what is driving us and what we wish to achieve. Here again the notion of ‘safe direction’ is beneficial.

Do not be mean in giving anything – not just to others, but also to yourself. Be generous, but not necessarily indulgent, with your own needs and requirements. Give yourself some time every day to just be, to replenish your energies and your sense of wellbeing, so that you will be more able to be generous with what you have to give to others. Give yourself permission to make mistakes, recognize them and make amends. Give yourself the benefit of the doubt, just as you would others, and trust your heart.

Do not hold on to anger, especially anger with yourself. If we cannot love ourselves, how can we ever really love another? It is one thing to be thoroughly annoyed and fed up with something we have been doing – that can be used as a powerful incentive to change – but that is not the same as being angry with ourselves and darkening our view. Purified anger will give a brightness and energy to our thinking and actions, and shine light on what we need to do differently.

Do not defame the Three Treasures. *The Kyōjukaimon*¹ says: “To do something by ourselves, without copying others, is to become an example to the world and the merit of doing such a thing becomes the source of all wisdom.” To be ourselves and act in accord with our innermost heart of meditation as best we can is a great act of kindness to ourselves, and to all beings.

Notes

¹. Great Master Dōgen, *Kyōjukaimon: Giving and Receiving the Teaching of the Precepts* from Jiyu-Kennett, Rev. Master. *Zen is Eternal Life*, 4th Ed., (Mt. Shasta, CA: Shasta Abbey Press, 1999) pp.21 -214.

The View of The Precepts

Rev. Master Berwyn Watson

—*Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, Northumberland—UK—*

The Precepts point to and express a fundamental shift in our point of view. Training seems to me to involve choosing a certain way of living or relating to the world—a choice that is repeated daily, almost endlessly. Perhaps it becomes less of a deliberate choosing over time—but speaking personally, I still have to choose when I wake up in the morning feeling a bit grumpy and sorry for myself.

I have the choice to be a consumer of the world, hoping to get something out of it, or to open up to what existence is and try my best to respond to that call. I remember asking once in Shosan (spiritual direction ceremony) what my real responsibility was. The answer was that we are already entirely owned by the world, so to listen to what the world offers.

There is the difference between wanting to take from the world, and being entirely owned by the world. It's a fundamental difference between 'What can I get from this situation' and 'what can I offer to this situation'.

To me this shift in attitude underlies all of the Precepts: We cannot kill, because killing is killing the Buddha, which

includes myself—so to attempt to kill Buddha is spiritual suicide. We cannot be proud when we realise there is no separate thing, no separate being to attach this pride to; we cannot covet or be greedy when we start to realise that we are already given everything we need; we cannot steal for a similar reason—the world is not a separate place with things in it we can have or not have: we are already in the world, intimate with it. To steal or be greedy is to see the world as separate and try and keep a bit of it for ourselves.

The Precepts work in two ways: restraining us when we actually are being driven along by fear, etc; but also pointing to this new perspective of being owned by the world—because they are an expression of, or come from, the view of non-duality.

Part of the teaching of the Precepts is that seeing ourselves as consumers of the world is in the end painful and futile. Even if we are angry or greedy it actually makes no difference—with an emotion like anger, I can feel I am achieving something—that after all my anger is justified and the righteousness of this gives me the energy to do things. But even if the cause may be a good one, once the energy of anger goes, there is a sense of deflation; how does it actually feel when we do ‘get our own back’? For me there is a sadness and futility right there. And what does *Dōgen’s* commentary say on Anger, “There is no retiring, no going, no Truth, no lie; there is a brilliant sea of clouds, there is a dignified sea of clouds”¹ However justified anger may seem to be in defence of things we may consider to be ‘truth’—

there is ‘no Truth and no lie.’ No Truth with a capital ‘T’ to actually defend and get angry about. This sounds absurd, but what is it pointing to?

So often in our relations with others, the disagreement is over what we consider to be Truth. A person’s view may indeed be wrong on one level and untrue, but the Precept challenges our motivation in getting angry and acting from this. Even when another person is wrong and deluded they are still part of the ‘brilliant sea of clouds, the dignified sea of clouds...’

There is the Truth of what we consider to be right view, right doctrine, but there is also the Truth that all beings, however deluded, remain within existence and express Truth just being what they are. This does not mean we never take a stand against delusion; it just means that our motivation is not anger. In the end anger is often about ‘I am right, the other person is wrong’. From the viewpoint of being in the world as part of what it is—being entirely owned by the world—the other person is Truth, even when they are wrong on one level. This should not stop us acting and standing up for Truth when we need to, but this is not driven by anger, and even when we disagree profoundly, it is possible to respect the other person.

So in sitting with the Precepts—reviewing what has happened when things have gone wrong; it does seem to come back to the fundamental stance I have been taking. Have I been asserting myself, trying to make the world into

something I feel it ought to be? If there is a sense of the tension of this ‘Why isn’t he like this and not like that...why is this situation like it is, it should not be...’ then that is what I need to see and relinquish.

As Dōgen says; “To carry the self forward and illuminate myriad things is delusion. That myriad things come forth and illuminate the self is awakening.”² This does not justify being passive and quietistic. It does mean that action needs to come from a real acceptance of the situation and our involvement in it; and a deep faith that existence can teach—that it is teaching constantly. Part of this faith is that we too are part of existence and have our place; our involvement is not accidental, we do have a role, being part of a family, or a work situation or the Sangha. But this involvement seems to be more like an offering of ‘what can I do now to help’, than ‘I don’t like this situation—it shouldn’t be like this’. I think this is why one of my favourite Shunryu Suzuki quotes is ‘Rather than criticising, find out how to help.’³

Notes

1. Great Master Dōgen, *Kyōjukaimon: Giving and Receiving the Teaching of the Precepts* from Jiyu-Kennett, Rev. Master. *Zen is Eternal Life*, 4th Ed., (Mt. Shasta, CA: Shasta Abbey Press, 1999) pp. 269–272.
2. Great Master Dōgen. *Moon in a dewdrop*, Kazuaki Tanahashi, ed. (New York: North Point Press, 1995) p.69.
3. Chadwick, David. *Crooked Cucumber: The Life and Teaching of Shunryu Suzuki*, (New York: Broadway Books, 2000).

Life of The Precepts

Rev. Elinore Agnew

—Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey—UK—

From a talk given at the Precepts weekend retreat at Throssel in 2016

There is something that calls us to meditation and this call persists as we go on. There is something deep within us that we know to be true, and know to be good, but we can feel as if we have almost lost this knowing, and we experience conflict.

This conflict may seem to be between this deep sense of knowing and what we are actually doing. It can be experienced as difficulty in life, relationships – obstruction – a sense of limitation. We wish to resolve it but it appears in many forms. It may appear not to be caused by us, but very much affecting us.

To give ourselves to zazen is to be willing to see what this really is – and as we see – to accept, and let go. The more we give in this way and realize that we can take everything to the sitting, the more we actually see what we are doing and are able to choose what to do and not to do, to say and not to say. We become aware of very habitual thoughts, opinions, emotions and begin to see that they may

not be helpful. We do things, say things, think things and we get feedback; there are consequences. As we go on with meditation, if we really wish to see, a sense of commitment, the need to give ourselves comes.

The Precepts guide us, help us, are never separate from us. At first the Precepts seem to be the voice of Buddha, a voice outside ourselves, but they are not outside us. They are the depth of being that calls us to sit – and we need to clarify this.

Through zazen the Precepts become known; in daily life the Precepts reveal themselves – and we study – we look and listen carefully. We sit in faith. We commit ourselves to zazen, to being guided by the Precepts (our true heart), to really see and to trust the transformation that comes from this.

We want to do something about ourselves. When we go against our true nature, there is suffering; we feel it. Sometimes it may not be conscious, but at a deep level we know.

There seems to be an endless cycle of suffering. Zazen is an expression of the end of suffering in this moment because how we see suffering changes.

But we need to do the work that is asked of us. We need to look carefully at the ways that we act selfishly, the belief that we are separate, and the things we do based on the belief

that we are a separate self. We sit in the midst of greed, anger or hate, and delusion – when they are there – and look closely. We come to know fear and desire intimately at deepening levels. We see and feel the consequences of action that comes from these states. It doesn't help to judge or condemn. Zazen takes care of all this, the more we trust it. We come to know the gratitude that seeing more clearly is.

We know suffering. We know that we can cause harm and we come to trust that we don't wish to. This commitment comes above everything else. This is the willingness to give whatever is asked.

We feel as if we begin at some distance from this understanding, and get closer as we go on with zazen. There can't be a distance, but we need to realize this. We need to know what is good and then there is no separation between being and doing. Something is asked and there is a response.

There is a great sensitivity, openness, generosity. We let go of things as we see them. Some habits run deep. We seem to have built strong defences. Fear and desire can be very hard to see. The Great Way encompasses all this, embraces everything. We need to be willing to let go. We can let go when we see—and truly accept what we see. As this goes on, resistance lessens. We come to not wish things to be other than they are, as we see more clearly the depth of being.

All of this is happening together and it is a sense of freedom. Nothing is fixed, everything changes. We are not limited in the way that we felt ourselves to be, obstacles are not what we thought they were— and there is this vast boundless depth of zazen.

The Precepts come forth as this life now, and this coming forth goes on forever.

We come to know Great Compassion, which is the source of the Precepts, the nature of all things, the depth of this being. Great Compassion is always there and has no beginning. This is zazen, this is the Precepts—it is all life. When we see, it is clearly there in all beings, and zazen is the clarification of this.

We cease from evil, there is Great Compassion—there is good, doing only good, doing good for others. We need to know what evil is. We need to really sit and look.

What are the three poisons: greed, hate and delusion? What are they in relation to compassion, love and wisdom? Do we have a dark aspect and a light aspect? Is it divided? Does the darkness become light? The mind cannot find answers to all this. We just sit with these questions. Sometimes we doubt everything. This is necessary. We come to know the heart of doubt.

We all experience fear, aggression, anger, vulnerability, jealousy, sadness, joy, grief, ambition, greed,

despair, isolation, excitement...We all have particular tendencies, and we go on looking at more subtle aspects of these habits, and feeling the consequences. We see aspects of the self and go on relinquishing things that we hold close. Sometimes we feel as if we might die if we have to go on further – and still we go on.

The presence of Great Compassion is beyond our understanding, beyond the realm of the discriminatory mind. Something takes care of it all – it is taken care of – and there is life, this moment. There is seeing and hearing that responds and is doing only good, and doing good for others. This is where the Precepts are. We need to be willing to go.

OBC Rules Conclave 2017

The 2017 Rules Conclave convened at Shasta Abbey on 18th September. In attendance were most of the North American senior monks and over 25 visiting senior monks from Germany, Latvia, and the UK, a total of 44 monks. Several lay ministers participated in the discussions as well. The transmitted and novice monks at Shasta maintained the kitchen and offered a bountiful course of meals and other food to sustain the attendees in their deliberations. The weather began as cool, cloudy, and smoky (from nearby forest fires), but by meeting's end we saw clear skies, a frosted mountain, and mild temperatures.

Our conclaves are now held every six years, alternating locations between the two abbeys, Shasta and Throssel Hole. The rules provide a framework and guidelines for the conduct of our monastic life and practice (a separate section is devoted to lay minister responsibilities). The rules are based in the Buddhist Precepts, compassion, and wise discernment, and they are applied with the intention of helping the person concerned. Like the original vinaya (monastic regulations) of Shakyamuni Buddha and His disciples, the rules are created as needs arise and are preventive, rather than punitive, in nature.

As Founder of our Order, Rev. Master Jiyu formulated many of our first rules. She once expressed the preventive spirit in an informal Dharma talk to her monks, “The rules in a monastery [or the Order] are there for those who, although they are truly centred, and trying to be truly centred, need... some simple guidelines when one falls slightly away from this.” Accordingly, the rules are composed in order to prevent others making the same mistake and also to point to the attitude of mind and intention behind the rule that we want to foster in our daily practice. Rev. Master Jiyu quoted the *Dhammapada* in relation to this principle, “The end already blooms in the cause.” The rules also benefit others by fostering harmony in the sangha so that others can do their practice peacefully and productively.

Rev. Master Jiyu would also often tell her disciples that the rules were not ‘set in stone’. They are fluid, and they are modified as people mature and new issues arise. At the same time the rules require significant reason to change. Our conclaves provide the formal process by which the Order as whole can consider carefully if a change is genuinely necessary. The meetings provide an opportunity to review the rules, delete rules which are no longer helpful, modify other rules as needed, and consider new ones. All senior monks are invited to attend, and we follow a modified form of consensus, again preserving a practice similar to one traced back to the early monastic sangha.

At this 2017 Conclave we had a large number of provisional rules to consider. Applying primarily to temples,

the section on “Priories and Parish Priests” was revised by the previous Head of the Order in order to bring those rules up to date and to make them applicable to all the temples of the Order, from the smallest hermitage to the larger abbeys. The collection of provisional rules had been made between conclaves and due to various circumstances had not yet been ratified by a conclave. This ratification is a necessary step for a rule to become a permanent addition to our guidelines. The Head of the Order may make provisional rules between conclaves, which provides us time to live with a rule and assess its effectiveness before finalizing its adoption.

Having functioned under these provisional rules for some time, there were no surprises regarding the various issues we considered. Some rules were adopted ‘as is,’ others dropped completely, while others required extensive revision. On occasion a rule would be sent to a committee of several people to revise and bring back to the assembly later on. I detail here some of the subjects and individual rules we addressed in order to illustrate the breadth of the various issues considered. (Since most of these rules are in our Temple rules section, similar rules for individual monks already existed in other sections.)

- Some rules dealt with our sitting practice, such as the maximum length of time for meditation periods so that no one sits crossed legged to the detriment of their physical health; and clarifying how meditation instruction by lay trainees is done when a monk or lay minister is not available.

- Other rules concerned monks' lives, including the "correct ordering of daily life" (to quote Great Master Dōgen) in order to keep one's vocation a priority; guidelines for attire and appearance; measures to prevent the appearance of impropriety when giving private instruction and spiritual guidance; and the necessity of complying with work and residence requirements of particular countries or jurisdictions.

- Another area concerned temples directly: assuring that there is faithfulness to the tradition in regard to schedules and offerings; maintaining standards for a temple's finances, liability insurance, real estate purchases, and the health and safety of residents and guests; updating and rewording our policy on non-discrimination; clarifying the position of temples' involvement in political or social actions; not undermining monks in other temples; and outlining procedures for establishing or dissolving a temple or meditation group.

- A small group met informally to discuss gender parity in our liturgy.

Our proceedings were marked by co-operation, harmony, goodwill, and careful listening to and consideration of all perspectives (our lay friends made significant contributions). Although we had our differences, we usually eventually found our way to consensus. Of particular note was the warm trust and open willingness of participants to share their personal experience of practice

affected by the various rules we deliberated on. The Conclave was also a rare opportunity to work together directly with Rev. Master Haryo as Head of the Order, and we were grateful for his patient and kind leadership.

We had the good fortune to finish all the rules several days before the end of the Conclave period, so we had several days to spend with each other renewing old friendships and making new ones. For some monks this Conclave was likely to be the last time they would be able to visit Shasta, and for others it was their first time. This relaxed time together is an important aspect of our conclaves and biennial gatherings, for the future of the Order depends to a large extent on our shared practice and development as a Sangha, and our ability to work together as friends toward shared goals.

We wish to express our thanks to Rev. Master Haryo, Shasta Abbey, the monks and lay ministers who attended the Conclave, and everyone else who provided support in the myriad other ways involved in hosting such a large event.

*—Rev. Master Oswin
OBC Executive Secretary*

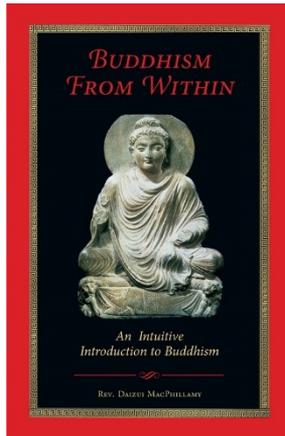
When completed, a copy of the new, updated version of the Rules will be available at each temple of the Order.

Buddhism from Within:

We are pleased to let Journal readers know that Shasta Abbey Press has arranged a second printing of Rev. Master Daizui MacPhillamy's book, *Buddhism From Within: An Intuitive Introduction to Buddhism*. Rev. Master Daizui was a senior disciple of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett and served as her successor as Head of the Order from 1996 to 2003. The content of the book remains the same.

Buddhism from Within can now be purchased through Lulu.com as a print-on-demand book. This means that when someone orders a copy from Lulu, the book is printed and mailed to the person. The proceeds from purchases help support the Order.

The book is also available for sale at Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey and Shasta Abbey; it can be downloaded as a free .pdf on the Shasta Abbey Publications webpage: shastaabbey.org/publications



Europe

Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey

—Northumberland, England—UK—

Retreats: Rev. Master Daishin lead our second summer sesshin in August, with Rev. Master Berwyn. This silent week of meditation and dharma is a key retreat of the calendar and was deeply valued. The talks are now available on our website.

In October, we held our annual Segaki week-long retreat, with its central ceremony of offering the Dharma, *The Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts*. This sesshin was led by Rev. Master Leandra and Rev. Master Willard. This photo shows the altar just before the ceremony started.



Our monthly Festival weekend retreats for Avalokiteswara and Great Master Bodhidharma, were run by Rev. Jishin and Rev. Master Finnán, in September and October. We celebrated

Founder's weekend on 3rd–5th November, so the festival this year was just one day before the 21st anniversary of the death of our Founder, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett. Rev. Master Roland offered teaching and classes and was celebrant for the ceremony. A portrait of Rev. Master Jiyu painted by Rev. Gareth was brought from our Founders's Shrine and formed the focal point on the altar.

September and Conclave: In September, eight Throssel senior monks and a UK Lay Minister travelled to Shasta Abbey, along with eight other European monks, for the OBC Conclave, at which the Rules of the Order were updated at a series of meetings. It was also an opportunity to spend time together and deepen relationships within the European and North American sanghas of our Order. The rules, which are available at all temples of the Order, will be updated in due course. Monks appreciated the warm welcomes and kind hospitality both at Shasta abbey and the Priors visited en-route.

Rev. Master Leandra left for Shasta a month earlier as she along with five other Masters had been invited to participate in their August sesshin. (The others were Rev. Master Rokusan, Rev. Master Meidō, Rev. Master Seikai, Rev. Master Mugo and Rev. Master Scholastica). She had also received an invitation to Sonoma Mountain Zen Centre in Northern California by Jakusho Kwong, a disciple of Shunryu Suzuki. She visited in August with Rev. Vivian of Shasta Abbey. Both monks found it a joy to be there and an honour to spend time with Roshi Kwong and join in the dedicated practice of the temple.

Meanwhile it was a relatively quiet month at Throssel, with a reduced schedule. Many thanks to those who came to stay during September, helping in the kitchen and with other jobs in the monastery.

During this month, we welcomed back Rev. Kyōsei after spending nine months at Shasta Abbey. She appreciated her time there very much and has settled back here.

New gas boiler installed: Over a three week period in September our old coal boiler and its fittings were removed and a new gas boiler system was installed in its place by local companies. The photo below shows the intricate pipework which serves the Meditation Hall, Ceremony Hall buildings and the Guest Cottage, and also incorporates the solar panel connections.



Green Mountains Walks: We have enjoyed two outings of the Green Mountains Walking Group recently. The first was organised by Eric at the end of September, a delightful seven mile walk, in the Blanchland area, across the moors, back by the river, with a packed lunch in a bothy and ending with tea and cake at the White Monk cafe. No less than four dogs also joined the trip.

On a perfect sunny Autumn day in October, another group of monks and lay trainees enjoyed a lovely walk and day out together in the Lake district, arranged by Jenny. This took in a climb up Beda Fell, with clear views of Ullswater and also a sighting of a herd of red deer. Thank you to Eric and Jenny for

organising these walks and to all who came; such a pleasant and relaxed way for the sangha to spend time together.



The Blanchland walk

New gate for the garden: Here is a photo of our new garden gate, designed, made and installed by George, son of one of our local lay ministers, Julia. It matches the larger one at the top of the garden which he made for us a few years ago.

Both feature a beautiful design of a lotus flower above water. George came and installed it for us free of charge; we are most grateful for this beautiful new addition to the garden which replaced a very old wooden one which had served well for decades.



—Rev. Alina

De Dharmatoevlucht

—Apeldoorn—The Netherlands—

Relocation of the temple: Some time ago we were informed by the city council that the soil spoilage at the left side of the old fire station building is worse than previously thought and that it will probably take a long time before it is cleaned; they expect that it might take years instead of months. The building can't be sold before the soil remediation has been completed.

They also informed us about the changing political climate within the city. Several political parties have indicated that they hope to abolish the purchase subsidy, often given by the city when buying a public building, as soon as possible after the local elections coming up in March. We were promised a subsidy of 50% of the asking price of €200.000 and without it the fire station is out of reach for us.

The council suggested that we look for an alternative location for the coming years where we can wait till the fire station

is put back on market. In the meantime we received a detailed builder's estimate for the rebuilding work to convert the fire station into a Buddhist temple. The estimate is €228.000 which is quite a bit higher than the estimate given last year by our architect. However, in the meantime the housing market has recovered greatly and the cost of materials and labour have sky-rocketed.

We will stay in contact with the city council and wait till the fire station comes up for sale again. When this happens, we will consider anew if it is still wise and feasible to acquire it.

New alternative: In the last few months a new possible location offered itself to us. A wonderful building, situated close to the royal palace in Apeldoorn, is rented by a foundation that is looking for spiritual and religious groups who need space for their activities. We have had several meetings with the board members and have come to an agreement. From the beginning of next year we will rent two rooms on the first floor; one large room which will function as a zendo and a smaller room which will be an office/bedroom for Rev. Baldwin.



Amerfoorsteweg vooraanzicht, the new location

On the first floor are also situated a kitchen and bathroom with toilets. Around the building is a large garden and forested

area which is ideal for sangha meetings in the summer. Next to the house is a beautiful renovated coach house which can be rented separately. It too contains a kitchen and bathrooms. This location is easily accessible and has plenty of parking spaces.

Purchase of a holiday cabin: As mentioned above the office/bedroom for Rev. Baldwin is small and offers little living space. We have been very fortunate to be able to purchase a lovely holiday cabin with 260 square metres of grounds, situated in a quiet part of a holiday park at a distance of twenty minutes' drive from the house mentioned above. The cabin is nine by five metres and is divided into a sitting and dining space, a small kitchen, two bedrooms and a small bathroom. In 2007 it was completely renovated. It has double glazing and central heating. This little house will give Rev. Baldwin some extra living space and it is a good investment. We receive hardly any interest on our savings due to the very low interest figure set by the European Central Bank and with higher inflation they slowly lose their value.



The holiday cabin

The purchase has been financed with the savings we have accumulated over the last seventeen years, together with a kind donation of the Order and with financial help from Throssel. No donations that were given towards the purchase and rebuilding work of the fire station were used.

Donations given towards the purchase and rebuilding of the fire station: Many sangha members as well as several monks of the Order have given us a donation towards the purchase and rebuilding of the fire station. As there is now substantial uncertainty if we will purchase the building we hope to contact all to those who have contributed in the coming time to enquire if they would like us to reimburse the donation given, or that we keep it reserved for the purpose given, or that we may use it for the future development of De Dharmatoevlucht, in whatever location in Apeldoorn presents itself.

—*Rev. Master Baldwin*

Dharmazuflucht Schwarzwald

—*Gutach (Black Forest)–Germany–*

Our highlight of the year was no doubt the visit to Shasta Abbey during the month of September. It was so good to see all American monk-friends again. For Rev. Clementia, who had never been to Shasta, it became an important time, and she very much enjoyed meeting everyone and having talks with many of the monks. We are deeply grateful for the very warm welcome the community of monks showed us, particularly to Rev. Master Haryo, the Head of our order, for his patient, generous and wise guidance, and to the abbess of Shasta Abbey, Rev. Master Meian, for all her kindness. A big thank you also to Rev. Master Kinrei, the Prior of the Berkeley Buddhist Priory, for his hospitality on our way through, and for his generous help with the transportation from the Bay Area up to Northern California and back. It goes without saying that it would give us much joy to be able to welcome any of the American monks in our own temple one day.



Rev. Master Fuden and Rev Clementia in front of Rev. Master Jiyu's stupa

We are very grateful to Lay Ministers Andreas Körner and Benjamin Britz, and to Elisabeth Bucher, who took turns to come on each of the weekends in September when we were at Shasta, to look after the temple.

Not long before travelling to Shasta Abbey, we received the sad news that Gesine Stone, a devoted lay trainee from Hamburg who had been coming to our temple over the last years, had suddenly died. Gesine had been last with us in November 2016. She used to work as a translator and had just finished translating Reverend Master Jiyu's diary from Japan, *The Wild White Goose*, into German, for which we are deeply grateful to her. We will keep Gesine and her sincerity in training in our hearts.



Gesine

It was encouraging for us to see more people from the local community come to the Dharmazuflucht over the last while. Apart from September, when we were in the USA, we kept our regular retreats and meditation Sundays going. Earlier in the year we had organised an open house afternoon at the request of the local community, and those who came seemed to be genuinely interested in what we are doing. In November, the local churches invited us to a meeting of the churches and an ecumenical discussion. Earlier on, we had several school-classes with their teacher come to our temple for a short introduction into meditation.

At the beginning of November, we had our yearly weeklong autumn retreat for the congregation. Six lay trainees came for that, including five German Lay Ministers, and towards the end of it, two more congregation members joined us. During the retreat, we celebrated the Segaki ceremony, and most of the Dharma-talks had the “Feeding of the hungry ghosts” ceremony as their subject.



Rev. Master Fuden with the Lay Ministers



Before the Segaki Ceremony

On the last day of the retreat, and while the Lay Ministers were still here, we had the annual general meeting of our charitable trust (or the German equivalent). Since Rev. Clementia has taken on more and more responsibilities in the running of the temple over the last years, we proposed to the members that we create a new office within the charity, so that she can be part of the board of directors. The proposal was unanimously accepted, and as soon as we have notarized the change in the constitution of the charity, Rev. Clementia will take her new position on the board.

After looking for some time for a new, used car to replace our loyal but struggling 20-year old VW, we found and bought a small Skoda, which is only 7 years old and is already doing a very good job. We are very grateful to all those in our congregation who have made donations towards the purchase of the car.

As always, we cordially invite anyone who is already familiar with our practice to come and train with us even outside of the scheduled retreats.

—*Rev. Master Fuden and Rev. Clementia*

Great Ocean Dharma Refuge

—*Pembrokeshire, Wales—UK—*

During the summer months it was a pleasure to welcome Rev. Master Daishin for a few days' visit, and we appreciated the company of Sister Ruth Furneaux who joined us for a short stay.

Rev. Master Mokugen has recently spent some time away from the temple; visiting family and having some rest and retreat time to help along some health difficulties. During this period Rev. Caitlin continued to lead half day retreats for the local congregation, as well as welcoming monks from Throssel who came to benefit from some quiet retreat time. We thank Rev. Jishin, Rev. Alina and Rev. Master Berwyn for their presence, for their kind help with gardening and various tasks, and for helping

with the plumbing leak due to a hungry mouse chewing our newly renovated plumbing pipes!

This autumn the Temple house ‘Penwern’ received a face-lift with work done around the roof and fascias, including having the four large chimneys repaired and repainted – so they now gleam in the Pembrokeshire sunshine and can withstand the rain.

For retreat opportunities and enquiries we welcome you as always to write or phone Rev. Master Mokugen or Rev. Caitlin at Great Ocean Dharma Refuge, and as always, we thank you for your kind support of the Temple.



Rev. Alina with a friendly robin who made our acquaintance this year.

—Rev. Master Mokugen and Rev. Caitlin

The Place of Peace Dharma House

—Aberystwyth, Wales—UK—

In September Rev. Master Myōhō visited Shasta Abbey to take part in the conclave and monastic gathering. It was 40 years since she, along with five other Britons, first went to the Abbey where, that same year, on September 6th, she had the good fortune to be ordained by Reverend Master Jiyu-Kennett. To be able to go, in person, to make offerings of gratitude and to sit in their

meditation hall again, made it a special visit. Rev. Master Meian, and all of the Abbey monks, were so very welcoming and generous with their hospitality, which was greatly appreciated. As was Rev. Master Kinrei, of the Berkeley Buddhist Priory, who kindly arranged lifts and accommodation for us. Our plane was two hours late in arriving, and the smiling face of Lay minister Helmut Schatz, who had waited patiently for many hours to collect us from the airport, was a most welcome sight. Thank you to everyone who offered help, lifts and other acts of kindness at this time. It was so good to see you all.

Gratitude is also offered to Ceri Jones, who looked after The Place of Peace, with her usual care and competence, whilst Rev. Master Myōhō was in America.

In early September the temple repairs and exterior decoration were completed. The house has a pebble dash finish and the outer walls are painted in a colour called ‘first dawn’. This is very similar to the blue that Reverend Master Jiyu favoured, which represents the tender vastness of meditation.

On November 6th offerings of gratitude were made to our Founder, Reverend Master Jiyu-Kennett, and there was a meditation vigil the evening before. Rev. Master Myōhō offered a talk on how we do not need to look to the past to see Reverend Master, for she is still teaching us, still pointing the way.

Now, with suitcases packed away, and warmth once again filling this little house, we are settled in for the winter, which feels like a natural time of retreat. The two little oak trees, found some years ago, growing from acorns and barely more than three inches high, are now three feet tall and are in full autumnal colour, with flaming yellow leaves that brighten our little garden. Blue tits come to find food in the crevices of our wall. Early November offers a quiet spell before the next retreatants arrive, and the temple opens its doors to welcome them.

—*Rev. Master Myōhō*

Sitting Buddha Hermitage

—Cromford, Derbyshire–UK—

This autumn was for me, as for many monks, dominated by my trip to Shasta Abbey to attend the 2017 Rules Conclave of the OBC. As I am sure that others will have written about the Conclave, suffice it to say that it was a joy to meet up with so many of my fellow monks and the lay ministers who attended, and I am very grateful to all who accommodated me, assisted with my travels and helped to make my visit such a delightful one.

A couple of weeks after my return in early October I gave a talk to a local mental health support group – Wirksworth in Support of Health – including a brief sample period of meditation and a lively question and answer session.

With winter approaching I am planning to do a tidy-up of the courtyard, path and steps using a pressure washer. The stone in this area has a pinkish tint to it and it is a very satisfying job to clean it all up.



—Rev. Alicia

Turning Wheel Buddhist Temple

—East Midlands–UK—

Update on the Building Fund: towards a long-term home for the temple: We are pleased to be able to let you know that we have now found a suitable property for the temple to move to, which is pictured below. It is within half a mile of where we are

at the moment, and is a modern detached house with a substantial extension. It was on the market for £310,000, and the vendor has accepted an offer of £295,000.



We are hoping that this house will be our new temple

The house is in a good quiet location, and has two large downstairs rooms (8m x 5m and 5.4m x 3.3m), together with a good sized kitchen and a downstairs toilet/shower room. It has four bedrooms, and the garage looks like it has potential to be converted to, for example, a downstairs accessible bedroom and a utility-type room. The garden is smallish and has a nice shed at the end.

At the moment the stairs and kitchen are accessed from the main room, which is not ideal. We can see a number of possible ways of reconfiguring things, but it also seems like it would be perfectly usable just as it is, certainly in the short term.

We recently had a survey carried out on the property, and that went fine. We don't yet have any dates for exchanging contracts or completing the sale, but hopefully we might be able to move during either January or February, if things continue to go smoothly.

We have recently received two additional lump sum donations to the building fund. We are very grateful for these, as

well as for a very kind donation from the OBC, and the Building Fund has now received a total of just over £35,300. We have also received a long-term loan from Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, which is very kind of the trustees and the community at Throssel, and makes a big difference to our finances.

Thanks to all of the donations and loans that we have been offered, we do now have sufficient funds to purchase the property. However, any additional support would be most welcome, and details of how to help are on the temple website (www.turningwheel.org.uk/building-fund/). We are very grateful for all your support.

Day Retreat in Nottingham: On Saturday the 28th of October we had a day retreat at the Tiger Boe Centre in Nottingham. It was nice to welcome Sangha members from Nottingham, Loughborough and Leicester, and thank you to all those who helped to make the day such a success.

The large room at Tiger Boe works well as a meditation hall, and the building was nice and quiet throughout the day, despite being so close to the city centre.



Sharing lunch at the Nottingham Day Retreat

—Rev. Aiden

Wolk-en-Water Hermitage

—*Langelille–The Netherlands*—

In the summer and autumn season we had one week-long retreat, a weekend retreat and several Sunday meditation retreats. Once a week a small group of newcomers joins us in the morning/evening.

We have been blessed with the help of several Bodhisattva's (Lies, Wilma and Fer), who did great work in the garden and the premises.



Also we received remarkable dana for the Priory house: Kees and Marie-Jose came to hang up curtains in the common room/kitchen – and donated a 2 1/2 meter wide poster of the Paranirvana reclining Buddha, which now is a great presence in the contemplation room.



Rev. Master Hakuun with the first crop of potatoes from the grounds of the temple

We held FaceTime lectures for the mixed nationality group at Mo and Peter Henderson's Labyrinthe. This seems to work very well.

—*Rev. Master Hakuun*

USA and Canada

Shasta Abbey

—Mt. Shasta, California—USA—

Conclave of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives: We were glad to welcome more than twenty senior monks from throughout the Order who came to join those from Shasta Abbey in the Order-wide Rules Conclave from September 18-29. Participants traveled from Europe and Canada as well as several temple locations in the United States. Three lay ministers also took part and shared insight from the point of view of committed lay practitioners with many years' experience in our tradition.

The purpose of a Conclave, which happens every six years, is to review the Order Rules and make necessary additions, deletions or revisions, which must be ratified by senior monks in Conclave through a process of consensus. In addition to daily meetings we also set aside some time for rest and outings to local scenic places. Local congregation members joined us for an afternoon tea, which gave us a chance to renew long-standing Sangha friendships and meet new Dharma friends.

Meeting together ensures that Sangha members have the opportunity to know each other and to enjoy working together. We are grateful to have had this opportunity to open the monastery to our monastic Sangha for this important work.



Conclave participants listen to announcements.

Retreats:

Summer Retreat on Teachings of our Tradition: This retreat, led by Masters from several temples of our Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, examined various facets of the profound Teachings of the Serene Reflection Meditation tradition. Each of the retreat leaders offered their unique experience and understanding of the Dharma.

Rev. Master Rokuzan Kroenke of Columbia Zen Buddhist Priory in South Carolina; Rev. Master Seikai Luebke of Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple; Rev. Master Meidō Tuttle of Wallowa Buddhist Temple; Rev. Master Mugo White of Jade Mountains Buddha Hall (<http://www.jademountains.net>); and Rev. Master Leandra Robertshaw of Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, Northumberland, U.K. joined Rev. Master Scholastica Hicks of Shasta Abbey in offering Dharma talks, discussions and formal spiritual guidance. Thirty-five guests attended the retreat and found this format very helpful.

We were pleased to welcome nearly thirty guests for the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts retreat over the weekend of October 26-29. The weekend included the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts Ceremony and the Ceremonial Burning of Paper Tombstones (Segaki Toro) Ceremony on Saturday and the Festival of the Founder on Sunday. We now schedule this retreat to coincide with a weekend, which allows more people to join us in offering merit to the spirits of the departed.

Rev. Master Mugo and Rev. Leon Kackman assisted Rev. Master Haryo Young with leading a retreat with seventeen lay ministers October 18-22. The focus was on the *Shushōgi*, a compilation of essential teachings of Great Master Dōgen. In addition to the usual monastic daily schedule, the retreat schedule included time for personal practice of each participant's choice such as Dharma study, meditation, working meditation, small group discussions, exercise and rest.

Precepts Ceremony: On September 2 Rev. Master Meian Elbert gave the Precepts to Alexa Elizabeth Nash and Michael Julian Arnett. We offer them our best wishes as they take this important step in their training.

Memorial Ceremonies: Rev. Master Jishō Perry was the celebrant for an early October memorial for Robert Uhl, who died suddenly in Yreka, California, on September 30. Robert, age 38, had taken the Precepts at Jukai, attended retreats, and spent a period of lay residency at Shasta Abbey. Members of Robert's family attended the ceremony.

On October 14, Rev. Master Ando Mueller was the celebrant for a memorial for Danny Dirck, age 34, who died earlier this year in Chicago. More than twenty of Danny's friends and family attended. Danny had spent time in residence and taken the Precepts here in recent years. We offer our deep sympathy to the families and friends of both these young people who died unexpectedly.

Animal Shelter Blessing: When Rev. Helen and local congregation member Rosemary Dyke went to perform the monthly Animal Shelter blessing at the Humane Society of Siskiyou County on Thursday, October 28, they found that the staff had just discovered that the Shelter had been robbed of all drugs, medical supplies, computer equipment, and much more. In addition, the building had been trashed. The animals were all accounted for, though the cage doors and doors to the cat rooms had been left wide open. A tip from a neighbor, led to the arrest of the suspected thief and the return of most of the equipment. Thankfully the Mount Shasta community responded with overwhelming generosity and support for the Shelter, the animals and the staff. Rev. Helen and Rosemary came back on November 2 to do a combined blessing and purification ceremony.

Office Blessing: Rev. Helen also blessed the new InterimHealthCare Home Health, Hospice and Personal Care facility in Redding, California, on November 4, naming it Place of the Water of Compassion. Robert Seawright, RN and CEO of InterimHealthCare, who has been a long-time friend and generous benefactor of Shasta Abbey, acted as chaplain for the ceremony, which was attended by InterimHealthCare staff and friends.

Visitors from the Vietnamese Buddhist Tradition: We were glad to welcome Chan Phuong Thien, a novice female monk from the Thien Vien Dieu Nhan temple in Rescue, California, who trained with us for a week in late October and found our teachings to share much in common with the practice taught by her grand-master. Several days later we enjoyed a day-long visit from two male and two female monks and twelve laypeople from the Buu Hung Monastery in Vancouver, Washington. After a tour of the monastery they joined us for lunch, listened to a Dharma talk by Rev. Master Ando Mueller and translated by one of the group, then joined in a Dharma discussion with members of our monastic community before re-boarding their bus for the trip home.

In late August Rev. Vivian Grunenfelder and Rev. Master Leandra, who was visiting us from Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey in the U.K., spent a long weekend at Sonoma Mountain Zen Center. They had the opportunity to meet with Jakusho Kwong Roshi, the temple's founder and head priest, to spend time with other community members, and to join in their practice schedule. It was a joy for both of them to experience the training at this Sōtō Zen temple.

Meditation Group Visits/College Classes: Rev. Master Meikō Jones traveled to Meadow Vista in early October to lead a retreat with the Bear River Meditation Group, with a focus on offering merit. The retreat included a Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts (Segaki) Ceremony and a Segaki Toro. Rev. Master Meikō and group members also offered a blessing ceremony at a local trail called the “Assassin Trail,” the site of two unsolved murders.

Rev. Vivian visited Sierra College in Rocklin, California on November 6 and gave a talk on “Women in Buddhism” for Christine Vona’s Women, Gender and Religion class. She was accompanied by three members of the Bear River Meditation Group. She attended the group's regular Monday evening meeting and led a discussion entitled, “Why Don’t We Like Meditation?”

Two of our monks combined visits to the Chico Serene Reflection Meditation Group with talks to classes at the California State University, Chico:

Rev. Master Oswin Hollenbeck and Rev. Allard Kieres visited Chico from October 10-12. On the 11th, Rev. Master Oswin offered a well-received introduction to Buddhism to Professor Jason Clower’s East Asian Religions class, and Rev. Allard helped with answering questions. They joined the meditation group that same evening for a potluck, meditation and Dharma talk. Rev. Master Oswin led a discussion on the Four Wisdoms, based on different translations of these qualities and drawing out examples from group members’ experiences.

Rev. Master Oswin and Rev. Allard also visited the New Clairvaux Cistercian monastery at Vina, where they viewed the restoration-in-progress of a 12th-century Spanish monastery's chapter house which is being incorporated into the monastery's new sanctuary and worship center.

Rev. Margaret Clyde visited the Chico meditation group in early November for a talk and discussion on gratitude, especially on expressing gratitude for things we may find unpleasant. On the following day she spoke to Professor Daniel Veidlinger's Asian Religions class about the history of our Order in this country, the monastic schedule and practice, and her personal experience with monasticism. Rev. Master Oswin, Rev. Allard and Rev. Margaret would like to express their appreciation for the generous hospitality extended to them by Chico group members and the two professors and their students.

Summer Projects: Many of our tall trees died during the five-year drought, and we continued with the project of cutting them down for safety reasons, and working meditation during the summer included converting them into firewood and lumber. The Friends of Shasta Abbey offered a workday in early November to "winterize" the temple and bring in the last of the firewood.

Other large projects included replacing installing and plumbing new tanks for the meditation hall, kitchen and Bodhidharma Hall boilers, construction of a new firewood shed, and re-finishing the fountain outside the Buddha Hall.



Lay residents load lumber onto the truck.



Digging a trench for the kitchen water-heating system.



Sanding the Buddha Hall fountain to prepare for re-finishing
—Rev. Margaret

Lions Gate Buddhist Priory
—Lytton, British Columbia—Canada—

On September 5 and 6, we moved the statue of Kwan Yin up to Fearlessness Peak. The statue is 5 metres (16.4 ft) tall and weighs 10 metric tons (22,000 lbs). It was carved out of a single block of stone in Vietnam. The Kwan Yin is very beautiful, holding a vase containing the waters of compassion in her left hand, and making a blessing mudra with her right.

This move was the culmination of much effort over several years by many people. The statue was offered to us four years ago by Tu Viën Chan Nguyen, a Vietnamese monastery in Langley

BC near Vancouver. When the Abbot, Venerable Thich Viën Giac, visited our property with his community of male and female monks, he wanted us to have a large Kwan Yin statue to look out and bless the valley and the town of Lytton.

Before we moved the statue, it was necessary to have our driveway improved, which meant getting a water truck and grader here. The next step was to get a sturdy concrete base constructed. Before the crew started digging the hole in which the base was to be placed, we contacted Lytton First Nations, and they sent up a representative to look for any indigenous artefacts that might possibly be unearthed. None were found, but the representative said it was a likely place for them, as Fearlessness Peak looks like the type of place that someone might have chosen in the past while on a Vision Quest, which was a spiritual journey undertaken by adolescents as a rite of passage.

After the hole was dug, the crew built forms and poured concrete for a 6' x 6' base, one ft. thick, on top of which they poured a column, 4' x 4' and 8' tall. Then they backfilled the hole and spread a layer of gravel around the base.

A few weeks later on September 5, after the concrete had a chance to cure, the actual move took place. This was a major operation that took two days. A large mobile crane was required at both ends of the move.

The statue spent the night on the truck outside the Lytton Hotel, eliciting much curiosity from the townspeople. Early the next morning Kwan Yin arrived at Lions Gate. The truck had no problem getting up our steep road, but the crane got stuck halfway around the first switchback and we needed to tow it. Before the statue was placed, Rev. Master Kōten inscribed a large Sanskrit OM seed syllable on its base as a blessing. Standing on a small rise on top of Fearlessness Peak, the statue looks quite magnificent, facing south towards the village of Lytton and the Fraser Canyon beyond, blessing the world.

We are grateful to the community of Tu Viên Chan Nguyen; to everyone from Lillooet Contracting, Wingenback Industrial Movers, and VSA Highway Maintenance; and to all the many people who donated the funds, encouragement and support necessary to bring Kwan Yin to Dragonflower Mountain. We warmly invite anyone who wishes to come and see her.



Rev. Master Aurelian and the new statue

[photo by Bob Page]

We had a hot, dry summer here on the mountain and a pleasant sunny autumn. We were lucky that none of the many forest fires in the area affected our valley this year. In September several of us insulated and winterised Prajnatara Hall, our “log cabin zendo,” which we hope will enable us to use the meditation hall through the winter. As well we have been busy gathering and

splitting firewood, and John has been clearing underbrush from around Bodhidharma Hall, which is important for fire prevention. We replaced the propane fittings on our hot water heater, and installed a propane heater in Raven Cottage and Rev. Master's Kōten's room.

Our venerable 34-year-old truck, which we have been using to plow snow and haul wood, finally “died” this past winter. We were able to purchase a newer, more reliable truck to replace it. It’s a 3/4 ton Dodge Ram Diesel with a lot of power, and in excellent condition. It is also driveable on public roads, which our previous truck was not. We are hoping that it will serve us well for many years.

In September Rev. Master Kōten and Rev. Master Aurelian travelled to Shasta Abbey in California to attend a Conclave of our Order. We are very grateful to the community of Shasta Abbey for hosting this event; to Rev. Leon, Prior of Portland Buddhist Priory, who helped expedite our accommodation and travel enroute to the Abbey; to all the monks who came from North America and Europe; and to everyone who helped make this event possible so that we could renew old spiritual bonds and forge new ones.

We were happy to host several retreats over the spring, summer and autumn. Although with winter approaching we end our scheduled retreats for the year, we always welcome guests who would like to visit for any length of time, whether it’s just for a cup of tea or a long retreat. Please contact us if you would like to visit.

We continue to hold weekly meditation meetings on Tuesday nights at 6:00 pm at the Chinese History Museum (Joss House) in Lytton. As well, the Vancouver congregation meets on the last Sunday of the month at the residence of Supriti Bharna. Please contact us for details.

—*Rev. Master Aurelian*

Wallowa Buddhist Temple

—Joseph, Oregon—USA—

Our mountain wilderness and secluded valley have been experiencing a wet and blustery autumn this year, interspersed with glorious sunny days and even a few snow showers.

Offering of the Dharma: Rev. Master Meidō was delighted to participate (as one of the six OBC monks offering the Dharma) in the week-long “Teachings of Our Tradition” retreat held at Shasta Abbey in mid-August. It meant a lot to her to be there at Shasta Abbey, working with the other monks to offer this retreat.

Monks to Conclave: In September, Rev. Master Meidō and Rev. Clairissa spent three weeks at Shasta Abbey attending the OBC monastic conclave. It was a joy to see so many of our fellow monastics and to be gathered together with everyone at the monastery for a good long while, participating in the business of the conclave and also simply catching up and/or getting to know each other better. We are grateful that it was possible for both of us to be there, thanks in large part to a local congregation member who stayed at the Wallowa Buddhist Temple, caring for the two cats and looking after the buildings and grounds.

Retreat Guests: Despite the ongoing remodeling project and our being away for three weeks in September, there was still time for us to welcome two retreat guests this fall: a woman from Bend, Oregon, who came for a week from late August into September, and a woman who joined us for ten days in October from Victoria, B.C., Canada.

Segaki Ceremony: On October 29th, a bright and crisp fall day allowed us to celebrate the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts ceremony outdoors on the temple patio. The ceremony was followed by an abundant vegetarian potluck lunch held inside the temple building around our wood stove. We were delighted that day to greet as one of the potluck guests the newest member of

our local congregation (and his mother) on their first visit to the temple since his birth in August.

Meditation Hall: The project is nearing completion to re-insulate and remodel the meditation hall so that it can be more efficiently heated in winter, with improved wiring for light and sound. We continue to work in the now-much-warmer hall between services, with help from a number of volunteers, friends, neighbors, and local businesses.

New Temple Statue: A magnificent life-sized hand-carved wooden Balinese Avalokiteshwara statue was unexpectedly found and purchased in October to serve as one of the main statues in the temple. We are now working to create an altar space that will properly accommodate her. We plan to include photos in a future issue of the Journal when the work has been completed.

Individual Retreats: One of the Wallowa Buddhist Temple's main purposes is to offer a place where both monks and congregation from our wider Sangha can come for individual retreats. Those interested in arranging such a retreat are welcome to call or write for more information.

—*Rev. Master Meidō and Rev. Clairissa*

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For details of meditation groups in Europe, please contact your nearest priory, or the Guestmaster at Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey.

For details of meditation groups in the US and Canada, please contact your nearest priory, or the Guestmaster at Shasta Abbey

Further Information

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As Buddhism grows in the West, we wish to share the Buddha's Teaching through our Journal; we also share our experience of practicing the Buddha's Way, thus encouraging and supporting each other's training. Lastly, the Journal helps to keep friends and members informed of activities and events.

The views expressed in these pages are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Order as a whole.

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