



# One Heart- One Mind

*The Newsletter of the Association  
of Engaged Buddhists*

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## Meditation & Dhamma Teaching

7.30pm every Monday night.

- Join with others in sitting practice.

7.30pm every Wed night.

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

## Dana Days

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

*Please note that we must start promptly at 10:30am in order for the Sangha to finish eating by noon. The next Dana Day will be Sunday 4th June 2016*

## Association News

*Bhante Tejadhammo's Travel*

*Bhante Pandit's Visit*

*Joint Vesak Celebration*

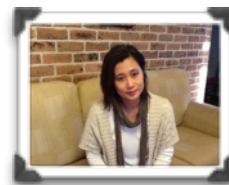
*Volunteers*

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## Membership Profile

*Meredith Tan*

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## Bhante Pandit on His Visit to Sydney

It's been several weeks now that I have been in Sydney. Thanks to Grahame White and Steven Smith for connecting me with Bhante Tejadhammo, which brought me here. Your reception, from the groups and centers, has been welcoming, and fun. While Bangkok suffers a drought, a heatwave (hot even for Thailand), and further descent into military dictatorship, Sydney has been a welcome change.

It really is the land of the free and the friendly. I know you all complain about social changes, politicians and rising prices, but I hope you also remember to appreciate the free and organised society you have. And your great weather.

I'm getting familiar with the train, light rail, busses, and with linking up the multitude of parks in long walks. Much of my time walking though, has been spent standing at crossroads waiting for

green men to tell me it is safe to cross the road. I bet it was some pommie bureaucrat who came over and convinced your council that people could not cross the road by themselves!

Comparing the communities here and in Bangkok, it is noticeable to me how much more you are able to come together in tight groups. The Thai capital, where getting to anywhere takes at least an hour, is not commuter friendly. It is a city of transients as people tend to stay a year or two and move on. Or else they are based in Bangkok only for convenience in flying out to work in local Asian projects. I guess Sydney is quite a long way from anywhere else!

Vejjasala retreat centre is very nice. I took pleasure in the cool weather. It is something I have not experienced for many years - my English blood must have thinned out! I also noticed how quiet it was in the meditation hall without the constant gushing of air-conditioners, or the other city and country noises that one cannot escape in

Asia. I can really see that this retreat centre will be a great resource now and in the future. Meditation needs to be developed in quiet spaces with good kalyanamitta (friends in the dhamma), as well as in an urban setting and work life.

It seems that Western Buddhism is growing up. It is twenty years since I was in England, and even yoga was considered a bit esoteric back then. Let alone monks and nibbana.

The psychology industries have in recent years usurped the term 'mindfulness' and turned it into a therapy tool, for patients, and more lately, for therapists. This secularization of one element of Buddhist practice worries some people. Is the path really just about trying to be a bit more mindful? Can we remove references to nibbana, arahants and enlightenment?

Well it's OK I think.

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Many people actually just want to feel a bit better. The materialist ideal where getting more consumer goods equals happiness, was probably justified in my parents' generation where rebuilding after WW II was the zeitgeist. These days we are growing aware of the limitations of material goods. It is society growing up and adapting to the times. The battle for perfect spiritual enlightenment was and always will be an occupation of the few. That mindfulness can enter the mainstream is a good thing. People who do have a real interest will get to hear about meditation and this path of development. That is something I missed growing up. I was 22 before I came across meditation.

When Buddhism was first traveling from Asia to the West there was a strong contingent which thought monks and monasteries would not fit. They were too alien. Psychology was the back door into a new culture. There was much discussion of whether Western cultures would be able to support real monasteries. Teachers now famous, who had been monks, disrobed in order to take the teachings back into the Western cultures. I don't think that is a good excuse any more!

Now that mindfulness has become a fairly current term, albeit in a diluted and stripped down form, there seems to be an appreciation for where it has come from. Monks and monasteries are not quite so strange as once they seemed. Especially with more resources becoming available via internet - you know when I first got started we had to copy dharma talks onto cassette tapes one at a time. English stuff was hard to come by. English society did not know what to make of robed figures.

The monastic side of this path will always be with us. It is noteworthy that after the Buddha passed away there were some 18 schools of Buddhism in India. They seemed to get along with each other, and dwelled side by side in the great Buddhist Universities of India. Some of them accepted only the Suttas, and not the Vinaya (monks rules). Some were recitation schools. Some focussed on the different forms of Abhidhamma (philosophy). Some were for lay people. The largest was the Puggalavadins, who posited a transcendent self, similar to an Atman.

The school that survived and became Theravada was the chanting school. These monks kept up the rituals and recitations. You might have expected the meditation schools to be the one to last into the modern era, but it was not so.

This school eventually was edged out in Sri Lanka by the more Mahayana leaning school, and so at that point the great Indian monk Buddhagosa set all the Pali canon down into streamlined Pali, along with the commentaries. This is where we get the Theravada Buddhist teachings from today. Buddhagosa had been afraid that without enough monks to maintain the recitations, the original teachings would die out.

Long term, I believe, it is always the ritual side of a tradition that will last. I have seen it in the Thai temples. There are often great meditators, and great teachers. Charisma is found everywhere. But the places and teachings that last and have a firm foundation belong to the quiet monks and lay groups who just get on with the rituals and running the temples. These are the guardians of the dhamma, who keep the story alive.

**Pandit Bhikkhu**

## Accommodation Request

Genevieve Lawlor is one of our overseas members who lives in Ireland. Last year she came out during her long-service leave from her nursing job and spent several weeks in Australia. You may have met her at Wednesday meditation or at one of the retreats she attended at Vejjasala. Genevieve is hoping to come out again but that will be partly dependent on finding some accommodation at a reasonable cost.

If any of our members has a spare room and wouldn't mind a visitor, Genevieve would be happy to pay some rent. She has no immediate plans to travel but is looking to explore possibilities. If you have the space perhaps you could drop her an email at [genevieve1@eircom.net](mailto:genevieve1@eircom.net)

## Words of the Buddha

Yadūnakam taṃ saṇati,  
yaṃ pūraṃ santameva taṃ.  
Aḍḍhakumbhūpamo bālo,  
rahado pūrova paṇḍito.

Things that are empty make a noise,  
the full is always quiet.

The fool is like a half-filled pot,  
the wise one is like a deep still pool.

Listen – you can hear the Pali chanted here:  
[http://host.pariyatti.org/dwob/sutta\\_nipata\\_3\\_726.mp3](http://host.pariyatti.org/dwob/sutta_nipata_3_726.mp3)





# Association News

*K K Lim*

## **Bhante Tejadharmo's Journey**

Bhante landed in Tokyo on 11 April to start his Japanese journey. He travelled by bullet train to Kyoto and after a trip of several hours including local trains, cable cars and bus, he arrived at the holy mountain of Koyasan.

Bhante stayed three nights at Sekishouin temple (whose Abbot spoke no English but knew some Thai which became the common language between the two of them) in a lovely room overlooking ponds and adjoining forests. He visited the mausoleum of Kukai, a famous monk who brought Buddhism to Japan more than 1200 years ago. Along the way, he passed through Okunoin a path of several kms amongst centuries old cedar trees and thousands of graves. He also went for many walks in great spring weather with cherry blossoms of this mountain top and visited some of the many beautiful temples in the town.

An incident of note was that whilst Bhante was in Koyasan, a severe earthquake hit the southern part of Japan unfortunately resulting in multiple casualties.

Bhante next travelled to Kyoto where he continued his visit to the numerous ancient temples and monasteries in this ancient city and its vicinity. He then went back to Tokyo where amongst the temples he went to included Kamakura with its Giant Buddha statue.

Some of the wonderful photos that Bhante took of the sights in Japan can be viewed on AEB's facebook page.

Bhante has gone on the second part of his journey and is now in France.

## **Bhante Pandit's Visit**

We welcomed Bhante Pandit to Sangha Lodge on 18 April after a long trip from

Bangkok and Singapore. He quickly settled into bringing his dharma teaching to the Sydney community each Wednesday night when he talked on a number of dharma topics followed by meditation.

A full complement of retreatants enjoyed Bhante's successful Chachakka retreat over the ANZAC Day long weekend on 22 – 25 April at Vejjasala.

Bhante was also kept very busy with Tuesday night teachings at the Buddhist Library as well as other engagements with other Buddhist groups in Sydney.

These teachings combined with meditation and Q&A have been well-received as Bhante kept listeners' interest with stories from the classics as well as his personal experiences.

We are very thankful for the many members of the community who stepped forward to help make Bhante Pandit's stay more comfortable with their various acts of dana.

## **Chris and Jan Macarthy's Camino Walk**

Chris and Jan took some personal time off from their work in helping to cater for retreats at Vejjasala. The two of them are walking the Camino Pilgrims Trail in Spain. They have put up photos of the beautiful landscape on the AEB facebook to share their experiences with the community. People are encouraged to sponsor this walk with a lump sum or by distance covered with all donations going to AEB.

## **Dana and Day of Teaching at Vejjasala**

Vejjasala hosted AEB's Dana day on 6 March. In the morning some 40 or so people attended on a glorious day of sunshine at the beautiful grounds of Vejjasala.

After Bhante gave some teaching and all joined to have some meditation practice, the group shared lunch out under the trees. Most took the opportunity to view the new kutis that were set up in January and see the waterfall where an image of the Buddha has been placed at the base.

Lynne Bousfield, Graham White and Steven Smith joined the lunch following which the crowd swelled with another 30 or so new arrivals who came for an afternoon of dharma teaching by these great teachers. The day ended with the teachers donating the cash dana they had received to AEB.

Sadhu sadhu sadhu!

## **Luang Por Jamnian Monastics's Visit**

On Wednesday 13 April, three senior monks from the revered Luang Por Jamnian lineage made a courtesy call to Sangha Lodge. Luang Por Ngam (Thailand), Phra Woody (USA) and Phra Kong (Germany) were in Sydney on a one week trip to prepare for Luang Por Jamnian's upcoming retreat on 4 – 10 July 2016. Those who are interested in attending this retreat to be held at Pennant Hills can get details on [www.mettacentre.com](http://www.mettacentre.com).

## **Visiting Teachers**

Sangha Lodge hosted two wonderful visiting teachers in the past two months. Jim Teoh came in March to teach about Mudhita, one of the 10 Paramis. In April, Frank Patay who has practised as a Buddhist for 50 years gave teachings on the 8 worldly conditions where he shared his views on living the dharma.

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### Joint Vesak Celebrations with the Buddhist Library

AEB jointly hosted Vesak celebration on 8 May at the Buddhist Library commencing 9am. Members of the Sangha in attendance included representatives from the 3 Buddhist traditions – Theravada, Mahayana & Vajrayana. They included Bhante Pandit, Phra Nick, and Sister Sudhira, Venerable Ban Ruu, and Venerable Forzi, Dungyud Rinpoche and Tenzin Phil. The programme featured teaching by the venerables, shared lunch and bathing of the Buddha image.

### Interfaith Forum

K K Lim, on behalf of AEB, was invited by Advance Diversity Service (formerly NSW Migrant Resource Centre) to be on the panel for an interfaith forum at the Hurstville Civic Centre. The panellists represented Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and Hindu communities to discuss achieving harmony amidst inter-religious conflict. More than 200 people attended who actively participated in the Q&A session.

Following on this, Advance Diversity has invited K K to be on the Interfaith Planning committee for St George District and Sutherland Shire covering about 500000 residents. This will provide the opportunity to ensure that dharma perspectives are included whenever needed, especially to help Buddhists living within the designated areas.

### Volunteers

In the past months, many of our supporters have come forward to offer their involvement in our various activities in the spirit of engaged Buddhism. Some of these roles include:

- retreat coordinator
- retreat design and marketing
- newsletter collator
- dana offerings for Bhante Pandit
- cooking at Vejjasala
- volunteers' register
- assisting joint Wesak celebrations
- maintenance of website
- cleaning and maintenance at Sangha Lodge and Vejjasala
- helping at PAL School in various capacities
- many other duties that keep AEB going but not mentioned

People who wish to be involved please talk with any committee member as there are ongoing need for helpers. Some volunteers may be needed for new initiatives that the committee is looking into that include:

- teaching English to refugee/migrant students for secondary schools
- collecting food and dry packages for the needy
- promoting interfaith youth harmony

## Upcoming Events

### Dana Day Dharma Discus

A dharma discussion, led by Jim Teoh, Patricia Austin and John Wan is scheduled for the June Dana day. This date on 5 June will be different to the usual dana day practice which focuses

on the offer of food to a member of the Sangha. The topic is appropriately on Dana, the first of the 10 Paramis, and participants are encouraged to explore and share their dana practices.

### Dave and Pip going on a Journey

Dave Denton has lived and worked on Vejjasala making enormous improvements for more than two years. Pip has assisted tremendously mainly over the weekends from her job when she has kept the premises neat and tidy. They have decided to take time away to journey through South East Asia and India, keeping their passion to visit Buddhist sites in these countries. AEB will miss their generous contributions in transforming Vejjasala into the wonderful place that it is today.

### Visiting Teachers in June

We have some wonderful teachers lined up for Wednesday evening teachings in June. The teachers are:

Sue Toohey  
Eng Kong Tan  
Lynne Bousfield  
Grahame White  
Malcolm Pearce

## Membership Profile

### Meredith Tan - 2016 AEB Secretary

*The subject of our membership profile this month is Meredith Tan. Meredith is a mother of three who migrated to Australia in 2008. Since coming to Sangha Lodge she has been a very willing volunteer in many of our activities and at the end of 2015 she took on the role of Secretary of the Association.*

### A little bit about my 'past life'

Before coming to Australia, I had a



totally different life. I was working for an Investment holding company, holding a high position in the management level; In my work, I had to set up different & very diversified businesses and companies in different countries, dealing with Government Officials, managing the company operations and staff force in different areas. Although financially I was quite comfortable, I was always busy, stressful, travelling a lot and hardly had time for any spiritual development.

Later, in order to provide a safer and better growing environment for our children, my husband and I decided to migrate to Australia. This decision required lots of sacrifices financially and mentally. We virtually had to give up a very comfortable life and start a new life from scratch in another country, but for the sake of our children's future, we were willing to accept the challenge.

#### My Dharma Development

Two years before migrating, I quit my job - which shocked many people as I was always known as a very career minded person. During this period, I had the opportunity to get involved in a Buddhist Society in my community and quickly became an active member of the society. I was also very blessed that I had the opportunity to be part of the project in developing the Sunday Dharma School for the society. It was during that time that my Dharma knowledge started to surge, especially when I was asked to be one of the Dharma facilitators in the Sunday Dharma School. You learn the fastest when you need to teach other people!!! It was also during that period that I attended many Dharma workshops, conferences, discussions and listened to many Dharma talks from many remarkable and distinguished teachers, both monastic and lay teachers.

#### How Dharma Helps

I've been through a very tough life. Since I was small, my life was anything but 'smooth'. My mind has always been filled with frustration, anger, guilt, confusion and maybe delusion. Dharma has helped me getting through difficult times, helped me to understand life one bit at a time. Learning about Karma has taught me to stop dwelling upon the

past or the future but to appreciate and focus on the present moment.

#### How I First Came Across Sangha Lodge

When I came to Australia, I have to 're-establish' my Dharma circle. I tried to look for Dharma related activities around my area but it was not as easy as I thought. I still remember I called the Buddhist Council one day and Sujata (Sue) was the receptionist there. She was very kind to give me some contacts that included Aloka, Hills Dharma group etc.

Later, I get to know that there were scripture classes in my children's school, however at that time, there were only Christian or Catholic scriptures. So I approached the Principal to see if I can start a Buddhist Scripture class. I was thinking, at least I would have 3 'customers' (my children). I was delighted that the Buddhist Scripture class generated interest and grew quite quickly from one class to 3 classes within a short period of time. Later I got to know about the SRE program at Buddhist Council and I attended their SRE teacher training program. Molly was the SRE coordinator at that time and from her I got to know about Sangha Lodge. I was really impressed with Bhante Tejadhamo's teaching and felt very connected. Ever since then, I have become 'quite a regular' visitor to Sangha Lodge. Actually, I met Bhante even before I came to Australia. I attended a Buddhist Conference in Malaysia and Bhante was one of the speakers at that Conference. I remember I was telling my friends, Wow! this monk is so knowledgeable and yet so humble and so down to earth. He always has a smile on his face and was very friendly, looked like a happy monk to me! I like to be around happy monk, not 'scary monk', haha! I believe that there are many good teachers out there but you have to look for teachers that you can connect with and understand, who can help you pursue your Dharma path at that particular time of your life.

#### How I Practice

Well, Dharma to me is something that, the more you know, the more you know that you don't know. Although I have

been exposed to some Dharma teaching, I have to say that I still have a long long way to go in the Dharma path. I am not a very 'scholarly' type of person, until today I still don't remember any single sutta. But I try to practice whatever I know or understand in my daily life as much as I can and teach my children to do the same too. To start from something, no matter how small, is always better than never to start at all.



### Jack Kornfield, "A Meditation on Gratitude and Joy,"

*With gratitude I remember the people,  
animals, plants, insects,  
creatures of the sky and sea, air and water,  
fire and earth, all  
whose joyful exertion blesses my life every  
day.*

*With gratitude I remember the care and  
labour of a thousand  
generations of elders and ancestors who  
came before me.*

*I offer my gratitude for the safety and  
well-being I have been given.  
I offer my gratitude for the blessings of this  
earth I have been given.*

*I offer my gratitude for the family and  
friends I have been given.  
I offer my gratitude for the company I have  
been given.*

*I offer my gratitude for the teachings and  
lessons I have been given.  
I offer my gratitude for the life I have been  
given.*

Jack Kornfield, "A Meditation on Gratitude and Joy," The Wise Heart (Bantam, 2008), 399-400

## Donations

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

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

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

## Association Membership

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

## For Those in Need

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

### Prayer for Freedom from Suffering

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

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

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

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

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

