

Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd.

33 Brooking St. Upwey 3158 Victoria Australia. Telephone 754 3334.
(Incorporated in Victoria)

NEWSLETTER NO. 7 MARCH, 1982

Library Project B.D.C. (UPWEY).

Bookcases have been installed in the front room which will be the main Library. Further Buddhist books have been purchased.

A set of Dewey Decimal Classification Texts have been donated to B.D.C. (Upwey). Dewey Indexing has commenced, thanks to the efforts of Martin Lawless. Index cards are now being prepared.

The target date for opening to the public has been set at 1st December, 1982. Interested persons are invited to help this project.

Chinese Buddhism Lecture.

Marie Castles, Third Year student of State Teacher's College, was loaned slides, tapes, images and written material to provide a lecture to trainee teachers on 5th March, 1982. By all reports, this was successful. It is important that future school teachers have exposure to notions of Buddha Dharma, in view of the multicultural nature of Australia.

Visit by Phra Khantipalo.

On 14th March, 1982, Dana offerings were made to Bhikkhu Khantipalo. Bhikkhu Khantipalo was born just north of London. After being with the British Army during the Second World War, he joined the Buddhist Society in London, and after three years as a lay Buddhist, took novice ordination from Ven. Dr. H. Saddhatissa Mahathera of the London Buddhist Vihara. After some time in India, he took Higher Ordination as a Bhikkhu under the Ven. Abbot of Wat Cakkapat, Bangkok. In Thailand, he studied for eleven years.

On his first visit to Australia, he accompanied a Thai Bhikkhu to set up Wat Buddha Rhangsee at Sydney. After a few years, he went to Sri Lanka where he helped with the work of the Buddhist Publication Society.

He is at present Abbot of Wat Buddha Dhamma, near Sydney. His wide range of writings have been on various aspects of Buddha Dhamma. His book, "Banner of the Arahants", First Edition 1979, is recommended reading for those who may wonder what monks do.

A summary of the Venerable's talk given at B.D.C. (Upwey) is enclosed.

DHAMMA TALK - Mentone Girls High School.

On 11th. February, 1982, John Hughes of B.D.C. (Upwey) gave a talk to about 100

senior students of Mentone Girls High School at the Church of Christ Fellowship Centre at Monbulk.

Some walking meditation was taught. Many copies of "Buddhism in Daily Life" by Nina Van Gorkom (a gift from the Dhamma Study Fund) were freely distributed to the young ladies.

Subsequently, their teacher, Winsome Dennis, advised John "If you could see the references to your speech that keeps cropping up in essays, you would I'm sure feel very satisfied".

There is much merit to be made by equating the five Buddhist precepts with Christian Commandments for those born in the West. More importantly the logical nature of primary socialization created on the child's consciousness can be used to allow a progressive abstraction from the roles and attitude of specific others to roles and attitudes in general. The decisive step of this generalized identification allows his own self-identification to attain stability and continuity. When the generalized other has been crystallised, a symmetrical relationship is established between objective reality, according to P.L. Berger.

While such social construction of reality is truly ignorance of anatta, it may hopefully lead to the production of wholesome "kamma formations" now and at some future time.

Western psychological theories may be empirically adequate to form a basis of morality in Western educated minds, and if that morality is "good enough", the future conditions for the "direct seeing" of sila could arise.

For these reasons, Western Buddhists of good heart may consider such notions as being within the "skillful teaching means" of the Buddha. As the antidote to the culturally induced killing of flies and mosquitoes for which native born Australians are prone, the suggestion that 'no being likes to be killed' as an appropriate point has often proved effective. The effectiveness of Dhamma teaching is sure when right understanding, rather than dogma, is transmitted.
May all beings be happy.

Dhammapada teaching in English and Pali by Ven. Shanti Bhadra at B.D.C.

On alternate Fridays, Bhanti teaches in Pali and English language, slokas of the Dhammapada. The directness of this teaching method is very powerful and it appears as an indication of the maturity of Australian propagation of Buddhist Dhamma that this rare opportunity should occur. Considerable publicity was generated by local newspapers on this event.

Members of B.D.C. (Upwey) are extremely fortunate to experience such Teachings and have a profound sense of gratitude to the Ven. Shanti Bhadra for his kindness.

H.H. Kyabje Ling Rinpoche Blessing.

A Blessing cord from H.H. Kyabje Ling Rinpoche has been received at B.D.C.

(Upwey). H.H. is the senior tutor to H.H. the Dalai Lama and is 97th holder of the Ganden throne, and thus head of the Gelug Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Very many B.D.C. members were able to share the Blessings of the cord.

In a teaching given at Tushita on November 14th, 1979, H.H. Kyabje Ling Rinpoche taught that as a result of the birth of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, great waves of enlightened energy spread throughout the universe, influencing sentient beings to create positive kamma.

In brief, H.H. teaches we should have the wish to help others maintain their happiness and separate from suffering regardless of whether they have acted as friend or enemy to us. The true blessing is we take upon ourselves the responsibility of actually fulfilling others requirements.

When the practice is near completion, the Bodhisattva develops the granting of wishes for the benefit of others. True compassion does not discriminate between beings; it regards all with equal emotion.

With an effective Bodhisattva Guru - disciple relationship, step by step the seeds of Bodhimind can grow within us. May all beings be happy.

Newsletter Mailing List.

Over the last two years, whilst costs of printing and postage have risen, so also has our mailing list. So now for the first time we ask recipients to please advise if they would like to continue to receive each newsletter. Also, whilst not making a subscription compulsory, anyone who would like to assist with a yearly contribution of their own choice may meritoriously do so.

Insurance and Superannuation.

If your insurances are not handled to your complete satisfaction, John Hughes offers his services of Local C.M.L. Representative as an alternative. Areas covered are:

Contents (replacement - new for old)	Mortgage Insurance
Buildings	Personal
Superannuation	
Personal Property	Sickness & Accident
Cars, caravans and boats	Term Insurance
Personal Liability	Life Insurance
Fire, loss of profits	Savings & Investment
Burglary, plate glass	Partnership Insurance
Key Man Protection	Children's Policies
Employee & Directors Superannuation	Funeral Expenses

Now, or on renewal, please feel free to ring for no obligation details on 7543334.

Programme 1982.

These activities are open to everyone at no charge. Donations are welcome and tax

deductible.

Monday 8 p.m. Meditation and Discourse with John Hughes
Friday 9.30 a.m. Pali and English Chanting.
Friday 8 p.m. Meditation and Discourse with John Hughes.
Pujas are conducted at various times throughout the year.

Meditation Courses held throughout the year.

- 1) Three Days Queen's Birthday weekend - June.
- 2) Two days August school holidays.
- 3) Five days Christmas holidays.

Hatha Yoga classes conducted by Franny Sime.

Monday	6.00 p.m.	Tara House
Tuesday	9.00 a.m. 6.00 p.m.) 7.30 p.m.) 8.30 p.m.)	Selby House Mt. Waverley
Wednesday	10.30 a.m.) 11.30 a.m.) 7.15 p.m.) 8.30 p.m.)	Mt. Waverley Upwey South Primary School

Please ring 7543334 for details.

GRAPHIC IMAGE Please see GI.7-001

Group Photo Here. Visit of Geshe Loden to B.D.C.(U) Ltd.
(One full page)

COMMITTEE FOR THE VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS DALAI LAMA
87 Westbury Street, Balaclava, 3183. Tel: 5278010

Dear Friend,

You may already know that his Holiness the Dalai Lama has been invited by the Buddhists of Australia to visit our country. His Holiness is possibly the best-known Buddhist in the world today and is highly respected by all Buddhists whatever their school, and by people of other religions. I am delighted to be able to tell you that His Holiness has accepted our invitation and the Australian Government has given its permission for the visit.

An itinerary has been proposed for a tour in August this year. His Holiness is to visit Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Perth, giving public talks in each city.

His longest stay is planned in Melbourne where, in addition to the public talk, a three-day series of lectures on Buddhist philosophy has been scheduled - "Emptiness and Great Compassion: the Psychology of Selflessness".

This series of teachings is a great honour for Melbourne. We will have the opportunity of hosting people from all over Australia at one of the most important Buddhist events this country has ever seen. It is also a great challenge for us, as costs of the tour will be borne by donations from the Buddhist community and other interested people. It is perhaps an indication of Melbourne's strength as a Buddhist centre in Australia, that we have been entrusted with the most extensive part of the tour.

His Holiness' visit to Australia is being arranged by committee's throughout Australia, made up of representatives of Buddhist groups, staff and students of Universities and colleges, members of the South-East Asian Buddhist communities and other people interested in Tibet and Tibetans.

A sturdy core of people has been working in Melbourne for more than a year now, planning details of the tour.

We would like to invite your support for what will be, by any standards, an historic event - a great gift from the Buddhist community to the people of Australia. If you wish to help in our fundraising activities or in any other way, please contact one of the people listed below. If you have no time to help but wish to support the tour, you may like to give a donation. These will be acknowledged with a receipt and should be sent to the Finance Convenor, at the Melbourne address above.

With prayers for your long life, health and happiness.

Yours sincerely,

Toby Gillies,

Chairman for the Committee.

Melbourne executive, elected by the committee: Uldis Balodis, Purushottama Bilimoria, Toby Gillies, Michael Joseph, Grace Keel, Brenton Phillis, Franny Sime, Helen Ward.

SUMMARY OF A TALK GIVEN AT THE VICTORIAN BUDDHIST SOCIETY BY THE VENERABLE ANANDA MANGALA ON 21ST FEBRUARY, 1982.

The Venerable is the Spiritual Director of the Buddha-Yana Organisation of Singapore. It is a key objective of the Singapore Buddha-Yana Organisation to propagate Buddhism among the youth of Singapore. It aims to promote the study of Buddha from a non-sectarian angle without any racial or national or foreign bias. The Venerable Ananda Mangala is a moving light behind the Singapore Buddha-Yana Organisation. The S.B.Y.O. Publication, The Young Buddhist, 1979, setting out its full aims and objectives is available at B.D.C. (Upwey) Library.

With the permission of my Elder, Venerable Shanti Bhadra, and dear seekers of the Dharmas, let me just express my deepest gratitude for giving me this opportunity to share with you some of my thoughts. Some may be comforting, some may be very provocative, and some may be very controversial, because it is not my intention to beat around the bush., but to go right on to the dot, even critically, of the Dharma itself.

Awareness: Mindfulness is like a magic word, like an impossible word, and I want you to really tell me yourself there's nothing unusual about this. There's nothing mystical or hidden about it. It is something which you and I have grown with in our pure, simple human living.

Awareness: In everything that we do, whatever we do, we exercise this unique, inherent, existing faculty called awareness. But it is mechanistic; we exist in it, but when you really become alive to it, then only it really fashions out with full strength, and you become part of it.

Now to come to a point of a multi-religious concept of it. Religions have confused people more than anything in the world. Religions have had the exclusive copyrights to heaven, or life there after. Each religion claims the copyright. That's a shame - including Buddhism. Nobody has copyright. We are all copycats.

What does religions say? What part do you play? They seem to all try to create an awareness that we are basically very ignorant people, and they try to educate us, and each religion seems to say - if you follow their way, you succeed. If you follow the other way, you go to damnation.

The Buddha: I see him as a unique man; I respect him because his is a man; I respect him because he is showing me the way. I respect him because he is certainly the wisest man I have known.

The Dharma I respect, not because of any comparative study, it fits to my temperament; it has the freedom of inquiry; it is unafraid of questioning; and it is not a gullible religion. It is a religion of enormous reason and freedom. It does not introduce fear and guilt. It is a courageous, daring approach to living.

What did the wise man say? What did he say? What all wise men have said. Avoid evil, do good. Look, this is the theme of all religions. To grow in awareness, in relation to avoidance of evil, and the cultivation of good. Now, comparatively, what does this mean to us? To me in particular, or to you in particular, are you aware, really aware: are you committed to this awareness that you should avoid evil and perform good? Are you aware where you stand in this, or is it utter hypocrisy? Or just make-believe, just an utterance, or ritual, or a social labour, or living in semantics?

Are you aware? Have you let your awareness grow to the enormous fact of cause and effect?

Are you really committed, are you really aware, are you really mindful, do you get elated when you utilise your personality? When thoughts arise in you, do you reflect, do you inquire, have you got the skill mindfully with awareness to channel it in speech or deed to a point where you cultivate goodness.

Now be aware of this truth. When we accept the concept of as we sow, so we reap, this is Buddha-Dharma, and this is Christianity too. It's in the Gospels. Do we act accordingly? Do you know if you sow greed, what will you reap?. Greed. If you sow hatred, what will you reap? Hatred. If you sow delusion , what will you reap? Delusion.

Because of greed, because of hatred, because of delusion, man kills, man steals, man commits adultery, and speaks false. Are you aware of this?. When you lack the quality of sharing, when you lack the quality of love, then hatred arises. When you lack the quality of analysis, investigation, study, scrutinization, not gullibility, if you use these there is no delusion, but if you do not utilize these you are a totally deluded person.

All religions say do not kill. Kill who? Christians say don't kill human beings. Well, not bad. Cultured, excellent I would say. Buddhists consider all life in all forms is to be protected. Therefore, the degree of awareness and the cultivation of good is certainly excellent in the Buddha-Dharma. The awareness of the cultivation of good in other religions is certainly good.

I don't think in the history of Buddhist religion, of Buddhist philosophy that be praise wars, we bless wars. Wars arises because of greed , hatred, delusion. It is a collective commitment of avoiding good and cultivating evil. The only holy war we know is the war within us. But there is no other war. Just the unique struggle of Mara within us , and there is no other Mara. Surely, are we aware as Buddhists, are you aware as Buddhists to the extent the Dharma gives you, with the wisdom of the Buddha. These are the causes that lead to the avoidance of good and the cultivation of evil.

When you are trained as a Catholic priest, you are well trained to protect life. In the training of a Buddhist monk he is not allowed to keep a weapon with him at all. He has been advised, he has been shown the way, he has been told, he is made to grow in awareness " I shall not keep a weapon". Therefore there is no weapon. The only weapon he has is the weapon; cultivation of good mindfully and karuna. Cultivation of mudita and upekkha. But these are the cultivations, positive cultivations to meet the negativity of evil. Evil is negative, but goodness is non-greed, non-hatred, non-delusion.

Next point - theft. Because of greed, because of hate, because of delusion man kills, man steals. It is a dynamic commitment. In other words: we Buddhists must be uniquely good.

There is a very nice story I will tell you; a Christian story - a very nice story. There was a Catholic priest in Italy who was in love with two beautiful princesses. And when he had gone on a long journey, one of the princesses died, and he returned to Rome to find that she was buried. He was very keen to behold that beautiful face that inspired him to romantic love, and then they exhumed the body to see that pretty face. And there he found her; decay had set in, decomposition had set in, the beauty was just a fleeting moment of time. Blood was oozing out, worms around the eyes and everywhere, and he just shuddered. "Get rid of it!" forgetting that in the rest of the world there were still beautiful women - one of them was still waiting - ran away to a monastery and became a monk.

After several years he chose to go back and see his family, and he came across this other beautiful princess still waiting. When he went there he was received with a great lot of praise and joy, she was beaming with smiles, there was love in her eyes. "Come in, Sir. Please come in, Oh lovely one". And he walked, and then he started saying "I have not stopped yearning for you, needing you, wanting you. I love you. I love you so much". Then he looked around, this priest, looked around really well and then whispered "Shhh.. Don't make a noise". She took him to the inner chamber and then again she started the beautiful privilege of a woman to entice, entrap a man. And she excelled in it. It was a privilege of a woman. There was nothing to be ashamed about it. A privilege; nobody can take it away from her. Again this monk looked around and said "Shhh". She took the keys of the jewellery chamber, opened the chamber and asked him to get in. Then he locked the jewellery chamber. Now they are all alone. And the priest looked, with utter shock, amazement, but yet feeling a sense of joy in seeing beauty, seeing form, seeing attraction. Again he looked around him "Shhh". And then she asked "Why?". "God sees, God hears". And this princess became a nun.

Now I want you to be very aware of this. This is the uniqueness of faith, you believe in God, for heavens sake, just behave this way: "He sees and hears you".

Now the message for us is this: you and I believe in the law of karma, the law of cause and effect, and how leisurely, lousily, lacking awareness, lacking alertness, purely existing in the mechanism of existence, never becoming alive to the fact of realities of the consequences of what you sow. And we sow evil, and we reap evil; we cease to sow good and we therefore cease to reap good. The law of cause and effect. If each of us has the strength of awareness, not the gullibility of just talking of it, the realistic approach, absolute faith, you really believe. You are convinced in this particular conviction in the mind of a Buddhist, the total awareness, non-distracted, total awareness. Just as much, you know, when you put money in the bank, it gains interest. If you take your money out and spend it you are finished. This is what I would like you to recognise in awareness.

Because I feel that there are non-Buddhists here, I have talked to you rather about the Christians and the Muslims. It is just to arouse an awareness, but I love them all.

Now the important factor with awareness, with growing awareness, with alertness, recognise you are responsible, absolutely responsible too. Your process, your nature in these two levels. And what is your task there? With awareness, bring about a synthesis bring out an integration, make it productive in the terms of investment, assets, positivity, and do not get in. Avoid evil, avoid negativity.

At least observe the five precepts. Do not steal, do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not speak falsely, are themselves in the Ten Commandments. Now the Buddhist must have a greater comprehension, a psychological comprehension of it. No compromise on sociological reasons. And intoxication is the fifth one. Which is not common. To be intoxicated. Those who don't do this thing, they are observing the precept. Please cultivate this. Let your basis first be proper, proper, thoroughly proper. Avoidance of evil, doing of good must be your exercise. Don't be a bluffer, don't go into the field of hallucination.

All religions observe, all religions meditate. All talk of meditation. Look within you. The areas to rectify. Your doing of good. Is it motivated in the terms of anicca, dukkha, anatta, or anicca, sukkha, atta? That's the exercise. That's the vipassana in this field. But I ask you know, in the terms of the Dharma, do you hear within you, can you spend time within you, are you that one who says "All this world in mine?". That is in depth knowledge of awareness.

My satipanna is to gain the inherent, inborn areas where you could see the fate, the consequences of all things conditioned, created, originated. Where you could see, feel, sense, articulate. All that is conditioned is miserable, miserable dukkha; also, the continuity without an entity.

This is what is called awareness. The more you go into awareness, that's what it is. We are able to do good, avoid evil. Nama rupa comes in. Are you able totally to grasp, to transcend causation? Are you able to transcend conditionality? That's the Dharma. For all religions talk of heaven and hell. All the religions talk of the beauty of the viharas. Now for instance: from the kamma loka, from the sensual realm when we meditate, we enter the rupa loka, the form realm. And from the form realm we enter into the arupa loka, the formless realm. All these are achievements.

The Buddha says they are noble, dignified. They are noble indeed, not vulgar, not course. But useless is the word. Now till you realise this, you are still disabled. So other meditations have a unique transcendence. As a matter of fact, those of you who have received my magazine, "The Young Buddhist", I wish you to read that article of mine, "Buddhism begins where other religions end". We go with every other religion in many ways, and it is at this point we really begin. From now on you really become a Buddhist. So vipassana, that is, satipanna, is what assists you to gaining to that inner level of the Dharma.

In the Catholic Church where I became a mystic of the Catholic Church, from the kamma loka, I had the privilege to go through, to enter what's called "The might of the senses" and enter the state of mysticism. Then there's another transcendence that is called "the might of the soul".

This is the reward of going through the "might of the senses". The might of the senses is really a very harrowing battle of Mara - Mara of sensuality, and what is called the "might of the sword". There arose in me a unique situation: the arupa loka. There was no form at all. The beautiful gold disappeared, the angels disappeared, all was blank, empty, totally empty.

In this situation there arose in me an awareness which I could not accommodate. For why, when I declared this to my teacher, my revered superior of the Catholic religion - I was a Trappist monk - he told me, "Son, prostrate thyself before the throne of God, and say "Lord that I may see, Lord that I may understand". Most obediently, most faithfully, with every possible level I had, I met these forces of Mara, but I couldn't. Everything was empty. Then I asked my teacher, "Why must I do this exercise? Is this not a psychological way of reintroducing into your mind what has already passed away like a passing parade?" It is in this crisis I left the Catholic Church.

But up to this point, I owe it to the Church. I owe it to the Christian training, my strength, my vigour, even now as a Buddhist monk. No question about it. I find I have not lost anything. Not that I love Christ less, Oh no, I love him, but I love Buddha more. And I say, not that I love Christ less, but I love the Wise One more. Why?. Now I would compare Christ and Buddha in this moment. I must compare them at a point of wisdom. Christ was a holy person. Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, knowing Lazarus would die one day. By comparison Buddha sent a woman whose baby had died looking for a house which had not known death. She found death was inevitable, and stopped grieving. Therefore I call the Buddha not just Holy, but absolutely wise. Holy was Christ, no doubt, happy event it was, but in the second sequence you shall know there was no wisdom. Not that I love Christ less, but I choose wisdom.

Now I come to Buddha again. Buddha was moving along and found among his monks one who was dirty and sick with no-one attending him. He called the monks; nobody came. He carried the monk, put him at a higher level, washed him, cleaned him, clothed him, and then he called after the monks, and said, "Oh monks, if you don't look after yourself, who would look after you?" And then he said those beautiful words "Those who tend the sick, tend me". So strengthen yourself, tend the sick. What does it mean? Look at every person as a Buddha to be, a Bodhisattva; a crawling, creeping worm, yet someday destined to be a Buddha. Cultivate this spirit of love, feeling love, knowing love. Act upon it, for when you are tending the sick, you tend the Buddha. Do you see this Buddha in everybody? Those who avoid evil, do good, they are the Buddhists. That's not a religion. It is a commitment and a doing.

You see that sick man in the hospital. You think lunatics are in the hospital. There are more lunatics outside the hospital than in the hospital, and there are many sick people not in the hospital. The whole bunch of us are sick. Stinking sick with our greed, our racism, our hatred, and a variety of delusions. the whole world, lots of people are starving. When you lift your heart to those who tend the sick, you see life in a better perspective. Millions of people are starving, millions of people are without homes. Fortunately I have a place to stay, this one meal a day. Happy. This is then to tend the sick, those who are emotionally sick. Have you shunned bad people? The drug addicts? The lesbians and homosexuals? Ridiculous, arrogant hypocrites. Where is your compassion? They need you. Tend the sick. They need your love., your compassion, your understanding. Ask yourself, have you got karuna? There can be a miser being a meditator, thinking he has achieved. He must give, distribute, set out to tend the sick, knowing that he tends the Buddha. So this is a provocative thought I have given you. I have only shaken you up to be alerted, not to deny, not to deprive you of the wealth of the Dharma, but to make you more aware.

SUMMARY OF A TALK GIVEN BY PHRA KHANTIPALO AT
BUDDHIST DISCUSSION CENTRE (UPWEY) ON 14TH March, 1982

The Meaning of Dukkha.

The Buddha never heard of the word "yana". You must consider that. You know Mahayana, Hinayana, Vajrayana, or Bodhisattvayana, or Buddhayana, or how many

others can you find? No, there weren't any such things in the Buddha's day. And he is unlikely to have instituted such things, because the Buddha is a Teacher of universal dhamma, and doesn't teach sectarianism. Part of the trouble with the unenlightened mind is that it has to label everything. Of course, we have words, and those words are recognised names for things. But then we get confused by using the words, and think the words are the things. We work the words up into a pattern, major concepts, and then we believe in the concepts which the confused mind thinks up. So actually, we believe our own confused minds. So what could be more confused than that? Just because the ideas happen to be there, we believe they're true.

Now I can think of an idea immediately. A mountain of gold, five miles high, in the middle of Australia. As an idea its quite a logical idea. Such things as mountains do exist, gold also exists, the middle of Australia exists, and if you put them all together, it's possible. But should a mining company come and say, "Look, we heard you discovered this mountain of solid gold. We're interested. We'll go halves with you", or something like that. That would be rather generous of them, though. You can't point it out, you can only say "yes, well it's sort of in here, (pointing to the heart) a mountain of gold five miles high in the middle of Australia, it's in here". Now that's an idea, that's a concept. If you fantasize about it enough, it will become true for you, and then you will live in a private world where you are seeking a mountain of gold five miles high in the middle of Australia. Although the words are there, which are true, the concept which is built out of them is not true. And it's the same when people come to conceptualise about dhamma, then they use the words, the words are true, but the ideas that they derive from it are not true. And that again and again and again happens, so we are caught in a kind of cleft stick, because all we have got for communication is words, apart from the odd people who can communicate direct mind to mind. Let's not consider them because they are rather unusual and rare. So then, most people, all they've got is words.

An important part of the dhamma is knowing how to use the words correctly so that the words do not give rise to concepts which are false, and then knowing how to put those ideas, those concepts, which are in terms of words, into practice. Now, if you are successful then, what will happen is that you get beyond the words. It doesn't happen on the level of sila, but it does happen on the level of samadhi. A person gets beyond the level of words, beyond the range of words, then you get some experience which is different from the people whose world is a world of words. But even then, you have to still be careful, because although the words aren't present in that experience, and you can say there's a wordless experience, yet even so, it can be misinterpreted when the mind returns to the world afterwards.

Suppose you are a mystic of some tradition or other, perhaps not a Buddhist one, and you have a teaching, a doctrine, and that doctrine is all written in words in books, and it is the sort of doctrine that one doesn't question because it comes from on high somewhere. If it's like that, when you get back to the world of words, after your experience, you don't try to investigate that experience to find out what it is like. Instead you try to fit that experience into words. Where does that experience I have had fit in? And this means that this experience is distorted in terms of the words, because it's not just an experience which is then examined, perhaps with insight, to find out about it, to find out about it's impermanence, or it's dukkha, or even it's not-self nature, not examined in such a way. It has to be made to fit, even if it does not

fit. It has to be pushed in somewhere, so generally with that kind of teaching, one has to use that "Bed of Procrustes" method. You know that Procrustean method? Old Procrustes, he is supposed to have lived in ancient Greece, and he was a robber, and he had this bed. He used to capture people who came over the pass where he lived, and he used to fit them to his bed. If they were too short for the bed, then he stretched them to fit, and if they were too long, he chopped them off to fit. If they were the right length he let them go. That was his method. Also if one does this with one's experiences, when one refers them back to words, and says, look it's like this, it's like this, it's like this, using the Procrustean method to make them fit, this is in opposition to dhamma, this way of looking at things. The way of dhamma isn't to try to make the experience fit the words. The words may be found to describe the experience, and they may or they may not, because other people in meditation have all sorts of experiences, all sorts of things happen to them. But every kind of experience can be subjected to the investigation - what is its true nature? Is it a conditioned or an unconditioned dhamma? There isn't a third category. If it's a conditioned dhamma, okay, then it's an experience of samsara, even though a very subtle one perhaps. If it's an unconditioned dhamma, well then that's the real thing, that's Nibbana.

So how does one tell the unconditioned from the conditioned. If you think about it, you must know that the guidelines given by the Buddha are very clear and precise. Now these experiences that arise, they have to be tested against, they have to be tried against, whether they are impermanent, whether is a subtle way they are dukkha, or whether they have the characteristic of not-self. The Buddha selected these three, these three aspects of reality as the touchstone to find out about the experiences. He selected these three, not that he had the word impermanence or not-self in his mind at any time when they were being experienced, but he has the genius of translating to language the wordless experiences of enlightenment. He knew too that it is possible to misinterpret experiences that one has in meditation and believe that they are enlightenment experiences.

Disaster for people on any spiritual path arises, because they suppose that they no longer have anything left to do. Having reached the summit, there isn't anything left, nowhere to go. So you don't try, and since you don't try and you believe that you don't have any defilements, the defilements increase, increase a hundredfold in no time at all. This is what comes from misinterpretation of the experience. You have to test it out, you find out about it when one gets out of the calm enough to investigate. Oh, well, what is it like? Is it like impermanence, an impermanence experience, or a dukkha experience, or a not-self experience? If it's something else apart from that, like it's remembering your former lives, or seeing what Mrs. Smith is doing across the road, or knowing the kinds of kamma that other people have made, or something like this, these kind of things, it's got nothing to do with enlightenment.

The way of craving is to grasp at these experiences and make a lot of these things. To make mountains out of molehills in fact. If you have a nice little experience in meditation of some kind, if you repeat it to your friends, and tell other people about it, which shouldn't be done, of course, then the size of the experience increases the more that you talk about it. What starts off as a quite modest bright light shining in front of you may be a light like ten thousand suns or something like that by the time you've described it a few times. That's something to be rather careful about.

Misinterpretation of dhamma in terms of words is a difficult thing not to do. One has to be careful to avoid it. One won't make anymore effort. But also, on a lower level, one has to be careful about words too. Words are tricky things. Although we are used to using words, we are used to using English words yet they are tricky things, and when the dhamma is described in English, it's very easy to give the wrong impression.

The word "suffering" was used as the translation of "dukkha". If one understands like that, (the word "suffering" can encompass all that Buddha means by "dukkha") you can get a very slanted and distorted picture of what he is talking about, because suffering is a fairly unsubtle kind of word. If you've got suffering with regard to the body it must mean something fairly serious. Just because you've been sitting there for half an hour, you're not going to say "I've got suffering in the body". People don't use it like that, only Buddhists perhaps. Also mental suffering means something fairly heavy. It's not going to mean slight troubles and small things, or fine kind of troubles. So they have understood in the ordinary way of the English language. But when it is understood like that, then the Buddha's teachings are quite distorted, because they don't see the more subtle aspects of dukkha, and when one doesn't understand the more subtle aspects of dukkha, one can miss the whole point, because obviously suffering, the English varieties, are quite limited. Now, dukkha is characteristic of everything that is conditioned. When people see suffering described as a characteristic of all that is conditioned, they can't understand it. Unless a person has that kind of experience in meditation, and knows the unsatisfactory nature of even a calm and blissful experience, they won't know what the Buddha is talking about, about the dukkha. When it is regarded as calm and blissful, that gives a chance to the craving and greed to get into it and stick there. It becomes one of those places where one can exist there. Different levels for consciousness to exist on, and to stick on. But then if it's investigated, you see it's not satisfactory, and that's the way of release from it, that's the way of freedom from it, and then one can refine it a bit more and find out a bit more.

Our use of words is quite important. We communicate the dhamma to others with words whether written or spoken, and we've got all those ideas nicely sorted out in our heads, if we've studied and practiced a bit, but, you have to consider how those ideas will be viewed by other people who don't have that background at all. The communication becomes quite a difficult business. Anyway, it's a much more chancy business of communication in that case because it seems quite obvious to us individually what words mean, but they have slightly different shades of meaning for different people, and when we come to consider different teachings and the way they use words; "dhamma" in India, see, all sorts of people use the word "dhamma". It doesn't have the same meaning at all. When Buddhists use "dhamma" and Hindus use "dhamma" they can be talking about quite different things. What is dhamma in the sense of duty, caste duty, for a Hindu, certainly isn't anything to do with Buddha Dhamma. It can in fact be opposite to loving-kindness and compassion. Jains also use the word "dhamma", Sikhs use the word "dhamma". They all use the word "dhamma" with their own particular flavours to it. A single word can have many different shades of meaning, many different computations.

Z.S. I think it is still the same at different levels. For a person who is not a laymen, meaning of dhamma is at much higher level, and for a layperson, if you taught dhamma which was beyond duality's he is not going to understand, because he has to

have wife and children, and has to live in the worldly matters, so for that person "dhamma" means duty, the rightful duties of a layperson.

PHRA KHANTIPALO: If it is understood like that, as unrestricted by caste, and that sort of thing, then it is alright, but then that gets in the way in India, and it's use differs between different castes. If it is understood in the sense of sila, and maitri, karuna and so forth, then there is no question, but that's rather a Buddhist outlook.

J.D.H. Could I ask you something; your view, if you've got a view. Not so many years ago, Shannon did a lot of work on information theory, and the outcome was that he realised that in any communication there is always noise - he abstracted it from transmitter to receiver - it will apply to any system at all. It's a universal mathematical approach. People always assume that they understand what the other person says, and there's no noise in the communication. So if that idea is spread; (the Western mind loves the scientific tag) if that idea is very carefully promoted that it's impossible to have perfect communication, apart from E.S.P. or something like that, then the conviction that people understand what they're hearing might evaporate, and they'll have to dig deeper inside here, or whatever they dig deep. I thought to leave the word dukkha untranslated. Children will come to terms with complex notions, whereas if we keep translating, it is unsatisfactory. It's probably got more inherent power in the word, and then maybe you just qualify it, you say "Buddha dukkha". That's the best approach of a bad muddle I think. Do you think that's reasonable?

PHRA KHANTIPALO: Where is dukkha? Even when you live in Paradise, you can find plenty. Suppose you go around collecting dukkha one day like you go collecting garbage, and you knock on a person's door, and say "I've come to collect your dukkha today. What kind of dukkha you got?" A garbage truck wouldn't take away the dukkha even from one house, not to speak of going all around the streets. Now everybody's got it, everybody's got some kind of troubles and difficulties, but the thing is that what everybody hasn't got is panna or prajna, they haven't got wisdom. So they don't enquire about their dukkha. They just either shrug it off or they try to bury their heads in the sand kind of thing, pretend it isn't there, or turn on the telly, or do one of the thousand and one things there are to do in this world. If they are religiously minded they might put it down to God, or to Satan, or something like this, and attribute it to something out there, or of course it might be the neighbours, or my wife, my husband, the children or something out there, the cause of the dukkha.

J.D.H. Dukkha is inherent in the five groups by their very characteristics, so it's inescapable in the sense that whatever comes to rebirth or that notion experiences it automatically, so that's the situation.

PHRA KHANTIPALO: Some of the aspects of rebirth can be comparatively free of it.

J.D.H. But they're impermanent, they're in the five groups, so what happiness can be found in that? Better to finish.

PHRA KHANTIPALO: Well, there you are, you see. That goes too far, because you mustn't go so far as to deny sukkha. One denies happiness, then people can rightly

point the finger at the Buddhists and say it is pessimistic.

TO BE CONTINUED.

School Commission Project - Reduction of Racial Prejudice.

Part 3. The author of this article, John D. Hughes, Associate Dip. Chem. T.T.T.C., of the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd., 33 Brooking Street, Upwey, 3158, Victoria, Australia, is a Buddhist of many years standing, and teaches meditation in the Buddhist tradition at this centre. He is well known by the leaders of all Buddhist groups in Australia and has their co-operation in the documentation of each Australian Buddhist group's teaching.

This project was supported by a grant from the Commonwealth made under an innovation program of the Schools Commission. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of the commission.

Due to the length of this section, which is on Chinese Buddhism, it will be presented in two parts, the second to be produced in the June 1982, newsletter.

Chinese Buddhism - Teacher's Guide

Materials are 30 slides and an audio tape describing the slides. The tape plays for 22 minutes. Manual slide changing is required. A further tape of the full chanting is provided. Written material on the background of Chinese Temples is provided. The written material has been verified by the Chinese Buddhist Society of Australia, 56 Dixon Street, Sydney. See Information Sheet 3.2. The text of one form of the chanting is provided in Romanised Chinese together with its English translation. This was provided by the C.B.S.A. through Mr. E.Y.Y.Liao, a former President of the society. Additional material is supplied together with a summary of useful source material.

THE CHINESE BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA.

The objects of the Society, as stated in their constitution, are:-

1. To encourage the study, the practice and the propagation of Buddha Dharma in Australia.
2. To promote activities associated with Buddhism and Buddhist cultures in Australia.

Membership of the Society is open to any person of any nationality, who in the opinion of the Committee is genuinely interested in the study of Buddhism, and whose application for membership receives the approval of the Committee.

There are three types of membership, Honorary, Sangha and Ordinary. Sangha membership shall be granted only to the Buddhist Monks or Nuns.

The Society has a reference library which includes a full set of the Chinese Tripitaka. This collection of Buddhist scriptures is recognised as the most important source for

the study of Buddhism, particularly Mahayana of China and Japan. In all, the Chinese Tripitaka is estimated to be about 70 times the length of the Christian Bible. Only a small proportion of the vast collection has been translated into English. The C.B.S.A. have provided some English texts of Chinese Sutras. Some of these are key texts for the Pure Land followers who use the method of visualizing the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life outlined for their practice.

The Society has provided use of its Temple, Prajna Hall, for use by Theravadin monks to give Dhamma talks and teach meditation.

Its members include many University lecturers and students, who are bi-lingual in Chinese and English. A resident monk is in attendance at the Temple.

The assistance of the C.B.S.A. in the preparation of this section is acknowledged with profound respect.

Slide Key to the 30 slides in this unit. All slides are prefixed 3. First slide is 3.1, second 3.2, and so on. All slides were taken by the author (J.D.H.)

3.1 Altar in the Main Temple of Bendigo Joss House.

The God worshipped in this Temple was Kwan Gung. He was a Chinese General, (221 - 266 A.D.) at the end of the Han Dynasty. Over a thousand years ago, he was deified as the State God of War. He has no relation to Buddhism.

Additional information on the Bendigo Joss House is provided in Information Sheet 3.1

3.2. Altar at Prajna Hall, Chinese Buddhist Society of Australia, 56 Dixon Street, Sydney. Sakyamuni Buddha on main altar.

3.3 Kuan-yin, the Bodhisattva. Great Compassion is the nature of Kuan-yin. This is a wooden image of Chinese origin in the collection of the author (J.D.H.). The scroll in the hand represents the Buddhist canon or writings on the Dharma. The single scroll represents the whole of the Tripitaka.

Avalokitesvara is the same as Kuan-yin, and these titles can be used interchangeably.

3.4 Kuan-yin, the Bodhisattva. This stone image of Chinese origin is in the collection of the author (J.D.H.) The vase has use as a symbol. As a vase is useful for containing liquid, so a person should strive to become a receptacle of the Truth. The pearl in the hands represents by its luminosity and its brilliance the Buddha and the Doctrine. Another meaning is to view it as the "Precious Pearl which grants all wishes".

3.5 View of the Bendigo Joss House exterior housing images of Buddhist origin.

3.6 Kuan-yin image on altar of Joss House. On the wall is a pagoda formed of written characters. A pagoda is a form of stupa. The origins of the stupa are pre-Buddhist. The form of the stupa can be used as a form of meditation, since it represents the "magical" representation of the universe. Its position in the Joss House so as not to be visible in full seems unlikely to be correct in the authors view.

3.7 Many armed Avalokitesvara on Altar of Joss House. Each arm has in its hand a different object. These are called the attributes (Laksana in Sanskrit). In the Buddhist iconography, each object has a symbolic meaning. Divinities which resemble each other on the mystic plane are distinguished iconographically by attributes which serve as mudra, in this instance as "signs of identity". The use of incense is common in China in Buddhist Temples. It is common to offer food to hungry ghosts (pretas).

3.8 Tibetan print on wall above altar, shown on slide 3.7. This is almost certainly Mahakalain the central figure. He may be regarded as a Guardian of the Dharma and is also known as the protector of Wisdom. This print shows a peaceful aspect. When presented on a black background, he is used for meditation in Tantric Buddhism by initiates. It would suggest that some of the Chinese at early Bendigo were initiates, otherwise this print would never have been brought to Australia.

3.9 The Ancestral altar at Bendigo Joss House.
The tape uses this to introduce the uses of incense.

3.10 This brocade is in front of the Ancestral altar in slide 3.9. The male figure may be the future Buddha Maitreya attended by Kwan-yin. In his hand is a sistrum, a staff with some loose rings at the top. In Sanskrit it is called a Khakkhara, and the historical Buddha instructed his monks to carry one. This enabled a monk to be silent, and the noise warns animals, so he can avoid inadvertently killing insects as he walks. Buddhism forbids harming any living thing.

The usual images of Maitreya have shaven heads, and for this reason some doubt exists as to the artists intention. If Buddha Amida were intended, there should be a second Bodhisattva, Maha Sthama Prapta.

3.11 This brocaded jacket is on display at the Bendigo Joss House. The dragon robe in the background may have been presented to a Chinese leader for public service. This was then worn on special occasions.

3.12 Prajna Hall, Chinese Buddhist Society of Australia, Sydney, N.S.W. The arrangement is shown of the rows. Women are in the two rows on the left of the altar, men in the two rows on the right. The Buddhist Monk is in the centre.

3.13 Prajna Hall, C.B.S.A. Kuan-yin on right. Gong is between two altars, temple bell on far right, wood-block ("skull") on left. The cushions in front of the main altar are for kneeling to make bowing easier. The Chinese lady is making food offerings.

3.14 Temple gong. An offering of money has been made on the altar. Since a Buddhist Monk does not own material things, the lay persons provide for his material well-being.

3.15 Chinese Wood Block, sometimes called a "skull". The use of drum beats for walking meditation (circumambulation) acts as signals.

3.16 Temple Bell - Used as an alarm system. If struck, the Chinese in former times

would come to the Temple. Theravadin Temples also have a Temple Bell used for similar purposes.

3.17 Bell and drum. The bell stands for impermanence, an idea which underlies much of Buddhist thought. This phenomenal world is like the sound of the bell. So human life, like the ever-receding sounds of the bell is changing. In Chinese bell is Chung, in Sanskrit, Ghanta.

3.18 The Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha is to the left of the main altar. The Chinese version of the Sanskrit name is Ti-Tsang. He holds in his hand the Khakkara, the metal wand at the top of which are fastened little tinkling rings, in most images. This image is different in that he has his hands in the lap, one on top of the other having the palms up. These hand positions are called mudra, and the particular position shown here is known in Sanskrit as Dhyanamudra. It is of Indian origin and spread to China. It has been noted that at certain times when "cognitions" appear in meditation, the meditator AUTOMATICALLY forms this mudra. For this reason it is a common hand position for sitting meditation.

3.19 Deva painting on wall of Prajna Hall.

3.20 Deva painting on wall of Prajna Hall.

3.21 Painting of sage on wall of Prajna Hall. The brush is used for writing. Calligraphy, which the Chinese call shu fa, is the art of writing the characters, the semantic units, of the Chinese written language. The calligraphers practice meditation to clear the mind of all mundane thoughts.

3.22 Dragon painting at rear of Temple. In China, dragons were invoked to obtain rain. The Buddhist books translated into Chinese reckoned some eight or ten Dragon-kings (Nagas). There is a sutra describing the teaching of the Dragon Kings by the Buddha.

3.23 In accordance with their objects, the C.B.S.A. teach Chinese to interested Australia Buddhists. Chanting is in Chinese.

3.24 The cushion arrangement is in four rows. When meditating, persons sit facing towards the walls of the Temple. They also act as position markers to ensure the original position is arrived at after circumambulation.

3.25 Buddhist in chanting positions. For chanting data, see Information Sheet 3.3

3.26 Circumambulation - a form of walking meditation.

3.27 The Monk carries his sash in his hands. While walking in circumambulation, various hand positions are made. These are known as mudra. Among the many observed by the author were mudra of Amita Buddha.

3.28 Circumambulation.

3.29 Circumambulation.

3.30 View of Prajna Hall of the C.B.S.A.

Transcript of tape for use with slides.

There is a difference between a Chinese Buddhist Temple and a Chinese Joss House.

This is the main altar of a Joss House in Bendigo, Victoria. It is not Buddhist. The God

worshipped in this temple was Kwan-Gung. He was a Chinese General who lived in the 3rd Century B.C. The main temple also contains a horse, symbolically Kwan Gung's war horse. Ceremonial weapons can be seen on the side of the altar.

This is a picture of a Chinese Buddhist Temple in Sydney. The main central altar has the image of the Buddha Sakyamuni. The images on each side of the main altar are Bodhisattvas, Kiteshvara on the left and Kuan-yin on the right.

Seeing at this wooden image of Kuan-yin, Buddhist image of Kuan-yin earlier.

The Bendigo Joss House has several altars, to the left of the main altar building is a second building. In this second building there is this image of Kuan-yin on the altar.

In another altar in the same building, this print of the many armed form of the Bodhisattva Kiteshvara is seen. Avalokiteshvara is the male form of Kuan-yin. For these reasons it could be said that this section of the Joss House was part Buddhist in nature. Kuan-yin was popular with the Chinese. It was probably common for the Joss House to have Buddhist Bodhisattva altars. It should be made clear that Joss Houses are definitely not Buddhist Temples. A Chinese Temple is truly Buddhist when the main altar has a central Buddha image. The image may be the Buddha Sakyamuni or in some cases, the earlier Buddha Amida.

On the wall of what might be described as Buddhist Bodhisattva portion of the Bendigo Joss House is a Buddhist print of Tibetan origin. In the same room is another altar having wooden tablets which symbolise the homage paid to ancestors. It should contain a hand carved ancestral tablet to commemorate the memory of the Chinese in the district of Bendigo.

In another Victorian Joss House, South Melbourne, the interior walls contain more than 3000 wooden tablets recording the names of those Chinese who died in the district. You can see in the centre of this altar a container with red incense sticks. Incense was widely used in China in public and private ritual. It is burned before ancestral tablets, and in almost all festivals and processions.

In Chinese Buddhist Monasteries, periods of meditation are marked by burning down of incense sticks. The altars of Chinese Joss Houses are likely to have richly brocaded materials surrounding them. So do most Chinese Buddhist altars.

Embroidered jackets like this one could have been worn by wealthy Chinese for the Joss House ceremonies. In contrast, in Chinese Buddhist ceremonies in Sydney, all persons wear simple black or brown robes.

In this ceremony, the shaven headed Buddhist Monk stands in front of the altar. The Buddhist laymen are Australians, Malaysian, and Chinese.

They stand in rows facing each other. Women are in the two rows on the left, and the men form two rows on the right of the altar.

In Theravadin countries, the monks wear saffron coloured clothing. In China, yellow of any shade, even so dark we would call it brown, was considered a mark of superior status. Most monks felt they were only entitled to grey or black. Grey was perhaps the most widely worn.

In the Sydney Buddhist Temple, Prajna Hall, on the right of the main altar, is the image of the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin on a separate altar. Flower and food offerings are made to Kuan-yin by this Buddhist Chinese lady. Between the two altars is a temple gong. On the far right is the temple bell. The gong sits on a doughnut shaped base, covered with satin material. It is struck during the chanting ceremony.

It sounds like this:

Another instrument used during chanting is the red wood blocks sometimes called skull. It is struck with the white padded striker. When not in use the handle is threaded through the wooden block.

Traditionally the temple bell is sounded in case of emergency such as fire or invasion. It has a deep note and its sound carries over long distances. In front of the temple bell is a drum and a small bell.

They sound like this:

On the side table is a pack of incense sticks which can be used by any person wishing to make the offerings to the image of Buddha or the Bodhisattvas. To the left of the altar is the image of the Bodhisattva Kiteshvara. Flower and food offerings can be seen on this altar. Buddhists consider that water placed in a bowl on a pedestal sometimes develops healing properties and is useful as medicine. A bowl containing such water can be seen on the kiteshvara altar.

On the side walls of the Chinese Buddhist temple are paintings of Devas. Devas protect humans. The word Deva literally means Shiny One. We could translate it as a heavenly being. They are not strictly Gods in the absolute sense since they are not eternal and are subject to the laws of rebirth.

Another of the paintings on the wall is of an earlier Chinese wise man. There is an ink brush in his hand. The type of Chinese writing on the side of this painting is called Calligraphy.

On the rear wall of the temple near the entrance door you will find a painting of a

dragon. Dragons are believed to bring good fortune. There was a Buddhist writing called the Dragon King Sutra in which Buddha instructed the Dragon King in the Dharma.

Chinese Buddhists teach the Australian Buddhists in Chinese language, to assist them to follow Chinese Buddhism. Naturally the chanting in a Chinese Buddhist Temple is in Chinese. It might sound strange to Western ears. Let us look in at a Buddhist ceremony.

Cushions are laid out on the floor. The Buddhist monk stands in the centre of the cushions facing the altar, and the lay Buddhists are arranged in rows as explained earlier. They bow to the altar since bowing is a sign of respect. The small bell and drum sound.

It goes like this:

After some time of slow chanting the monk leads the lay Buddhist in walking meditation. They walk around the Temple in circles. This is called circumambulation. Each person walks mindfully.

The wood block is now measuring the rate of walking.

The monk then leads them back to their places where they reform their lines.

The Buddhist monk will then give a Dharma talk in the Chinese language. This talk is translated into English line by line so that all can understand, since many of the Australian Buddhists cannot understand the Chinese.

After the Dhamma talk, sitting meditation could be done by the Buddhists. This may last up to half an hour.

Australian Buddhists are fortunate to have such a beautiful Chinese Temple. It adds greatly to the heritage of Australia. We are indebted to the Chinese who have so enriched our culture.

The Bendigo Joss House

The Bendigo Joss House is the only one which remains of four which were originally in the Emu Point area. It is constructed of timber and local hand-made bricks, all painted red in the traditional Chinese colour denoting strength. It has a National Trust classification of "B", which means that it is a highly significant building which should be preserved.

The Classification reads:

"Notable as one of the few existing buildings of this type in the State. The layout of the building, traditional in Chinese buildings of this type, is clearly expressed in the symmetrical arrangement dominated by the ornamented central portico. Although

small, the building contains many of the parts associated with similar though larger and more elaborate structures. The lantern above the floor recess in the centre of the interior is notable. Attention is drawn to the wall painting in the portico, the brick cresting on the roofs and the incised carving on the head board of the portico."

A Joss House is a Chinese place of worship. The name "Joss" being derived from the Portuguese "Dios", in itself a derivation from Latin "Deus" - god. It may be a tiny wayside shrine; or the family shrine for the ancestral symbols; or, if in the house of the headman or "tipao", for the clan symbols. Finally, it may be a temple, either small and simple or large and ornate, crowded with gods. The Bendigo Joss House is essentially a simple one, consisting only of three small rooms - the Main Temple in the centre, flanked by the Ancestral Temple on the right and the Caretaker's Residence.

Chinese Religion.

There are many streams in Chinese religion based on Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. In the beginning the Chinese were nature and ancestor worshippers, and they also believe in a more abstract idea - the will of Heaven. The philosophical ideas of a 6th century (B.C.) Sage, Lao Tze, were grafted onto these basic beliefs, and were contained in a book called Tao Te Ching (The Classic Way to Virtue) - hence Taoism - that man should submit himself humbly and virtuously to the power of nature. Taoist folk superstitions mingled with its philosophies, e.g. fortune telling and lucky charms. Meanwhile, Confucius urged man to lead a full, virtuous happy existence, and he revived the cult of Ancestor worship. Over the years the honours paid to him developed into the worship of him as a Deity, and this worship became a State Religion. Later, about 67 A.D., the influence of Buddhism was felt - it taught that soul purification could best be accomplished by right thinking and living, and love and charity. Saints or "Enlightened Ones" came to be worshipped as Deities in temples. Homage was paid to Ancestors (symbolised by wooden tablets or blocks) and one or more of the Taoist or Buddhist Gods or Goddesses was chosen to worship, as well, in image form. There also existed a strong tendency to hero worship.

Kwan Gung. The God worshipped in this temple was Kwan Gung. He was a Chinese general, who lived from 221 - 266 A.D. at the end of the Han Dynasty, B.C. 206 - A.D. 220. After the collapse of the Dynasty a period of anarchy and turmoil followed and Kwan Gung sought to bring justice and peace to the country. Kwan Gung, in addition to his military prowess, was also noted for his uprightness and justice. Over a thousand years ago he was deified as the State God of War, but to worshippers everywhere he became the wise judge, guide and protector. He was worshipped by many, for he was believed to make men successful in their undertakings, and courageous and daring - characteristics needful in a strange country. He was the patron Deity of the Manchu Dynasty. He was fundamentally human, having inclinations good and bad and advised wrongly as well as wisely, so that he must be respected with gifts and offerings.

Furnishings. (Note: It has not been easy to authentically furnish the Joss House and research, both in Australia and overseas, is still going on. It may be many years before the interior furnishings can be said to be complete to National Trust standards. What follows is a brief description of what are known to be the main features.

In the Main Temple stands the Kwan Gung portable throne. This has a chair for the God to rest upon and, for a special occasion or festival, Kwan Gung can be carried out on his throne and chair. On the altar in the Main Temple are the god figures "Poi Sart". These are Kwan Gung's attendants, known as "Chong Fei" and "Lin Pei". The Main Temple should also contain a rocking horse, symbolically Kwan Gung's war horse.

A Drum and Gong are also located in the Main Temple, being sounded when ritual worship is to commence. For ordinary service, three beats are given, whilst on each New Year or special occasion the gong is sounded 72 times and the drum 36 times.

The main altar contains a set of five Sacred Vessels. These are most important items, representing the five jewels of the Buddhist Paradise, and are provided for all altars, whether in private homes or in temples.

Ceremonial weapons are also contained in the Main Temple, as are Altar Cloths, Incense and an Incense Burner. Fortune Telling devices, consisting of bamboo containers with bamboo slat sticks are also provided for the guidance of supplicants.

In the small room in front of the Main Temple area is located Mun-shee (or Mun-dei), the Door Guardian, whose purpose is to protect the building from bad and evil spirits.

The Ancestral Temple contains the Ancestral Altar which holds Commemorative Tablets in respect of the Ancestors. In addition, it should contain a hand-carved Ancestral Tablet to commemorate the memory of all the Chinese that were in the particular district.

The Exterior.

Inscribed boards flank the main entrance meaning "The Generosity of the Land Gives Great Vision", and "The Hero (Kwan Gung) Brings Prosperity to Develop This Land".

Above the main entrance is a hand carved sign board reading "Kwan Gung Mu" (Kwan Gung Temple), and that for the Ancestral Temple reading "Gnee Soo" (belong to the temple, or ancestral room). At one stage of its career, the Bendigo Joss House was used as a Chinese Masonic Temple, and the sign "Gee Gung Hong" (Masonic Temple or Building) still exists under the proper sign.

Kylins (guardian beasts) are stationed on each side of the entrance to the Main Temple to protect it.

The simple courtyard contains a Lotus Pool, a Pomaloe Tree (Goo Look), a Loquat Tree and a Flowering Peach Tree, all of which form an important part of the environment of the temple.

The Chinese and Bendigo Easter Fair.

Shortly after the Chinese arrived on the goldfields, processions and festivals were

noted in the newspapers of the times, Bendigo being no exception. The Chinese welcomed the commencement of the Chinese New Year (generally in February) with all the pageantry and customs of their homeland, and it was not long before they became deeply involved with the Bendigo Easter Fair, giving it its present unique Chinese Procession and Dragon.

The Bendigo Easter Fair celebrations were inaugurated in 1871, through the instrumentality of two prominent citizens, G. Aspinall and J. Burnside. The object of the Fair was to raise funds for the Bendigo Hospital and Benevolent Asylum, and it was reported at the time that "before the Fair, a procession, allegorical in character, marches through the streets, and on the grounds all manner of sports are held, bazaars are conducted, and numbers of side-shows are opened, providing no end of amusement to the general public".

The Chinese Community was asked to participate, and quickly responded. In the early 1870's they contributed funds for the purchase of processional regalia and items to be made in China. These consisted of scores of finely embroidered costumes, banners of all colours and shapes, richly carved iron-wheeled vehicles and, most impressive of all, a dragon called "Loong" (the Chinese word for dragon). Loong originally measured 150 ft in length, being constructed of fine silk, brass lined cut mirrors to form the scales, and an impressive head. The majority of these priceless articles are still in the care of the Bendigo Chinese Association.

In those days, the Chinese so valued the honour of carrying the dragon that they would pay a large fee to do so, the money thus collected being donated to local charities. The Chinese procession would start from Emu Point, not far away from the present Joss House, and gradually wind its way to Bendigo. More than 700 men and children would participate in the display, which eventually became famous and permanently linked with Bendigo. So valuable was the Chinese contribution that, in 1879, a commemorative Address was presented to the Chinese Community, and still proudly hangs on the walls of the Bendigo Chinese Association.

It was natural for the Chinese Procession to be organised in the Emu Point area, as this was then one of the largest Chinese settlements in the district, with some 4,000 inhabitants. The dragon was housed in a building just slightly west of the present Joss House. Several disastrous fires gradually destroyed the Emu Point Chinese settlement (although fortunately "Loong" managed to escape), and at the beginning of the 20th Century the Dragon and all the associated equipment was brought into the Bridge Street Chinese section and housed in the present Chinese Association Building and the Chinese Masonic Temple opposite (Classified "C" and directly related to the Joss House) remained of the Chinese properties in this area, all others having given way to a carpark. In the carpark stands a Pomaloe Tree, a native tree of Canton, which was planted around the 1870's, and it is an offshoot of this tree that has been planted at the Joss House.

On Easter Sunday, a tradition grew up with the "Awakening of the Dragon" Ceremony, when Chinese Lion dancers (often referred to as sea lions) and displays of martial arts would take place. Even with the destruction of the Chinese area and the gradual decline of the Chinese population, this tradition has been maintained by the Chinese Community and friends.

Acknowledgments. The National Trust is indebted to Mr. Dennis O'Hoy, of Bendigo, for much of the information on Chinese history and customs, and to the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (Bendigo Branch) for some of the general information.