

Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd.
33 Brooking St. Upwey 3158 Victoria Australia. Telephone 754 3334.
(Incorporated in Victoria)

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Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

Group photo John. D. Hughes 60th Birthday
Celebrations

Birthday with a difference

Please see Graphical Image
30-?-2
last week in

Photo of John Hughes in
B.D.C.(U) Ltd Library

Upwey and

daughters, was

accolade" (to be

life as a

Internationally known Buddhist John Hughes of
Upwey celebrated his 60th birthday

unique style.

Mr Hughes, who was the Founder of the
Buddhist Discussion Centre in

father of three grown-up

presented with a "celebratory

sent to 35 countries) detailing his

Buddhist.

A former maths teacher at Boronia and Ferntree Gully technical schools, Mr. Hughes celebrated his birthday with more than 50 guests including 15 Buddhist monks from numerous Buddhist Centres around Melbourne. According to the president of the Upwey centre, Frank Carter, it is rare to see as many Buddhist monks assembled in one place, particularly when six nationalities were represented.

Mr Carter said this fact reflected the impact Mr Hughes had on the Buddhist movement in Australia.

Also among the guests were former Lord Mayor of Melbourne Lecki Ord and musician Bob Venier.

Mr Hughes said he found Buddhism through meditation in the 50's, an era in Australia which

regarded anything different as something "way over the top".

SPEECH OF THE FOUNDER OF THE BUDDHIST DISCUSSION CENTRE
(UPWEY) LTD on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday on 9 September 1990.
- John D. Hughes Dip. App. Chem. T.T.T.C.

IMAGE & STYLE.

Venerable Sirs, honourable Sirs, honoured guests, respected guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to have this opportunity to address you on this auspicious day.

I would like to share with you some paradigms relating to processes needed for considering image and style. Feel free to adapt them to your current concerns.

I suppose you have the view that I have an underlying life theme of high levels of social interaction because, as you are all aware I communicate to many persons by use of various media which has appeared during this century.

Before putting in place a particular image and style, you need to consider what happens when an external threat appears.

Conflict theorists posit that an external threat to a collectivity results in a tightening of the internal bonds of solidarity. An organisation facing a challenge seems to respond either by defending its values or focusing on its survival to the exclusion (if necessary) of values.

I was determined to find a path that could sustain an organisation's image and style without resort to either of these options.

The observation of truth about conflict required direct contact by myself to determine the workings of various cultures in Australia and contact within different countries, to provide myself with a large store of social data.

I applied the good things I learnt from Buddhism and so founded the style and image of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd. on a system which was designed to avoid the choices posited by the conflict theorists. I do not intend to disparage any person's intellect when I express this view.

The simple answer is to use a sane method to avoid conflict.

Working in a fair degree of isolation in this country has enabled me to undertake objective scrutiny of the various social fields that I have encountered. Fortunately, I can interrupt my isolation on demand to seek advice, views and opinions and other mental constructs from a variety of learned friends in many countries.

With respect to data needed for understanding primary and other levels of drives on which human society operates, I am fortunate that I know both Buddha's Teachings on such matters and have had some education at a secular level.

I am also fortunate that my working life has included experiences in scientific,

legal, teaching and financial fields of endeavour. Other pursuits have enabled me to become familiar with artistic domains, both Eastern and Western.

In practical terms, I think I can fairly say, of myself, I have bridged the two cultures mentioned by C.P. Snow. I always strive for the Middle Way because I do not wish to become attached in some disproportionate manner to some creed or view, irrespective of reason.

To my mind, dialogue designed to eradicate bigotry in this world is within the scope of a Bodhisattva ideal. The Western world, in this Dharma-ending age, seems to have introduced an overload on its mental environment by excessive pursuit of novelty. The positive aspect of this search has been proliferation of many wonderful time saving devices, which produce freedom from the historical difficulties to supply persons with a decent materialistic lifestyle, where their primary needs can be satisfied. I need not mention the negative aspects of such behaviour because it has been well documented.

It may not be well known that unpaid helpers, whose function is goal related, manifest dramatically more commitment than staff whose functions are instrumental. It became clear that significant variation in involvement of members could make an organisation vulnerable to internal tensions, when threatened by outside conflict.

Therefore, the answer must lie in methods of controlling commitment of members to some form of ideal intensity. This middle way could be termed "increased professionalism"

It is hard to practise charity if you are poor.

The materialistic well-being of Australians, compared with some of our Asian neighbours, is not so bad. The success of the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd, of which I was Founder, owes itself to a variety of factors, apart from materialistic considerations. One important factor for our success is that the Australian ethos is to give people a "fair go". A sense of fairness does not mean "anything goes" in my perception, but rather it means that social pressures are such that morality may be maintained with comparative ease.

I was born in 1930, the year of the "great depression" in this country.

As a young child, my earliest impressions in this present life were of the compassionate nature of my mother, father, uncles and aunts exhibiting "self help" to one another. Because of meritorious actions I had undertaken in previous lives, I, as the saying goes, had it easy.

Overall, the 1930 depression left most Australians with a strong desire to succeed in business and to discount the culture of poverty.

I have seen vigorous "self help" displayed in recent times in many so called underdeveloped countries. I have been fortunate to meet compassionate persons in those countries. I applaud "self help" actions whenever I encounter them. I have been fortunate that I have the leadership skills to guide, instruct, support and direct many "self help" groups in the delivery of goods and services to their respective clients.

It seems to me worthwhile to teach persons to be compassionate on the one hand and to teach practical skills of a business nature on the other hand. With two hands all things become possible, provided both hands are of equal strength. A balanced view is needed to see this truth.

I find inspiration in the Buddha, whose compassion is beyond measure and whose "skills of business" were vast.

For some reason, the administrative power, executive capacity, financial management and delegation powers of the Buddha seem to be poorly documented in Buddhist literature.

Let us consider for a moment or two the "skills of business" of the Buddha. Starting as a penniless beggar, he built a "self help" system which could feed, house and instruct something like half a million Monks and Nuns in suitable environments within a time span of half a century. The charity of the Buddha is praiseworthy. The Buddha and his Sangha, driven by their accumulated merit from many past world cycles, was the basis for the fruition of such business skills.

Dana is the first perfection.

Dana means "giving". Apart from material giving, it includes giving time and service to the community in the form of teaching, counselling and work training.

There are four types of dana.

The highest form of giving is Dhamma Dana, which is the strategy of showing persons how to remove hate, greed and ignorance and therefore they can obtain nibbana. The whole process of Dhamma Dana depends on having a person who is capable of learning what is taught. Accordingly, great emphasis is placed in practical Buddhism, on making people teachable.

The process of questioning is characteristic of the Buddha's method of instruction. Buddhism does not want to replace anything today. Buddhism presents no threat to any religion, sect or denomination. The fundamental attitude needed for success in the Buddha Way is that a critical examination should be made by the person wishing to learn Buddhism to see if the Doctrine being taught is wholesome or unwholesome. If the Doctrine being taught is unwholesome, it will not match the litmus test of Buddhist Teachings.

Conflicts exist owing to the divergence of value judgements. The necessity to criticise other religions, when teaching Buddhism, is not mandatory. As a matter of fact, I have found, over the last two decades, that the coherent nature of the Buddha's Teaching is such that it does not require many references to other Doctrines.

I wish to return to the theme of "self help" as a method of reducing racial and religious differences between people.

A product-mission matrix suggests that a simultaneous departure from familiar products and familiar culture is a drastic and risky strategy. When synergy is not an important consideration for an organisation, (because that organisation has matured into a comfortable pattern of delivery of goods and services), this departure may be chosen as "the way to go". However, if the organisation is not mature, change on two fronts at the same time would most likely destroy the organisation's essential nature.

It is for this reason that I advise groups not to try to be "all things to all beings". It is better to be aware of the fact that conglomerate groups have less staying power than monopurpose or concentric structures.

The success and stability of the B.D.C. (U). Ltd. arose because of strict observance of these concepts, since its inception.

Buddhist groups have been proliferating in the Western world in recent years and it is my wish to help them remain intact for centuries to come.

It is vital all Buddhist groups practise the three Refuges and the Eightfold Path. Style and image may be left to chance by ignoring cultural models or having vague specifications. However, I suggest this approach is most likely to bring about the decay of groups.

Unless style and image are well thought through on a sound model, a slight change in the distribution of heterogeneity (even if it is unobserved) can produce a serious identification problem. Expressions of ignorance are no excuse for cynicism in measuring and monitoring the 'internal trust' of an organisation's style and image.

Buddha's style and image is the "standard" to be held as a model. An item that means one thing in a given year should mean the same thing a decade from now. For these reasons, your Centre's Directors have focused upon style and image along these lines, which, I feel sure, will maintain the stable factors needed to give a sound structure for the years ahead.

The image of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd. is a stable discussion centre of cohesive Dhamma activity.

The style of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd. is fivefold.

The first style element is that of friendliness, for obvious reasons.

The second style element is a professional manner in conducting the business activities of the company.

The third style element is scholarly, since the Buddha Dhamma texts and commentaries comprise a vast literature. The third Council of Buddhism, convened by Asoka, decided to send missionaries to neighbouring lands. Asoka confined himself to the practical side of the Buddhist religion across his large empire. This period was important for the development of scholarship in art, sculpture, writing and literature. This tradition spread across many countries.

The fourth style element is to be culturally adaptable, since Australia is a multicultural society and B.D.C.(U) Ltd. has many contacts with organisations in overseas countries.

The fifth style element is practical. Practical means lending a helping hand to persons in the community by teaching them to solve their own problems.

The B.D.C. (U) Ltd. can untangle complex and well-disguised new stresses that appear in society, in a cost effective way, funded by active participation of our Members.

It is unlikely that there is any need to change our image and style within the next few decades.

For this reason, I am experiencing a happy birthday today. I wish to express my sense of gratitude to all the many person's who helped assemble these auspicious factors that manifest today.

May you be well and happy in this Buddhist era.

Thank you all very much.

JDH

Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

This photograph shows (L to R): Most Venerable Viriyananda Mahathera, Most Venerable Geshe Thubten Loden and John D. Hughes (making his 60th Birthday Offerings)

FIVE DAY MEDITATION COURSE 21 - 25 SEPTEMBER
DRAGON-KING SUTRA TEACHINGS

A five day Meditation Course was taught by John D. Hughes, Past President of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd from 21 to 25 September 1990.

The text used was the Dragon-King Sutra Stanzas, a Short Introduction Booklet No. 58 by Buddhist Yogi C.M. Chen.

Copies of the Sutra were supplied by Mr N. Prescott who reprinted Booklet No. 58 and distributed it to B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members who attended the five day Meditation Course. The dedication of this reprint and free distribution of the Sutra was in celebration of the 60th Birthday of Mr John D. Hughes, Founder of the Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd.

Buddhist Yogi C.M. Chen was advised by heavenly instruction that he should find this Sutra in the Chinese Tripitaka and repeat it. As this Sutra has not been printed separately by any publisher and is of considerable length, Yogi Chen summarised the essences into some standards and printed them in the English language. His hope is that it will flourish all over the earth between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.

Chien-ming chen (commonly known as Yogi C.M. Chen) practised meditation alone in Kalimpong, India, at the foot of the Himalaya Mountains for 28 years. For more than 30 years, Yogi Chen wrote and printed many Buddhist books both in English and Chinese. He made a vow that none of his works should be printed for sale. A meditation manual of Yogi Chen's instructions was first written in 1962 in Kalimpong, West Bengal by Venerable Sangharakshita Sthavira and Venerable Khantipalo Bhikkhu. The final draft was published as a book in 1966 by Upasaka Khoo Poh Kong of Malaysia. C.T. Shen published a reprint in 1976 to which Yogi Chen added two appendices. The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York, organised a team to work with Yogi Chen to revise the text.

B.D.C.(U) Ltd Newsletter No. 9 (June 1981) pp 15 - 16 contains a summary of mistakes in Meditation, as explained by Yogi C.M. Chen. B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members and others who attended the five day Meditation course were reminded of these types of mistakes. At the commencement of each Meditation sitting, the six remembrances (Buddha, Dharma,

Sangha, Sila (Morality), Alms (Generosity) and God should be observed. The term "God" was used in the translation by Yogi Chen but could be more clearly translated as protection by all the eight departments of beings who afford protection to Buddhist Meditators (Devas, Nagas, Yaksas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Kinnara and Mahoraga).

In this Dharma Ending Age, there are many persons who might exhibit wide academic reading or have business and selling acumen derived from the vast foundation of business, scientific and social knowledge and who are willing to attribute a large degree of their success to books and setting a certain amount of time aside every day, come what will, to enhancing their particular vocation. Profitable knowledge can be gained by reading about subjects relating to vocation.

Many of these persons exhibit good human qualities which are praiseworthy when used in their worldly actions. Unfortunately, they are unaware of the wholesome influence that certain Deva Protectors can exert. An Australian survey a few years ago showed only about 35% of Australians believed that such Deva beings exist. If persons do not arrange connections to Devas who may protect them, and those persons practise meditation, they cannot help meeting Mara beings. The negative influence of these Mara beings appears in many ways. For example, in the City of Knox (bordering the Shire of Sherbrooke where the B.D.C.(U) Ltd premises are located), the Hindu Trustees indicated they wanted to build a two storey building with a main shrine room, prayer hall, office and storage area upon the site of the St. Mary's Anglican Church which was sold to the Trustees recently. Six hundred residents objected to the design and it was subsequently re-designed by completely removing one of the main domes from the original design, and the other dome was reduced in size. With these modifications, the Knox Council gave permission to build the Hindu Temple in spite of widespread community opposition. One of the Hindu Trustees indicated that the domes are a prerequisite for a Hindu Temple. It could be guessed that the majority of the 600 residents protesting are excluded from that segment of the Australian population that believes in the beneficial influence of Devas.

Practitioners attending the five day Meditation course know of the beneficial influences of Devas and, therefore, because of past causes could understand a Teaching directed to the Dragon-King Deva.

Buddha explained to the Dragon-King that in former times Dragon-King was named Endless Welfare King and had heard the Teaching at an earlier time. One of Buddha's Disciples asked why a profound Teaching had not been preached to all mankind and why the Buddha had only taught it to the Dragon-King. Buddha explained that the Dragons had all been Bhikshus in past lives but they fell into poor rebirths because of their lustful karmas (actions).

The Prince of Dragons vowed before the Buddha that he would keep good conduct and not forget the correct Practice in future times. Buddha taught the Ten Goodnesses and their outcome.

Buddha taught the Dragon-King with endless Teachings which was a doctrine named "The Entire Control".

Among these Teachings were detailed four endless forces:

1. endless endurance to do things;
2. endless world wisdom to cut doubts;
3. endless power to see men's thinkings;
4. endless skill to give men teachings.

To develop these four abilities, the Students were instructed to consider the four valuable methods. (3)

The four valuable methods (Skt. Catvara Rddhipadah) are:

1. Satisfaction and joy in the things concerned.
2. Attending wholeheartedly to the things concerned without laxing. (sic.)
3. Diligent effort in doing the things concerned.
4. Diligently think about and investigate the reasons in things.

The correct view is needed of what conditions and Devas can be most useful to the Practice of Meditation. In the old Persian language, which, like Greek, places "h" before a vowel where "s" is used in Sanskrit, Ahura (= Asura) signifies "god". The Zoroastrian chief god is called Ahura-Mazda, "the wise Lord", as Varuna is addressed in early Rigvedic hymns, "wise Asura and King", and "the all-knowing Asura who established the heavens and fixed the limits of the earth". On the other hand "daeva" in the Iranian dialect, which is cognate with Sanskrit "deva" (god), came to mean "demon". "Asura" is derived from the root "asu", which signifies "the air of life", and "deva" from "div" (to shine), or "deiwo" (heavenly). (2)

The concept of asuras is much older than the Buddhist literature, and in recent times a great amount of research has been made on the study of the origin and history of the word. It has been shown that the term asura is used almost always in the hostile sense and almost always collectively. (4)

In Pali Buddhist literature, the Buddha uses the episode of the war between the devas and asuras as a metaphor for the moral retreat of the Monk in the face of Mara, the evil one, before the former had attained the meditative state "Infinite Space" (first arupa jhana).

In the Digha Nikaya (II, 285), sakka explained that "experiencing satisfaction such as this which was wrought by blows and by wounds does not conduce to detachment nor to disinterestedness, to cessation, to peace, to spiritual knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbana".

G.P. Malalasekera (DPPN. I, 215) observes that in Buddhaghosa's time, the bygone lustre of the word asura (as equivalent to ahura) had faded, and draws attention to the commentator's interesting explanation of the name: When Sakka was born with his followers in the asura world (which later became Tavatimsa), the asuras prepared a drink called gandapana. Sakka warned his companions not to drink it, but the asuras became drunk and were thrown down Sineru. Halfway down they regained consciousness and made a vow never again to drink intoxicants (sura), hence the name asura.

In the Sutta-nipata, commentary (SnA. 484), the asuras are also called Pubbadewa, "the gods of yore".

Many asura narratives are found in Mahayana texts. One asura was born because, in his previous human life, he had snatched things from others and donated them to non-Buddhist saints. Many texts explain that anger, conceit and doubt will be causes for a birth as an asura.

Asuras should not be confused with Asuradeva, a former Buddha, mentioned in the lists of former Buddhas.

It is important that Meditators do not allow the asuras to become their teachers, but rather display a series of wholesome minds as an example to such beings. It is not appropriate to have illwill towards any being. Illwill must be replaced by compassion, loving-kindness, sympathetic joy or equanimity. Similarly, if people are dutiful to their parents and respect Buddhist and non-Buddhist saints, such people can be reborn in a deva world where the beings will be powerful enough to overcome the asuras. It would be inappropriate to condemn beings to whom Buddha had given Teachings.

The result of the preliminary part of the five day Meditation course meant that the Students attending the course dispensed with many unwholesome minds, which, if left unattended, could have been a cause for the Students to experience asura rebirth in their next existence.

Having established the destruction of causes for rebirth as an asura means individuals are positioned to strengthen mature knowledge.

If the Meditators' minds establish the desirability for the non-production of the causes for rebirth in an asura world, then the Sutra Teachings of not harming others, not talking of others' faults and of not praising oneself highly with false pride becomes a *sine qua non*.

By practising all kinds of good Dharma, a type of beneficial consciousness, termed *Asrava Kasaya-Jhana* becomes evident. This particular Jhana involves the waning of vicious propensities. It is necessary to learn to ignore what you cannot control, and learn to control what you can. So, were an unwholesome, unprompted thought to appear concerning not keeping the Ten Goodnesses, there is no need to act out the unwholesome, unprompted thought.

The details of what arises in the unprompted mode varies from individual to individual, but the basic instruction is to influence your own wholesome conduct by your own practice, which is controllable.

The Dragon-King Sutra Stanzas recommend the broad view:

*A total maxim in many essences:
"Don't quench all the forms but act as conduct,
Don't give rise or produce any kind of form,
All forms have their own nature to contact.*

*When all forms have been contacted in Truth,
All your conducts will also be perfect,
But you should not hold it as success,
This is my profound teaching to affect."*

The method of meditation which does not give rise or produce any kind of form is where the mind is focused with concentration in observing the midmost mental base from which mental phenomena arise. Since volition is used in holding the attention on the midmost mental base, there is no volition to "play with" the arising feelings or memories. It is volitional contact with form in the sense of materiality (pali: rupa) that brings rebirth in a material existence. This meditation is difficult to do because "we" are interested in what "we" think and experience in our mental stream of arising and falling of mental phenomena. The meditation produces certainty that a parachute to capture any changes of the environment of one's own mental culture is likely to be better under the canopy of protection of devas. The tranquillity arising from the cessation of "playing with" feelings or memories is the parachute.

The midmost mental base allows all substantial forms to be contacted in Truth and repeated practice will bring Dharma Eye. Form in the sense of "substance" (Chinese: ti) is associated with "function" (Chinese: yung). In Ch'an, "mind" (Chinese: hsin), "nature" (Chinese: hsing, ti), and one-pointedness" (Chinese: i-wu) are the synonyms of substance. (6)

May the merit of the five day course strengthen refuge in the Triple Gem and bring suitable Protectors to all Buddhists.

JDH

References:

- (1) From Volume One (Nos 1 - 62) of A Systemetized Collection of Chenian Booklets by the Buddhist Yogi C.M. Chen, a gift by Dr C.T. Shen, U.S.A. Booklet No 58, Dragon-King Sutra Stanzas - A Short Introduction.
- (2) Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd Newsletter No 4, pub. June 1981 pp 15 - 16.
- (3) The Summary of Buddhist Terminology in English Ed. Wei-Lin Yan, Pub. Wen Szu Publishing Co., Taiwan, pp 65 - 66.
- (4) Donald A. MacKenzie, Indian Myth and Legend, Pub. The Gresham Publishing Co. pp 61 - 62.
- (5) Encyclopaedia of Buddhism Ed. G.P. Malalasekera, Vol. II, Fascicle 2: Article headed ASURA, pp 286 - 288.
- (6) Journal of Sino-Indian Studies Special Edition of the 5th International Conference of Buddhist Education No 5, 1986, Pub. Institute for Sino-Indian Buddhist Studies, Taiwan, Article by To Sung-po, On The Substance And Function in the Ch'an Sect, pp 64 - 65.

VICTORIAN KATHINA CEREMONIES 1990

The maturity of Buddhist Practice in Australia is becoming more evident each year. Several KATHINA Ceremonies illustrate this observation.

The Annual Robes Presentation is considered to be a great offering to the Monks (Sangha) because it must be organized by the Lay Practitioner. It occurs once a year at a chosen day (within the month following the end of the Rains Retreat during the October-November period.)

The Kathina Robes Presentation is the most significant merit making opportunity of the Buddhist calendar for the Lay Devotees since it is bound by time and the advantages are equally shared by both benefactors and recipients.

Meaning of Kathina Robes

The word Kathina or Kathin literally means a formal act performed by the community of Monks. The name Kathina is derived from the name of an embroidery frame which is used for making the Saffron Robes of the Monks.

THE KATHINA STORY

During the lifetime of Gautama Buddha (the Historical Buddha), there was a group of thirty Monks from a town called Patha travelling to Jeta Grove Monastery to see the Buddha. Realising they would not arrive at Jeta Grove Monastery in time for the Rains Retreat, they decided to stay at Saketu town. Having stayed at Saketu for three months they continued their journey through all kinds of weather, then made haste in order to see the Lord Buddha. All their Saffron Robes were worn out and spoiled by the end of the journey. These difficulties were known to the Buddha. He therefore set down for the first time a rule for the Monks that enables them to receive a set of Robes which is offered for personal use.

The Kathina Robes Ceremony was originated at that time and has continued to the present time.

After the Robes Presentation was completed, the Lay Practitioners offered Dana to the Sangha.

RMA

THE MELBOURNE THAI BUDDHIST TEMPLE INCORPORATED KATHINA CEREMONY

On 28 October 1990, 10 Members of the B.D.C.(U)Ltd attended the 5th Annual Kathina Ceremony of the Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple Incorporated, which is situated at 489 Elgar Road, Box Hill, Victoria, 3128.

The Temple Abbot, a naturalised Australian, Most Venerable Dr. Viriyananda Mahathera M.A., Ph.D., presided over the Ceremony. He was accompanied by four Buddhist Monks, three of whom are Abbots of other Melbourne Buddhist Temples.

This multinational Kathina Ceremony, catering for about 350 Buddhist Lay people, was held at the Box Hill Town Hall, 1022 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill, Victoria.

After the usual offerings of light and fragrance before the Buddha Image, Lay Practitioners chanted in Pali; Homage to the Buddha; Three Refuges and Five Precepts.

Most Venerable Dr. Viriyananda Mahathera then led the assembly in traditional Kathina Robe Chanting of;

IMAM SAPARIVARAM KATHINA-CIVARA-DUSSAM SANGHASSA
ONAJAYAMA

(We, of this retinue, cloth for the 'Kathina' Robe, to the Order dedicate)

RMA

Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

This photograph shows Most Venerable Viriyananda Mahathera and Most Venerable Geshe Thubten Loden on the occasion of Mr. John D. Hughes 60th Birthday Celebrations.

SRI LANKAN BUDDHIST VIHARA KATHINA CEREMONY

On Sunday 21 October 1990, Mr. Roger M. Armitage, Director and Vice President of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd attended the annual Kathina Ceremony of the Sri Lankan Buddhist Vihara which is situated at 66 Regent Avenue, Springvale, Victoria, 3171.

The Kathina or Robes Presentation Ceremony was held at the Carnegie Football Club Hall at No. 2 Kooyong Park Road, Carnegie, Victoria.

Several Abbot Monks from other Buddhist Temples near Melbourne and about 250 Lay Practitioners attended the Ceremony.

The Ceremony began at 9.30 a.m. with the traditional "Parading of the Buddhist Robes". This is a practice whereby the Lay Practitioners take turns carrying the Robes to be offered to the Monks while Chanting Salutations to the Buddha Dharma and Sangha.

During the parading Ceremony, a protecting banner was held over the Robes. At the end of the "Parading of the Robes" section of the Ceremony the procession returned to the hall and the Robes were offered to the Monks.

The Abbot of the Middle Park Vipassana Retreat Centre, Venerable P. Kassapa then delivered a short Buddhist Discourse prior to the offering of lunch to the Monks.

RMA

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR FOR B.D.C.(U) LTD LIBRARY

Literacy is a relative concept which encompasses a range of reading and writing skills. Internationally, the term basic literacy is used to indicate the ability to read and write your own name. Functional literacy means the ability to read and write well enough to accomplish simple everyday reading and writing tasks in your particular society. Functional literacy in English is essential for all Australians, but it is not enough.

Active Literacy involves the integration of listening, speaking, reading and writing and critical thinking; it incorporates numeracy. It includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. For an advanced technological society such as Australia, the goal must be an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, and which helps them become more aware of the world and empowers them to participate more effectively in society. (1)

Literacy is a community responsibility and B.D.C.(U)Ltd have arranged classes in active literacy for several years.

In 1981, John D. Hughes set up the B.D.C.(U) Ltd Library Project with a goal that the Library stay cohesive and "non-sectarian" to ensure ALL aspects of "Buddhism" were included in the Library. (2) This policy has been followed since that date and will continue to be observed.

The prime consideration for the enhancement of the Library is to increase refuge in the Dhamma. (3)

The B.D.C.(U) Ltd Library hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Friday. Open public holidays. The Library is open on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. (excluding days when Meditation Courses are held). On-site parking for up to eight cars is available. B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members and accredited scholars have extended library time privileges.

Considerable effort is planned for 1991 to introduce computer information systems into the library. No information system has ever been developed without mistakes being made. Efforts are directed to defining the useful life of the system. A library software program is under evaluation at the present time. It is thought that pilot conversion, rather than phased conversion, would be planned.

Some B.D.C.(U)Ltd Members have undertaken a commitment to index their own libraries. When these indices become available they will be incorporated into the B.D.C.(U) Ltd. main library index. Members are being encouraged to bequeath their Buddhist books and journals of their own collection to the B.D.C.(U)Ltd Library. It is proposed to arrange a library display on our Open Day on Australia Day 1991 (26 January 1991).

The library facility can welcome 5 persons at any given time. This facility is well ventilated,

carpeted, and in harmony with the many precious Buddhist artifacts displayed on its western side. Photocopying facilities are available for use within Section 40 of the Copyright Act 1968.

A series of reference library use training sessions, each of three weeks duration, from 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. on Sundays is planned. The objective of this training is to introduce persons to information use as a symbol of commitment to rational choice and to provide methods of summarising, filtering and reducing information to a pre-specified form.

JDH

References

- (1) Australian Government Printer, Federal International Literacy Year Briefing Paper No. 1, 1990, at p.1
- (2) B.D.C.(U) Ltd, Newsletter No. 4, June 1981, Pub. Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd. Australia. at p. 17
- (3) B.D.C.(U)Ltd, Newsletter No. 29, September 1990, Pub. Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd. Australia. at p. 9.

1990 ACHIEVEMENTS BY B.D.C.(U) LTD WOMEN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The development of the spiritual well-being of Buddhist lay persons and the pursuit of physical progress of their nation need not be mutually exclusive. What is important is the frame of mind of Buddhist lay persons have in their community as they go about their daily lives.

The ratio of women to men Members of the B.D.C.(U)Ltd is 29:29 at present. The Buddha Dhamma makes no distinction in practice between women and men, because a wholesome mind is not gender specific. This article is deliberately casting a narrow net by limiting itself to the diverse achievements of five B.D.C.(U) Ltd women Members. It is not intended to disparage, in any way, the achievements of our other Members.

From one frame of reference, Australia has had only 200 years of history of permanent building settlement in the European sense because the Aborigines were a nomadic people. In the Port Phillip District, there were few parts where the white settlers and their animals did not impact upon the Aborigines and the dingoes so that the numbers of kangaroos multiplied and upset the natural balance. In 1851, a series of bushfires raged killing some humans. Even today, bushfires are a fact of life for all Australians.

A bushfire is not gender specific. The ways that such natural hazards to life in this country effect the minds and determine the history of its people have reduced many distinctive roles of women and men. One of the historical factors is that Victoria had its population rise rapidly due to gold rushes. In 1852, Melbourne was the most expensive city in the world. The notion of great wealth by hard work built such places as the Melbourne Public Library which opened in 1856. This Library is conducting its Renaissance Appeal at present. B.D.C.(U) Ltd. Members support this Appeal.

By the mid-1860's it was widely accepted that education should be made compulsory and probably be free. Education became widespread. Women entered all types of studies.

The study achievements during this year of five women who are active B.D.C.(U) Ltd Members are worth noting.

Two Members, Wendy Clancy and Libby Dale completed their studies of a Master of Business Administration at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). Wendy is employed as an executive by the City of Melbourne and Libby is employed as a Manager of a Team of electronic engineers with Telecom Australia.

Leanne Eames, who is currently employed by the Japanese Government to teach the English language to Japanese students, entered a Japanese language speech contest for foreigners living in Japan for less than 5 years. Out of the initial 42 applicants, 20 were selected to appear on the basis of their speech contents. From these, 10 were chosen to present in the final held on 21 November 1989 at "Makuhari Messe" the new and largest Convention Centre in all Asia. Leanne's speech entitled "Looking far a Balanced View", gained her second place.

Lyne Lehmann graduated as the Most outstanding Marketing Student for 1989 at the Swinburne Institute of Technology and received an Associate Diploma in Business Studies (Marketing). She is presently employed as Marketing Manager of the Guide Dog Association of Victoria.

Catherine Palin-Brinkworth, a B.D.C.(U) Ltd Member resident in New South Wales, had her first book published this year by Matheson Publishing Australia in association with Progress Production Pty. Ltd. The book's title is:

"What is Success Anyway?"

John D. Hughes, Past President of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd actively encourages all Members to undertake useful studies in areas likely to be of benefit to many beings.

JDH

Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

The photograph shows: W. Clancy on the left and Libby Dale taken at their recent graduation.

BUDDHISM IN CAMBODIA (KAMPUCHEA)

Cambodia (Kampuchea) was estimated to have a population in 1989 of about 8 million persons. Much has been written about the difficulties of this country's troubles. Some recent changes are that the country's name is no longer the People's Republic of Kampuchea but the State of Cambodia. Buddhism has been re-established as the national religion and private ownership of property is allowed. (1)

This Centre was fortunate to be visited by the Head of Buddhist Monks of Kampuchea during January 1989, the Most Venerable Tepvong of Onalom Pagoda, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. During his visit, he had discussions with John D. Hughes (now Past President of the B.D.C.(U) Ltd). The Most Venerable has forwarded an excellent background paper on Cambodian history, on how events over the last three decades have caused considerable impact to Buddhist organisation, training facilities, libraries, study and

education infrastructure and destruction of about 2,000 pagodas in that country.

The present situation is that throughout the country there are now 300 pagodas reconstructed and 20,000 Monks together with an increase each year of the number of young Monks. Buddhist Institutes are reopened again and the rights and the freedoms in belief of the people have been assured by the State Constitution. Great efforts are being made to print Dhamma texts and other books.

The ancient history of Cambodia is still obscure and most of the research written by archaeologists and scholars dealing with Cambodian history is in the French language. The ancient country of Funan (circa 1st century A.C. - 550 A.C.) appears to have embraced a part of Cambodia. An Indian Buddhist Monk named Nagasena who was sent by King Jayavarman of Funan to the Chinese Emperor Wu-ti (484 A.C.) carried two ivory stupas among his presents to the potentate. Later on (502 A.C.), the same king sent to China a coral image of the Buddha; figures of the Buddha and of the Bodhisattvas, assignable to the Indian Gupta period (circa 320-600 A.C.), which have been found in the country, especially in Angkor Borei (contemporary with Dvaravati in Thailand) make this event probable. (2)

Mahayana Buddhism seems to have been the prevailing form at Angkor Wat, at least as far as covered by inscriptions. In general, the Hindu Kings were tolerant of Buddhism. Cambodia's first Buddhist King was Suryavarman I (1101-50), who followed Mahayana practice. For Buddhists the reign of Jayavarman VII (1181-1215) was especially favourable because his Queen Indradevi was a Buddhist Teacher.

By the 14th century Theravada Buddhism was well established among the people, and generally, this form of Buddhist practice remained unchanged, even through a land having a history of troubles by invasion and wars.

Australia is fortunate in having several Cambodian Buddhist Monks resident and practising in this country. May the Cambodian people continue to practise the Buddha Dhamma .

Ven. T.

JDH

References

- (1) 1990 Britannica Book of the Year, Pub. Enc. Brit. Inc., Chicago, 1990. pp 454-455.
- (2) Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Vol III, Fascicle 4, Pub. Govt. of Sri Lanka, 1977. pp 607-610.

Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

Photograph taken at the B.D.C.(U) Ltd (28.1.89) shows: (R to L) The Most Venerable Tepvong of Cambodia, J.D. Hughes and Committee Member

J. O'Donnell.

Please refer Graphical Image 30-?-1

Calligraphy - Title of a book written by Venerable Seung San Haeng Won which is used as the title of the article which appears below.

This significant book, published by the Educational Institute of Buddhist Correspondence, Seoul, Korea in 1990 is the work of the Venerable Author Seung San Haeng Won.

The flavour of the title is difficult to render into the English language.

This reviewer's copy was obtained from a B.D.C.(U) Ltd Member, who attended the August 1990 WORLD PEACE CONFERENCE in South Korea, (1) She sought the assistance of local Korean Translator, Ki Sung Kwak, who was kind enough to translate the Preface of this Korean book.

The Preface, written by Seung San, President of the World Zen Centre, commences with the statement "that everything in this world is formed according to karma".

The Preface continues:

"Born in North Korea (decided by achievements in my previous existence), I first entered the Law of Buddha while I was wandering in South Korea.

It has been said that man's pioneer spirit germinates in the midst of hard life. Division of the country and Korean war made Korea in chaos. It was this confused time when I became a Buddhist in order to find a way to true life. All the countries in this world, whether they are rich or poor, are suffering.

While I was delivering the Law of Buddha in Japan, U.K., U.S.A., Europe, China, USSR and Africa, I began to feel that man is suffering in the same destiny. I also realised that the ultimate aim of the religion is to overcome the suffering and provide the Buddhist Elysium where all men, being equal and free, can love each other.

Every time I went on a propagation tour, I wrote a letter to Monk Jung-Sup Han, at the Korea Buddhist College and this book is the result of his effort to collect and edit.

I thank him. I also wish to thank all Buddhists who helped to publish this book." The photographs are of excellent content.

At the present time, where some Nation's codes appear to be becoming somewhat along the lines of "load, fire, aim", it is necessary to put the aim of peaceful means first to overcome the suffering of others.

The works of Great Bodhisattvas, such as the Zen Patriarch Master Seung San, inspires many to peaceful actions, because his own living conduct never wavers from peaceful means, conducive to the well being of many persons.

Without wishing to disparage others, historical records tells us that it is a fact for most humans that ageing brings an inclination to greater pessimism. For example, Nicolas Berdyaev, writing in Moscow in 1914, thought that a sharpening of consciousness characterized his time and that his times were heralding the dawn of "a creative religious epoch" (2) By 1926, in Paris, he concluded the world must look forward to "a period of barbarization".

Buddhists would be well advised to reflect on the karmic consequences for the killer of any being and exhibit some more appropriate passion to such persons than hate. By such a method, the true wisdom-compassion mind for all beings can arise.

The understanding of method and means as taught by the Zen Patriarch are effective for this Dharma ending age. It is to be hoped that some kind person shall translate this text into the English Language to enable the wisdom of the Venerable to reach as many readers as possible.

MAY ALL BEINGS GUARD THEIR CAUSES FOR HAPPINESS.

JDH

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- (1) Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd. Newsletter No. 28, (June 1990), Pub. B.D.C.(U) Ltd, Australia, at p.18
- (2) Nicolas Berdyaev, The Meaning of the Creative Act, Pub. Victor Gollancz, 1955, London, at p.9.

B.D.C.(U) Ltd OPEN DAY - AUSTRALIA DAY 26 JANUARY 1991

FIVE DAY MEDITATION COURSE - 1990-91 TIMETABLE

Teacher: John D. Hughes (free of charge)
Thursday 27 December - Monday 31 December, 1990
Friday 29 March - Tuesday 2 April, 1991
Friday 5 July - Tuesday 9 July, 1991
Friday 20 September - Tuesday 24 September, 1991
Friday 27 December - Tuesday 31 December, 1991

BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE

12 BDC(U) Ltd Members are undertaking a 25 day pilgrimage to Thailand, Nepal and India commencing 12 February 1991.

TIMETABLE OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Monday and Friday evening (7.30 p.m.) Meditation (free of charge). Teacher: John D. Hughes.
Sunday (11.00 - 12.00 noon) English Expression, Teacher: John D. Hughes, (free of charge).

Sunday (12.30 -1.30 p.m.) Studies in Library Research, Teacher: John D. Hughes, (free of charge).

TIMETABLE OF CH'AN ACADEMY EVENTS 1991

3 February	-	Ch'an Academy Anniversary
2 & 3 March	-	Ch'an Workshop (1) with Melva Fitzallen
6 & 7 April	-	Sumi-e Workshop(1) with Andre Sollier
27 & 28 April	-	Ch'an Workshop (2) with Melva Fitzallen
25 & 26 May	-	Ch'an Workshop (3) with Melva Fitzallen
22 & 23 June	-	Ch'an Workshop (4) with Melva Fitzallen
13 & 14 July	-	Sumi-e Workshop (2) with Andre Sollier
3 & 4 August	-	Ch'an Workshop (5) with Melva Fitzallen
3i August & 1 September	-	Ch'an Workshop (6) with Melva Fitzallen
28 & 29 Sept	-	Sumi-e Workshop(3) with Andre Sollier
26 & 27 Oct	-	Ch'an Workshop (7) with Melva Fitzallen
23 & 24 Nov	-	Ch'an Workshop (8) with Melva Fitzallen

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This Newsletter is edited by John D. Hughes, Dip. App. Chem. T.T.T.C.

Copies are made available on request.