

BROOKING STREET BULLETIN



ISSUE #32, MARCH/APRIL 2010

BUDDHIST DISCUSSION CENTRE (UPWEY) LTD.
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ABBOT'S REPORT

How to stop treading water and go up stream.... this was the topic for the Buddha Dhamma class on Saturday 13th March 2010. It was a very insightful class in that most students were able to see how they could improve their merit making without doing any more physically!!! The idea is to make more merit than we consume on a daily basis so that this merit can be directed to our learning and changing our behaviour to reduce craving. Members were asked to write 10 things under each category:

1. 10 things on how to make more merit than I consume
2. 10 things to nourish the mind, wash the mind, quiet time etc.
3. 10 things on how to reduce the negative mind states
4. 10 things that are a 'must do' daily

The suggestions made in the class included:

1. send metta before doing any activity
2. take five precepts before doing the activity
3. take refuge
4. share your merits after each activity with your mother wherever she may be
5. Think of gratitude towards your self and all the causes that are now fruiting so you can learn the Dhamma
6. gently let go of the negative minds and prompt wholesome – just do it like a wish and a gentle thought ... one quiet, pure moment is more powerful than a lot of pushing and shoving...
7. Write 10 things that you are grateful for towards the persons you meet regularly and hand this to them. Be mindful in this activity.

IMPORTANT DATES

SATURDAY WEEKLY	MEMBERS' DAY BUDDHA DHAMMA FOR EVERYDAY LIFE CLASS, 11:00AM
SATURDAY EVENINGS	BUDDHA DHAMMA MEDITATION TEACHING BY VENERABLE SANGHA OR GUIDED BY ANITA CARTER, 8.00PM
SUNDAY WEEKLY	BUDDHIST HOUR RADIO, 4:00-5:00PM
13 MARCH	SUMI-E CLASS, 2:00-4:00PM (SECOND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH)
27 MARCH	CHAN CLASS TAUGHT BY MELBA NIELSEN, 9:30AM
27 MARCH	FUNDRAISING DINNER QUANG MINH TEMPLE
2-5 APRIL	AUTUMN BHAVANA COURSE
4 APRIL	BUNNINGS SAUSAGE SIZZLE
10 APRIL	SUMI-E CLASS, 2:00-4:00PM (SECOND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH)
24 APRIL	CHAN CLASS TAUGHT BY MELBA NIELSEN, 9:30AM
24 APRIL	GENERAL MEETING, 2:00PM

I wish to share with you a mnemonic that we have been using recently. It is Use These Steps And Leave Everything Mara Causes. This is an mnemonic for the 8 fold path: right Understanding; right Thought; right Speech; right Action; right Livelihood, right Effort; right Mindfulness; right Concentration.

Love Anita

VICTORIA UN VESAK FUNDRAISING DINNER

Stop Press: The UN Vesak Fundraising Dinner was conducted at Quang Minh Temple, 18 Burke St, Braybrook on the 27th of March 2010.

Eleven of our Members took part in this great event and enjoyed inspecting the new 4 level

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community centre which is nearing completion at Quang Minh Temple.

Early indications are that together with some donations from some of the Temples present on the night about \$13,000 was raised towards the UN Day of Vesak event. Wow!



PHOTO: MELBA NEILSEN

NEWS FROM MELBA

Hello everyone.

Saturday morning classes at 11am continue with excellent subject material prepared for us by Frank and teachings provided by Anita, and now Simon is living at the centre and is a great help.

At the end of January 2010, we had a paper by Tan Archan Chah, answering common questions asked by practitioners. Tan Archan Chah said, 'watch but do not touch as thoughts arise and go away again'. This is the same method Spike (John Hughes our founder), taught in the Chan Academy, and we use while 'mixing the ink' in our 'Way of the Brush' classes. The Chan Painting classes are held on the

last Saturday of each month.

It was wonderful to be taught by this Chan Master in the Chan Academy, although Pete Marshall was dismayed during the discourse to find that after having given up smoking and beer he had to give up the 'snooze' button on his alarm clock as well!

Tan Archan Chah said we are to give up everything, - including the attachment to pleasure. The trick is Pete - give up the attachment, NOT the pleasure!

Anita conducted a large Chan painting class on Saturday 7 Feb at 11am to show us how to put Chan theory into practice. Don't forget people, to use rice-paper, we want some of that yang bamboo for the 2010 Buddhist Art Exhibition. For big rice-paper see David or Liang at www.chineseculture.com.au

Thanks Julian for copying Chan Academy Tehons for our classes - they're a big help to Helen and Melba on those busy days.

Pennie got her second name; 'Scholar of the Sky', and Tanya got her first painting name; 'Coral sea-flower', meaning a delicate flower made of strong stuff!

'Art is the daughter of freedom,' said German Philosopher and poet, Friedrich Schiller.

The Chan Academy had its first Chan Painting retreat class in the field, 18-19 February 2010. Melba and Tanya painted Bamboo and Chrysanthemum in the guesthouse room, and the next day, invigorated by the salt ocean spray, we painted rock pools, rock cliffs and sea-scapes before a ferry 'sea' trip home.

We are calling for someone to record Anita and Frank while Teaching, this is a valuable resource to the centre. We began to record Spike far too late, and these basic lessons will save our Teacher's voices and effort. As the older students

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age, we will write a series of reminiscences with Spike, so that the new wave of students can get a flavour of their founder.

Remember, appointments can be made with Anita or Frank for guidance with personal Mandalas and life-plans.

If you would like to write personal testimonials on; 'What John Hughes did for you', and; 'What Anita and what Frank did for you', (that changed your life), please email them with signed permission to publish or not.

Prior to the Vietnamese Temples visit, Anita taught us the power of Truth, and requested that we write down five things to thank each person in the class for and then hand them out. It was overwhelming for some of us to find out how much we cared for each other - our Diamond brothers and Sisters, and was a marvelous way to perfect 'joyous effort'.

On Australia Day, we celebrated being Australians with a Bhaisadja Guru healing Buddha Puja. Just in the nick of time for Melba - members there

requested her, (and her pacemaker) to continue to Teach. We chanted the whole Mantra 108 times. Simon was watching Peter's mantra beads like a hawk - wondering how far to go to the 'fluffy bit'!

Well done people - you're champions! - Melba.



PHOTO: ANITA AND FRANK CARTER AND VEN. THICH THIEN TAM ABBOT OF HOA NGHIEM TEMPLE

We had our Vietnamese friends here again for the New Year of the Tiger on Saturday 20 February 2010 - and yes - it was a hot day! They donated \$4000 to our Temple and it was good to see many old familiar faces.

The team in sunhats and sunscreen worked like clockwork (Swiss), with trainee Simon in charge. John, Hero and Leonie worked in the kitchen producing hundreds of drinks for the 'waiters'



PHOTO: VEN. THICH THIEN TAM ABBOT OF HOA NGHIEM TEMPLE AND PRESIDENT OF OUR CENTRE

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outside in the sun. The garden and pools looked lovely and Ryan had mowed the lawns. Julian welcomed the guests and Sally resplendent in a 'Flemington' hat, Adam, Melba, Jan, Kate, Leonie, and George served drinks. Tanya, Trish, Sue, presented the food and Pete was our cameraman - plus everything else!

Error!

PHOTO: ANITA CARTER, EVELIN MARTIN AND PENNIE WHITE



Anita in a graceful Sari was helped in giving

PHOTO: GROUP PHOTO ON 20 FEBRUARY 2010

healing Padmasambhava blessings by Pennie, Tanya and Evelin. Frank provided the eye-drops! Buyers, THIN incense sticks for next time please? To all who helped – thank you, thank you, thank you. – Melba

BIRTH OF PRINCE GOTAMA, THE BUDDHA-TO-BE

This article is the first of three in the series. We will include part two in the next issue.

The Prince Gotama, the Buddha-to-be was born on the full moon day of May in the year 623BC in Lumbini Park, Kapilavatthu near the Indian borders of what is Nepal today.

In the Angutta Nikaya Pt. 1 XIII P.22, it is written: "A unique Being, an extraordinary Man arises in

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this world for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit, and happiness of gods and men. Who is this Unique Being? It is the Tathagatta, the Exalted Fully Enlightened One.”

In The Buddhist Handbook, John Snelling wrote of the birth: It is said that prophetic dreams heralded the great event; that the Buddha-to-be was not conceived in the usual way but descended from the Tushita Heaven in the form of a white elephant.

Bikkhu Nanamoli recorded in the Life of the Buddha; that the Bodhisatta passed away from the Heaven of the Contented and descended into his Mothers womb, and it is said a great measureless light surpassing the splendour of the gods appeared in the world with its deities, its Maras and its Brahma Divinities, in this generation with its monks and brahmins, with its princes and men.

Prince Gottama's father was King Suddhodana of the Shakya Clan. His Mother was Queen Maha Maya.

It is said that while in his mothers womb four deities came to guard him from the four quarters, so that no human or non human beings or anyone at all should harm him or his mother. His mother became intrinsically pure, no kind of affliction

arose in her; and she was blissful in the absence of all bodily fatigue.

Queen Maha Maya carried him for ten months exactly, give birth to the Buddha to-be standing up. He did not touch the earth. Four deities received him and set him before his Mother saying “rejoice, O Queen, a son of great power has been born to you.” First deities received him, then humans. He was born clean, unstained in any way, and two jets of water appeared to fall from the sky, one cool and one warm, for bathing the Bodhisatta and his mother.

As soon as he was born, the Bodhisatta (Buddha-to-be) firmly standing with even feet goes firmly to the North and with seven long steps, a white parasol being held over him (by the gods). He surveys all the quarters, and in a lordly voice uttered the words, 'I am the Highest in the world, I am the Best in the world, I am the Foremost in the world, this is the last birth; now there is no more renewal of being in future lives. (From E.J Thomas's Life of the Buddha 1949, and Life of the Buddha by Bikkhu Nanamoli, 1984)

The Queens younger sister Maha Pajapati Gotami who was also married to the King adopted the child and entrusted her own son Nanda to the care of the nurses.

Not long after his birth a seer of the Divine or priestly Brahmana caste named Asita foretold of the coming enlightenment in a song:

'At a Sakyan city in the land of Lumbini
A being To be Enlightened, a Priceless Jewel,
Is born in the world of men for welfare and weal;
Because of that we are extravagantly gay.
The Unique Being, the Personality Sublime,
The Lord of all men and Foremost among mankind,
Will turn the Wheel in the grove of the Ancient Seers
With the roar of the Lion, the monarch of all

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beasts.'

The Sage came to Kapilavatthu. When he saw the child, he at once noticed there were 32 special signs on his tiny body. The Sage began to weep, and when asked why, he replied that the tears were not for the child but for himself, as he saw that the child would grow up to be a fully Enlightened Buddha, a Teacher of Men and Gods, and Asita new that as he was growing old and would not live long enough to hear the Buddhas profound teachings.

These accounts of the birth are ascribed to Venerable Ananda who said 'all these things I heard and learned from the Blessed Ones own lips. And I remember them as wonderful and marvelous qualities of the Blessed One.'

On the fifth day after the Princes birth he was named Siddhatha which means "wish fulfilled." His family name was Gotama. On the seventh day his Mother Queen Maha Maya died and was reborn in the Heaven of the Contented.

On seeing the child Prince, the learned Brahmin Kondanna noticing the hair on his forehead raised one finger and convincingly declared that the Prince would definitely retire from the world and become a Buddha.

Sabba-papassa akaranam, kusalassa upasampada,
Sacitta-pariyodapanam; etam buddhana sasana.

To do no evil deeds, to give effect to good,
To purify the heart; this is the Buddha's teaching.

References:

Nanamoli, Bhikkhu. The Life of The Buddha – According to the Pali Canon. Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy Sri Lanka. 1984

Narada, Venerable. The Buddha and His Teachings. Buddhist Missionary Society, Malaysia.

1998.

Snelling, John. The Buddhist Handbook. A Complete Guide to Buddhist Teaching and Practice. Rider, Random House Group Ltd. UK 1998.

Thomas, E.J. Life of the Buddha 1949 (referenced in Bibliography of The Buddhist Handbook)

This paper was researched and written by Julian Bamford and Susan Goodes.

VALENTINES DAY FLOWER STALL

At the Valentines Day Flower Stall held on Sunday the 14th of February we sold 70 bunches and made a profit of \$367.

Thanks to all Members who helped run this worthwhile and meritorious event.

We would like to identify any other suitable sites to run our flower stalls. Please let Frank know if you see a roadside site which may be suitable.

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA) VISIT

Evan Thomas from the CFA will attend the centre between 1-4pm on Saturday 10 April to give a presentation on the latest thinking regarding wildfire prevention and suggested preparation we should be aware of.

It is requested that all members of the fire team attend. Other interested members would be welcome to come along and be informed and instructed.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Our USA based member Michelle Hill will be moving to Australia on Monday 30. We wish for Michelle that all goes smoothly and with ease as she packs and prepares to move from her present home in Los Angeles to her home here in the Dandenongs in Melbourne. We look forward to welcoming you Michelle. May you and all your

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family be well and happy and your new life here in Australia be blessed.

Julian has stepped into a new career as a Funeral Celebrant, something he has been looking to do for some years. He is being mentored by Civil Celebrant Christine Davies. He has also recently completed a four day intensive workshop to become a Certified Trainer and Assessor. He is studying through HBA Consulting Pty Ltd, a registered training organisation located at 200 Queen St, Melbourne. Over the coming months Julian will study to complete the 100 hour theory component to gain the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA401040). We wish Julian great success with his new career and studies.

Simon has went to see Sogyal Rinpoche and has written, “It is not often you get to spend time in the presence of a truly great master, but on Tuesday 9th of March I did just that. I was most impressed with the energy, eloquence, and wit of Sogyal Rinpoche. It was inspiring to see a being with so much merit, a deep mind and the ability to see very clearly. At times, I felt like he was talking directly to my mind. Sogyal Rinpoche is often in Australia around this time, so if you get the opportunity to see him next year, I highly recommend you take it.”

We wish Simon and Bodhi a very Happy Birthday in March.

Best wishes from our Centre for Sue’s mum.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Thank you to all the Members who have contributed articles for this issue of the bulletin. Articles about our activities and events are needed monthly. If you have attended an event or manage part of our programs and would like to contribute please send your article to Pennie.