



# Brooking Street Bulletin

Issue #95, January 2024

## Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd.

A.C.N. 005 701 806 A.B.N. 42 611 496 488  
33 Brooking Street, Upwey, Victoria 3158  
Phone 03 9754 3334

email – [wbu@bdcu.org.au](mailto:wbu@bdcu.org.au) web – [www.bdcu.org.au](http://www.bdcu.org.au)



*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato  
Sammāsambuddhassa*

### Abbot's Report

On Wednesday the 10th January Frank and Anita visited the Dragon King at the Nobbies. The Dragon King vowed to look after the Centre for the next 389 years!

With regard to Anita's illness the Dragon King said for her to not to fight the tiredness and that her teacher was a great Master.

He told Frank and all Members:

- To chant the Dragon King Stanzas often, once a week.
- To say the name of the Buddha and visualize Him.
- To keep the Dragon King Altar clean and offer flowers, incense, jewels during the day.

The Dragon King gave us many blessings.

Love Anita

### Important Dates in 2024

Every Saturday	<u>10.00am – 10.00pm</u> Dhamma Day Meritorious activities
Every Saturday	<u>8.00pm – 10.00pm</u> Buddhist Meditation

	& Discussion Class
Every Sunday	<u>4.00pm – 5.00pm</u> Buddhist Hour Live on 3MDR Radio 97.1fm
Last Saturday of each Month	<u>10.30am – 6.00pm</u> BDC Practice Day
Saturday, 17 <sup>th</sup> February	Tu An Buddhist Temple Visit – 8.30am
Saturday, 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Hoa Nghiem Buddhist Temple Visit – 10.00am
Every Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March to 13 <sup>th</sup> April (No Class on 30 <sup>th</sup> March) Onsite at Centre	<u>2.00pm – 4.00pm</u> Introduction to Buddhism Course “Bringing Wisdom to Life” (6 weeks)
Saturday, 9 <sup>th</sup> March to Monday, 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Labour Day Long Weekend Bhavana Course (3 days)
Every Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March – 30 <sup>th</sup> April  Zoom Online	<u>8.00pm – 9.30pm</u> Introduction to Buddhism Course “Bringing Wisdom to Life” (6 weeks)
Friday, 29 <sup>th</sup> March to Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Easter Bhavana Course (4 days)
Saturday, 6 <sup>th</sup> April at 6.00pm	UN Vesak Dinner
Thursday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> May at 11.53 pm	BDC Vesak Commemoration
Saturday, 11 <sup>th</sup> May 7am start	UN Day of Vesak Commemoration
Sunday, 12 <sup>th</sup> May	BDC Mother's Day Flower Stall Fundraiser



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### *Pujas in 2024*

Surangama Puja	- 3 <sup>rd</sup> February
Manjusri Puja	- 9 <sup>th</sup> March
Medicine Buddha Puja	- 13 <sup>th</sup> April
Sakyamuni Buddha Puja	- 23 <sup>rd</sup> May
Sarasvati Puja	- 8 <sup>th</sup> June
Dragon King Puja	- 6 <sup>th</sup> July
Sukhavati Puja	- 3 <sup>rd</sup> August
Green Tara Puja	- 28 <sup>th</sup> September
Vajrasattva Puja	- 5 <sup>th</sup> October
Padmasambhava Puja	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> November
Medicine Buddha Puja	- 28 <sup>th</sup> December

### *Padmasambhava Tsok Days in 2024*

Saturday	20 <sup>th</sup> January
Monday	19 <sup>th</sup> February
Tuesday	19 <sup>th</sup> March
Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> April
Saturday	18 <sup>th</sup> May
Sunday	16 <sup>th</sup> June
Tuesday	16 <sup>th</sup> July
Wednesday	14 <sup>th</sup> August
Friday	13 <sup>th</sup> September
Saturday	12 <sup>th</sup> October
Monday	11 <sup>th</sup> November
Tuesday	10 <sup>th</sup> December

### *Kathina Ceremonies*

Every year at the end of the three month rains retreat in October, Theravada Buddhist Temples conduct their Kathina Ceremonies, the annual offering of robes to the Venerable Sangha.

The Buddhist Discussion Centre Australia encourages all members to attend one or more Kathina Ceremonies per year. The Buddha explained that offering robes to a Sangha member is one of the most powerful and beneficial types of merit. Participants are provided with a most auspicious opportunity to practise generosity, the

first of the six perfections in Buddha Dhamma. Our teachers advise that when offering to the Sangha recollect the offering is made to the entire Buddhist community of monastics from the past, present and future. It is also recommended one makes the offering on behalf of all beings. Doing so produces vast amounts of merit and ensures the action is completed with a pure intention.

Last year in 2023, Members were fortunate to attend four ceremonies at various locations across Melbourne. We visited Sakyamuni Sambuddha Vihara in Berwick, Daham Niketanaya in Yuroke, Dhamma Sarana in Keysborough and Wat Thai Melbourne which was held at Box Hill Town Hall.

*Article: Simon Kearney*



*Ashta Rajbhandari offers a Robe to Monk at the Wat Thai Kathina Ceremony at Box Hill town Hall*

### *Christmas 5-Day Bhavana Course – Introduction to Vajrayana Buddhism*

A five-day Christmas Course was held at the centre from the 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

The main topic for our course was an introduction to Vajrayana Buddhism with emphasis on some revered Vajrayana practices for purifying our mind



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and removing path and life obstacles.

These practices included The Four Powers repentance practice with prostrations to the 35 Buddhas, a Medicine Buddha Puja and the Barche Lamsel (Removal of Path Obstacles).

Teachings were given on Vajrayana Guru Padmasambhava and the great Maha Bodhisattva Vajrasattva who together can provide us extraordinary help and support with our life and our practice through puja's, meditations and mantras.

During the course, students listened to recorded teachings by the highly regarded Dhamma Teacher the Late Rob Burbea on the topic of emptiness which is a profound subject and pathway leading to extraordinary well-being and wisdom attainment.

On the first day of our course we were most fortunate to host a visit by Ajahn Hasapanno, Abbot of Vimokkharam Buddhist Hermitage, Kallista. We offered lunch to the Venerable after which he kindly gave a Dhamma talk on the topic of Anatta (not-self).

Dhamma and meditation courses are offered at our centre four times each year.

*Article: Frank Carter*

### ***BDCU Dhamma Dissemination Program***

Our Centre has previously focused on Dhamma dissemination through on-site Buddha Dhamma classes. In the last two months, we have updated our Dhamma dissemination strategy to include more online teaching approaches to reach a broader and global audience. We have identified a few suitable digital channels such as Podbean and Insight Timer to upload the recording of appropriate Dhamma classes and completed three recordings of on-site classes in both video and audio formats. This project has received

contributions from various members. We appreciate the time and efforts of everyone involved, with special acknowledgement to Peter Marshall, Herro Salim and Vivek Rajshrestha. Thank you.

We have more videos in the pipeline and this will be an ongoing project. For those interested in joining the video production team, please get in touch with Connie. Your skills and contributions are invaluable to us.

*Article: Connie Siow and Jenny Liu*

### ***Installation Ceremony and Puja for Ksitigarbha Altar***

On Saturday, 30th September 2023 there was a ceremony held at our Centre to install a white marble image of Bodhisattva Mahasattva Ksitigarbha in a newly constructed altar that is clad with slate on the base and has a polished red and black granite altar top. There is a reddish brown wooden lattice that protects the image on three sides and a metal corrugated pitched roof that is painted gold on the underside and dark grey on the upper side. The roof is supported by two large wooden lintels that run across the front and back of the altar, which are in turn supported by four steel posts which are painted gold. The altar is situated to the right hand side of the temple grounds when walking into the Centre from Brooking Street, through the Eastern gate.

To celebrate the installation of the image, there was a Mahasattva Ksitigarbha Puja held in the Meditation Hall after which there was a procession of the white marble Ksitigarbha image that started from the white Buddha image and made its way through the Chan garden to the new altar. The procession was guided by Frank Carter. The people involved in moving the image were Adam, Simon, Mike and Herro who supported the image during the procession. These participants then lifted the





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image up and into the new altar. Frank put the Bodhisattva's staff into position just prior to the image being installed under the altar roof. The image was centred on the altar and offerings of flowers, water and incense were made by all those present.

*Article: David Yates*



*Abbot Anita Carter standing at the Ksitigarbha Altar*



*Vivek, Simon, Adam and Mike moving the Ksitigarbha Image*

### *Introduction to Buddhism Course - Online and Local Dhamma Classes*

Our Centre runs several 'Introduction to Buddhism' courses throughout the year. The next one will be held on-site, starting on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 from 2pm to 4pm. The six week course is suitable for those who are new to Buddhism, or intermediate level practitioners who want to revisit the fundamental teachings of the Buddha.

If you would like to attend our 'Introduction to Buddhism' course, please email the Centre at [wbu@bdcu.org.au](mailto:wbu@bdcu.org.au) to register your interest.

*Article: Connie Siow*



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### *Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser*

On Melbourne Cup Day we ran a Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser at Bunnings Warehouse Scoresby and raised \$1,088.27 for our Centre and \$78.40 for Dhammarajika Orphanage in Bangladesh. Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

We had a steady flow of customers and our team of volunteers was kept busy in managing the event given the warm and sunny conditions.

Congratulations to all who participated in this meritorious activity of serving food and raising funds for our Centre and Dhammarajika Orphanage.

Our volunteers worked harmoniously and efficiently together. Well done to all!

Thank you so much for your help and support.

Article: Mark Fowler



*Fiona, Simon, Michelle and Brooke at the Bunnings Sausage Sizzle on Cup Day*

### *World Fellowship of Buddhists Standing Committee on Women*

Our Centre is a member of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) Standing Committee on Women. In 2023, the WFB Standing Committee on Women hosted a series of online zoom talks on topics of interest and relevance to women in Buddhism. The topics and speakers were as follows:

1. Ms Sushma Bajracharya (Buddhist Women's Association Nepal) - 'The Role of Buddhist Women in Society' (29/4/23)
2. Reverend Chi Kwang Sunim (Seon Centre, Kinglake, Australia) - 'Sun-Mind Moon-Mind; An Unfolding Path, How the Wise Compassion of my Teacher Lives On'
3. Reverend Ikuko Hibino (Kayadera Buddhist Temple, Tokyo) 'Yes, a Woman Can Be a Priest in Japanese Buddhism'

These online zoom talks were well attended by our Centre's members and by monastics and lay people from around the globe. We plan to continue to host these talks every couple of months in 2024.

The WFB Standing Committee on Women's publication, 'Harmonious Families', has recently been translated into Nepalese and will soon be printed and distributed in Nepal.

If you would like to volunteer with the WFB Standing Committee on Women, please speak to Anita or Claire.

Article: Claire Ransome

### *Summer Fire Fuel Reduction*

This summer period was predicted to be a high fire risk period of hot dry conditions. Fortunately, so far we have had a very mild summer with frequent rain allowing high fire risk regions such as the





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Dandenongs to remain free of bush fires.

During the COVID lockdowns our senior Members had many meetings on Zoom to do long term planning for our centre and our analysis of the risks to the future survival of the centre identified fire as the number one risk.

Each year during the period leading up to summer and throughout the summer period we focus on what actions we can do to reduce the fire fuel on our property and how we can improve the fire rating of our buildings so they can better withstand a bush fire attack.

This year we started preparing for the summer season by reducing vegetation which was physically close to the various buildings here such as the removal of three medium size trees which were located in the driveway and garden next to the house, the removal of the large black bamboo thicket near the rear of our Dhamma Hall, and a second bamboo thicket in the Nat House garden.

We have cleaned most of our gutters, raked a lot of dead leaves and pruned our hedges. So far we have taken 3 large loads of pruning's and weeds to the tip at a cost of about \$350 and there are more to be taken.

We also sorted out our large stock of building materials which are stored under the hall to provide better access to the underfloor area and make it possible to cover the wood better as a precaution against fire. We then improved the wire mesh sealing around the base of the hall which had developed holes.

We have stopped using flame candles for offerings in our hall and office preferring rechargeable battery lamps.

Thank you very much to all who have helped with this ongoing project to protect the precious Buddha Dhamma resources we have here. Each year we

will increase the fire rating of our buildings and our preparedness to repel fire to preserve our centre and Anita and Frank's home.

*Article: Frank Carter*

## *BDC Monthly Practice Days*

Early in 2023 we introduced our monthly practice day on the last Saturday of each month starting at 10.30am. The start time allows Members and Friends to do a dana offering to Venerable Hasapanno at around 9.45am in Kallista.

The practices we focus on during the day have been sitting and walking meditation, chanting, the Four Powers repentance which includes prostrations to the 35 Buddha's, water offerings, mantra recitation, occasional puja's and at the end of the day Barche Lamsel (removal of Path Obstacles).

Just a single day of continuous practice has many benefits and often by the end of the day participants are feeling strong, energized and clear.

We were most fortunate to have been joined by Life Member and Dhamma friend Jeff Radford for our last Practice Day of 2023 on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November. Jeff began his Dhamma practice at our centre in around 1983 and has been a great servant of many Buddhist temples for many years through helping their Sangha community of Monks and through leading building projects at temples in Victoria and England.

At our Centre Jeff organised our Members to build our first Chan Academy Hall in 1986 which was created by enclosing the North side veranda and opening up a few internal rooms. Later he worked with George Costas and Members to build our office, our kitchen dining room and our current Dhamma Hall as well as many smaller projects such as helping to build some of our garden gates and renovating our Teachers office.



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Jeff talked about his experiences as a lay practitioner for around 30 years which were very interesting and we expressed our sincere gratitude to him for his excellent contribution and support to our centre and his first Buddhist teacher John Hughes. To recognise his long service to our community we requested Jeff to become a Patron of our Centre, joining with Master Yi who has been our Patron since March 2021.

Anyone who spends time with Jeffrey will recognise his many qualities and Dhamma energy which arise from the merit and Dhamma activities he has done consistently for a long period of time and the Blessings he has experienced through serving the Sangha. Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

*Article: Frank Carter*

### **Proposed Cake Stall Fundraiser**

Our Centre is happy to report that Scoresby Bunnings have offered us the opportunity to run a cake stall fundraiser at their premises.

We are still in the planning phase on how best to run the cake stall fundraiser, with the first fundraiser likely to be between June and October this year.

Please contact the Centre or Fundraising Manager – Mark Fowler on 0404 866 672 if you would like to help out and volunteer for this fundraising event.

*Article: Mark Fowler*

### **Annual General Meeting including Election of Office Bearers and Management Team Members**

The Annual General Meeting for 2023 was held at the Centre on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Thank you to all the Members who attended. It is a necessary event each year for members to elect our Directors and

management team, pass our annual accounts and recollect the meritorious activities done at the Centre during the past 12 months which are presented by our Vice-Presidents.

Congratulations to the Members appointed.

Position	Member(s) Appointed
President	Frank Carter
Secretary	Anita Carter
Assistant Secretary	Connie Siow
Teaching Program Manager	Anita Carter
Treasurer	Frank Carter
Vice President Corporate Governance and Reporting Public Relations	Simon Kearney
Joint Vice Presidents - Corporate Governance and Reporting Fundraising	Claire Ransome and Mark Fowler
Joint Vice Presidents - Social Media and Promotion	Connie Siow and Jenny Liu
Vice President Knowledge Management	Vinse Cheung
Joint LAPAM Managers	Frank Carter and Simon Kearney
I.T. Manager	Frank Carter
Fire Prevention and Occupational Health & Safety Manager	Frank Carter
Executive Producer of Buddhist Hour Radio Broadcast	Simon Kearney
Librarian	Vinse Cheung
Editor of Brooking Street Bulletin	Mark Fowler
Joint World Buddhist Radio Managers	Adam Richards and Tanya Poynton

The next AGM is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2024. We will send a notice to all members closer to the date.

*Article: Connie Siow*



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### *New Members*

We are happy to welcome our new members who have joined the Centre in the past few months being:

- Fiona Wong
- Michelle Holovka
- Giribala Thomas

### *AGM Celebratory Lunch*

On Sunday 13th August 2023, our Members gathered at Rosebank North Restaurant in Ringwood North for our Annual General Meeting Celebratory Lunch. It was a delightful occasion with many of our members attending. The restaurant had an old-world charm and felt fitting for our grand celebration! Thank you to all who attended.

*Article: Claire Ransome*

### *Visit of past Member Dorothy Welton*

One of our past long serving Directors and Secretary Dorothy Welton (formerly Dorothy Sadler) visited our Centre on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 for the first time in many years. Dorothy was one of our most prolific typists having typed many Dhamma articles, correspondence and reports mainly using manual and then electronic golf ball typewriters. This was way before our office had personal computers which were only installed here around 1992.

Dorothy married another Centre Member Mike Welton with the wedding being held onsite at the centre. Last year Mike passed away after a long illness and Dorothy wished to offer our centre her and Mike's Dhamma library, some items from their altar and some Buddha relics which she was given by a Burmese monk who resided at our centre for a short period in 1982.

We express our gratitude to Dorothy for her generosity in offering these precious Dhamma resources.

*Article: Frank Carter*

### *Visit of Mr. Charlie Chia*

On Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, September 2023 we had a talk and presentation by Mr. Charlie Chia who is a friend of Alice Chow and was visiting Melbourne from Malaysia. Alice recently travelled to Ladakh to visit the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre which was founded in 1991 by Buddhist Monk Venerable Sanghasena. The story about the humanitarian work of Venerable Sanghasena and his supporters is remarkable and inspiring.

We were fortunate to have an opportunity to meet Charlie who is one of the long-time supporters of the campus created by Venerable Sanghasena which has become a home and refuge for thousands of deserving people who live peacefully and happily together.

Charlie Chia also presents online talks on mindfulness and meditation. Thank you Alice for arranging his visit.

*Article: Mark Fowler*

### *Social Media and Marketing*

As a continuous effort to create more opportunities for others to learn more about Buddhism, our team has been making various improvements to the online marketing and promotional materials for our Introduction to Buddhism course 'Bringing Wisdom to Life'. We engaged and attracted many curious new students in 2023 from across Victoria to attend the course, in person and online. So far the digital platforms we have been using are Facebook, Eventbrite, Meetup, WeekendNotes and online local community noticeboards. Some learnt about our course through word of mouth.





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In our recent marketing campaigns, we faced some technical issues with the course registration channel; specifically the Facebook advertisement which was previously a highly effective marketing channel to attract registration.

It was a team effort to identify the underlying issue and explore solution options. The team agreed that we need a new website with the name Buddhist Education Centre and Facebook page as part of the solution and have co-designed a new digital marketing strategy and structure to support future marketing activities.

We embraced this as a good opportunity to incorporate some other important changes Anita and Frank identified for the centre.

*Article: Connie Siow*

### ***New Trading Name - Buddhist Education Centre***

We are excited to announce that the Centre registered a new trading name – Buddhist Education Centre. It is important to note that this new trading name does not replace the existing name for our Buddhist Discussion Centre; rather, the purpose is to support our digital dhamma dissemination projects and marketing activities.

We are in the process of building a new website, which serves as a comprehensive hub for Buddha Dhamma teaching materials and resources.

In early January, we launched a new Facebook page named Buddhist Education Centre and we invited our members and friends to ‘like’ and ‘follow’ the new page. If you have not done so, here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Buddhist-Education-Centre/61555202010612/>

and the QR code:



Your participation and support is very important to us, so we encourage you to ‘like’ and ‘follow’ our new Facebook page. This will also help to build trust from others new to the Centre and see our presence through the new Facebook page.

*Article: Connie Siow*

### ***Library Report***

Homage to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

Thank you to the combined efforts of our Members and volunteers we now have over 1700+ catalogued Dhamma books on our digital platform Libib.

In 2024 we shall commence cataloguing our Dhamma books for our lending library which will enable opening up browsing and borrowing using our digital platform for our members.

Our volunteers Jade and Marece have stepped down from their roles, we sincerely thank them for their great efforts and contributions, we wish them all the very best. An advertisement will be placed to seek for interested candidates and we invite our members to take part in this meritorious deed.

The Dhamma is extremely rare to meet, having the fortune to come across it, may we look after it well and make the causes for ourselves and others to meet the Dhamma again and again. May we always meet the Dhamma, practice the Dhamma and realize the Dhamma. Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu.



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Article: Vinse Cheung

## **Member's News**

### ***'Experiences for a Month, Lessons of a Lifetime - To Walk the Path'***

*The following article was written by Jayden Lai, son of BDC Member Vinse Cheung.*

#### **The 'Lay Life'**

Having just completed high school, I have entered adulthood almost unprepared. I struggled to balance work, social life, and hobbies. I often am distracted by whatever is happening in the future and worried about everything happening around me. I often found myself under extreme stress and anxiety. Unable to focus and concentrate on what matters, I struggle with deadlines and forget to take care of myself, neglecting both my physical and mental health.

#### **How It Happened?**

At the lowest point of my life my Mum took me to the Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple. On our third encounter, Abbott Ajahn Boonsom invited me to attend the evening meditation class; it was the only time of the week when I could stop all the chaos around me and focus on the present and myself instead of what was happening tomorrow or next week. After a few sessions, Ajahn Boonsom invited me to ordain as a Novice, to which I replied, "Yes" without much hesitation.

#### **Ordination**

To become a Novice (Samanera), one undertakes a series of instructions to the ancient ritual. The most significant difference between a Novice and a normal person (Lay Person) is the monastic robe one wears and the number of precepts (Sila) one keeps. Buddhism believes that all humans should practice and uphold the five precepts. The continuous practice of the five precepts is meant to develop the virtuous mind and character to assist in the path to enlightenment. As a Novice, one vows

to take on an additional five, which are meant to assist the practitioner in abstaining from the comfort they are used to.

#### **The Experience**

In the beginning, adjusting to the dramatic change in lifestyle was quite challenging. As the temple was of Thai Theravada lineage, the monks and the followers spoke fluent Thai, creating a language barrier for communication. I could also not eat after noon, sing, dance, or sleep on beds. I had multiple occasions I wanted to call quits. And the worst part of all, I was a teenager stuck in a temple with no phone and no way to contact the outside world.

#### **The Lesson**

As the days passed, I learned to adjust to this new lifestyle. Through meditation, I learned how to focus on the present, understand the things happening around me, and gain better insights into myself. From learning Dhamma, I discovered ways to live happier. By abstaining from luxurious goods, I realised how to enjoy life and its simplicity.

#### **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank the Monks, Maechi and temple followers at Melbourne Thai Buddhist Temple & Wat Thai Bhavana Ballarat for taking care of me throughout and after my time as a Novice. I especially would like to thank my parents, Vinse Cheung & Kevin Lai, for supporting my journey.

Special thanks to Ajahn Boonsom, Ajahn Boon, Rinpoche, Ajahn Air, Ajahn Mario and Ply.

With Loving Kindness,  
Jayden Lai



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*Connie, Anita, Frank, Jayden, David and Jenny in the BDC Meditation Hall*



*John David Hughes Puja held at the Centre*





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