



All in Order

Celebrating 10 years of the Western Buddhist Order

In this Issue

Who, Why & What is the WBO?

'Hallo. My name is Devamitra'

'Going for Refuge.' Three personal manifestos

Book Review

Alternative Traditions

Weekly Programmes

SUKHAVATI

Monday	7.00pm	Meditation & Dharma courses (by arrangement)
Tuesday	7.00pm	Meditation and puja (varied programme)
Wednesday	7.30pm	Hatha yoga (also additional day classes - ring for details)
Thursday	7.00pm	Beginners' meditation class

MANDALA

Monday	7.00pm	Beginners' meditation course (by arrangement)
Tuesday	6.00pm	Hatha yoga
Thursday	7.00pm	Varied programme including meditation & puja. All welcome.

SWISS COTTAGE: Church Hall, Loudoun Road, NW8 c/o 960 3515

Monday	7.00pm	Hatha yoga
Thursday	7.00pm	Meditation course (by arrangement, new course every 6 weeks)

Also Tuesday Dharma course, by arrangement only.

ARYATARA

Monday	6.00pm & 7.45pm	Hatha yoga
Tuesday	10.30pm	Hatha yoga
	7.30pm	Meditation and puja
Wednesday	7.30pm	Beginners's meditation class

AMITAYUS

15 Park Crescent Place, tel. 693971

Monday	7.15pm	Introductory evening with meditation instruction (19 George Street)
Tuesday	7.15pm	Regular meditation class
Wednesday	6.00pm & 7.30pm	Hatha yoga (by arrangement)
Thursday	7.15pm	Meditation and Buddhism course (by arrangement)

VAJRADHATU

Monday	6.30pm	Meditation course (6 weeks, by arrangement)
Tuesday	7.00pm	Regular meditation and puja
Wednesday	6.30pm	Meditation course (6 weeks, by arrangement)
Thursday	7.00pm	Introductory Buddhism (talk/meditation/taped lecture)

HERUKA

Tuesday	7.15pm	Meditation, puja, etc.
Wednesday	7.30pm	Buddhism for today & tomorrow: lecture series & discussion for newcomers
Thursday	7.30pm	Beginners' meditation class
Sunday	7.30pm	Beginners' meditation class

MANCHESTER

Meditation classes and Dharma courses are being held. Telephone 061-225 3372 for details.

EDINBURGH

Classes and courses are being held, telephone for details.

CORNWALL

Mitras and friends are meditating at St. Austell Arts Centre every Tuesday. Contact the secretary at Selsey, St. Stephen's Coombe, St. Austell. Telephone: Grampound Road 882401.

'Most excellent, Lord, most excellent! Just as if a man were to set up that which is thrown down, or were to reveal that which is hidden away, or were to point out the right road to him who has gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness, so that those who have eyes can see external forms;—just even so, Lord, has the truth been made known to us, in many a figure, by the Blessed One. And we, even we, betake ourselves, Lord, to the Blessed One as our refuge, to the Truth, and to the Brotherhood. May the Blessed One accept us as disciples, as true believers, from this day forth, as long as life endures!'

—From *The Teviga Sutta*

Editor: Nagabodhi
Assistant Editor: Marichi

Layout and Design by
Windhorse Studios

Photographs by Roger Jones,
Mike Ratzer, Padmapani, Gunavati,
Siddhiratna Anne Murphy.

Photographs by Roger Jones,
Jory Squibb, Siddhiratna,
Surata.

Published quarterly for the Friends
of the Western Buddhist Order,
51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green,
London, E.2. Tel: 01-981 1225
President:
Ven.Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita

Printed by Windhorse Press
at Sukhavati, 51 Roman Road, E.2.

© FWBO Publications 1978
Subscriptions: £2.00 per annum,
£2.50 overseas.

Cheques and postal orders should be
made payable to Windhorse
Publications at 3 Plough Lane,
Purley, Surrey, England.

EDITORIAL

The Order is ten years old. It is now ten years since the first ordinations, ten years since thirteen people took their leap in the dark and went for Refuge. Not ten years since a building of some kind was formally opened, or ten years since someone somewhere filed a definitive set of documents with a registrar, thus founding a new sect, club or society: ten years since just a few people made a statement about themselves, about the way they wanted their lives to go. That is how the Western Buddhist Order began. That is how it has continued to grow.

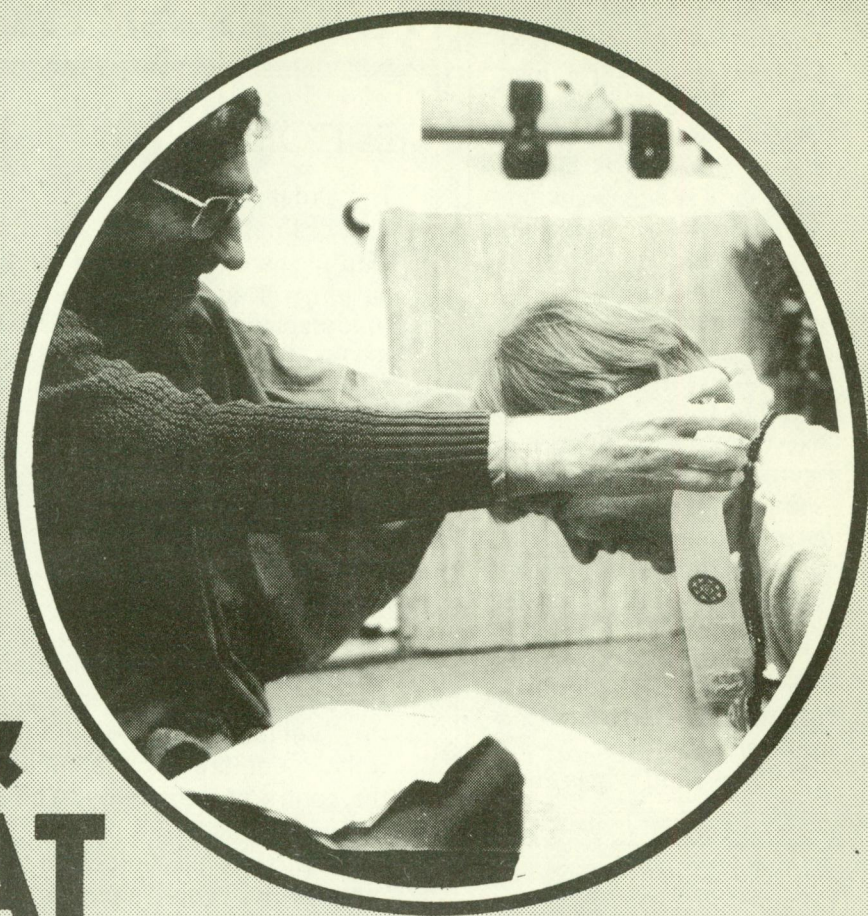
When we talk about the Order, about how long it has been going, how many members it has, and so on, we always have to bear in mind that 'it', the Order, is not a thing: it is nothing outside or beyond the people who 'belong' to it. These people feel sufficiently inspired by the ideal of Enlightenment, sufficiently grateful for — and receptive to — the Teaching that will guide them towards Enlightenment, to have declared a determination to place these things at the centre of their lives. The Order, then, is the medium through which these people communicate. Indeed, you could say that the communication these people have with one another *is* the Order. Sangha, spiritual fellowship, is an ideal — something that we grow towards. It is one of the miracles of the Order that it is always changing; it changes whenever someone new enters it, and it changes as those already within it change. The miracle continues, for, as the Order changes, as the quality of communication and interaction between Order members changes, so to do the Order members themselves. And so the process unfolds, gaining intensity and refinement all the time.

So to celebrate the Order's first ten years is not to celebrate the survival of some static thing through the ups and downs of a certain time span, but rather to celebrate the fact that a whole process, an evolution of communication and commitment, has now had ten years in which to deepen and mature, ten years to become ever more conducive to the spiritual development of those within its influence. Already we can look back and see how far we have come. Already we can look forward and sense, with wonder, the direction in which we are going.

Nagabodhi

WHO WHY & WHAT is the WBO?

by Upasika Dhammadinna



Twenty years ago, on the 7th of April, 1968, 12 men and women became the first members of the Western Buddhist Order. Today the Order has 96 members. It might not look, judging by statistical appearances alone, as though the W.B.O. is a particularly successful body; we live, after all, in a society in which biggest is almost always best, in which nation states, large corporations and huge business amalgams are commonplace and in which the success of a religious movement also is often judged simply by a counting of heads. We could ask whether the fact that 96 people have

committed themselves to the Spiritual Life, within the context of the W.B.O., signifies very much in the modern world. To answer this question we need to look much more closely at what the Order is and what it does.

When Sangharakshita returned to England in 1964, having spent 20 years in India as a Buddhist monk. During this first visit, he taught meditation, gave lectures and held meetings at Buddhist societies all over the country. He felt there was a lot of potential for the growth of the Dharma in the West, but also saw that for this growth to happen a

new kind of movement was needed which would provide an opportunity for those involved actually to commit themselves to the spiritual life. Most people involved in Buddhist societies and organisations at that time attended one or two weekly meetings and meanwhile continued to live their lives much the same as before, and in much the same way as their neighbours. Anyone who wanted to live a completely Buddhist life thought they had to go East, either to take the robe, or at least to find Eastern Teachers. Genuine commitment in Buddhism involves Taking Refuge in the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. For this to be possible, all three Jewels, or ideals, have to be present. At that time the Buddha Jewel, the

ideal of human perfection, existed in the Buddhist scriptures and in rupas and thangkas, and the Dharma Jewel, the teachings which lead to that perfection, existed also in the scriptures. There was, however, no body of committed men and women, in this country, to make contact with, and Take Refuge in. There was no Sangha. In 1967, therefore, Ven. Sangharakshita founded the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. One year later, the Western Buddhist Order itself came into being, when the first 12 people publicly committed themselves to the Three Jewels.

The significance of the occasion was probably not understood by many of those present. It was only a small beginning, but it opened up the possibility for so many other people to take that first big step in their development. Bhante gave a lecture at the time explaining the meaning of the Upasaka Ordination and the Western Buddhist Order. Listened to now, 10 years later, the lecture seems a little lightweight and even old-fashioned. We have to understand, however, what an enormous step those first people were taking. Only Bhante, at that time, had any idea of what the Order was, or could be. The people about to commit themselves had had no contact with a spiritual community and could only trust Bhante and their own aspiration, take a leap in the dark, and emerge the other side, fully committed Buddhists in a newly born Spiritual Community.

Though nowadays, the experience of becoming an Order Member, and of entering an already existing, dynamic Spiritual Community is obviously very different from that first occasion, the ceremony and its significance is the same. The formal Going for Refuge, which one does in the presence of one's teacher, is the act which makes one a fully committed Order Member. We tend to speak, in the FWBO, of Going for Refuge to the Three Jewels, and of commitment to the Three Jewels. Commitment seems to be the English word which best conveys the spirit of the Pali, which we literally translate as

Going For Refuge, and is a word you will hear used a lot if you move at all in FWBO circles. Up until the time of actual commitment, Buddhism has been something which has perhaps taken up only a certain amount of our time and energy, and something which is still at a distance from us. From the moment we formally Go for Refuge, we are personally involved in the study, practice and realisation of the Buddha's teachings and have taken our first step towards becoming one with our Ideals. Of course the steps from being marginally involved to being fully committed, merge into one another, but never-

Individual. Ordination most often takes place within the context of a retreat and on the evening of the private ordination, while all those present practice the *metta bhavana* (loving kindness) meditation, the person to be ordained slips quietly away to the private shrine room, where Bhante waits to perform the ceremony. On one such occasion, Bhante first of all spoke to all of us about the significance of this part of the ceremony. He stressed, very strongly, that this is the moment when the person concerned really does Go Forth, just as the Buddha did in his day. She (it was a women's



theless, there still comes a point when we have to come forward as an individual, on our own, separate ourselves from the group, and *actually* commit ourselves by privately and publicly reciting the Refuges with our teacher.

The Ordination ceremony thus falls into two natural parts. Firstly there is the private ordination which takes place between the individual concerned and Bhante. During this ceremony the Refuges and Precepts are recited after the teacher and one is given a new name and a personal visualisation practice. This ceremony corresponds to the lower bikkhu ordination, the *pabaja*, and represents the Going Forth, the leaving of home and of all group ties, to become an

retreat) makes her individual commitment to the Three Jewels, alone, by herself. In a way, she does not really know there is a spiritual community at this point; she just wishes to make her own individual commitment, regardless of what anyone else is doing and regardless of whether others have trod the way before or will tread the way in the future. Even if everyone drops by the wayside, she will have made her commitment, which will stand—no matter what. He stressed this very strongly on this occasion, adding that she might even die, life being so precarious, before she could take part in the public ceremony, and that the person concerned even feared she might die before she got to the private ceremony to make her individual commitment! Perhaps this gives some idea of the seriousness of the occasion and of its significance.

The public ceremony is usually

performed on the following morning in front of all those present, and is an extremely happy occasion enjoyed by everyone. The ordinand publicly recites the Refuges and precepts, is given a kesa (a white neckpiece replacing the traditional white robe) and the new name is disclosed. After the ceremony the person steps back and sits within the circle of Order members present and is welcomed into the Sangha (usually with three hearty shouts of *Sadhu!*). So you step forward as an individual and make your own commitment, and then to your delight and surprise find an association of other individuals committed to the same ideals, with whom you are now in communication. The Public ceremony corresponds to the higher bikkhu ordination, the *Upa-sampada*, when the new individual, who has been tried and tested in the first of loneliness, as it were, is accepted into the existing company of individuals. It really is a new person who is accepted into the Sangha. The integration, energy and growing commitment which has brought the person to this step, has completely destroyed the old personality, and so the spiritually reborn individual is given a new name by which he or she is now known by all other Order members, mitras and Friends.

The two most important aspects of both the public and private ceremonies are the taking of the Refuges and the reciting of the 10 precepts. We go for Refuge to the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. The Buddha jewel represents the ideal of Enlightenment—not just the historical Buddha, Sakya-muni, but also the Ideal of Buddhahood itself, the ideal of human perfection, the ideal of Enlightened humanity which transcends time and space and is eternally present and accessible in our own depths. When we commit ourselves to the Buddha Jewel, we commit ourselves to attaining this Ideal, to having the faith that such perfection is possible, and to having the energy and determination to attain it through our own efforts. The Dharma Jewel represents all the ways and means of achieving this ideal found in the

Buddhist teachings. Commitment to this Jewel means living these teachings and becoming one with them by practising in a genuine, patient, systematic, faithful way until we have transformed ourselves into the Ideal of Enlightenment itself. As we say in our basic puja, "The Truth in all its aspects, the Path in all its stages, I aspire to study, practice, realise". The Sangha Jewel represents all those who have Gone Forth as individuals, all those who have committed themselves to the Three Jewels and share the same Ideals. What commitment to this Jewel is will become apparent as we dis-

cover what the Order is and does a little later. Thus Going for Refuge represents what we can call a conversion. By this I mean a 'turning towards' the Ideals of Buddhism and a turning away from worldly values and claims. For a person genuinely to commit himself, this sort of conversion has to have taken place. The Three Jewels become the most important things in that person's life, all other considerations taking second place.

The second major part of the ceremony is the taking of the 10 precepts. The word Ordination comes from the word *Sangvara*, which



An ordination at Padmaloka



Study on the Order convention

literally means restraint or obligation and there is a *Sila* (code of ethics) associated with each different ordination. The 10 precepts associated with the Upasaka/Upasika ordination cover all aspects of natural morality in a general way and are mainly concerned with the purification of Body, Speech and Mind. The precepts are not rules, but guidelines to behaviour. If we were Enlightened, and therefore in a totally positive state of mind all the time, we would naturally act in accordance with the precepts. Thus we try, by following the precepts, to bring about positive states of mind.

The relationship between these two aspects of the ceremony is quite important and can be discovered by going back to the time of the Buddha. Although the Western Buddhist Order is a new movement, it is based on traditional Buddhist lines. In the time of the Buddha, the Going for Refuge was, as it is now in the WBO, the central act in the Spiritual Life. In the Buddha's day many young people had left home

in search of Truth and were wandering the jungles of India. Some of these people met the Buddha, heard the Dharma, awoke to the Truth and went for Refuge as a result of this spiritual awakening. The Buddha also met many householders in his travels to whom he taught the Dharma and many of whom responded to his teaching, awoke spiritually, and Took Refuge. It is not as though he created a lay and a monastic order. He taught the Dharma, or we could say he just communicated, to whoever he met, and if their eyes were opened spiritually they Took Refuge and entered the Sangha. Obviously the full-timers wandering about with no ties or responsibilities had more time for extensive practice of meditation and more opportunity for intimate contact with the Buddha, but householders, too, practised as best they could. Thus there was one Sangha embracing many different types of people, all with the common bond of having awoken to some extent to the Truth and having Gone for Refuge, but following different lifestyles. In the Western Buddhist Order also, the Going for Refuge is the primary thing, and the lifestyle one adopts is secondary. All Order members take the 10 precepts, but some Order members may go on to take further precepts, or vows of a more specific nature. Some Order members may continue in their profession after ordination, (providing it is in line with right livelihood), while others work full-time for the Movement. Some Order members live with their families, some alone, and some in communities. People may live in different situations at different times. There may be, at any one time, Order members living with their families and working in the world, while others are living in monastic situations and involved in full-time meditation or teaching. But these two extremes of a sliding scale are not exclusive to each other. Family people may spend time in single-sex communities or on solitary retreats, while single people may choose to spend time living with Buddhist families and teaching in a Buddhist school. Nothing is fixed. Whatever precepts are taken, we come back again and again to our common commitment which bridges all differences on whatever

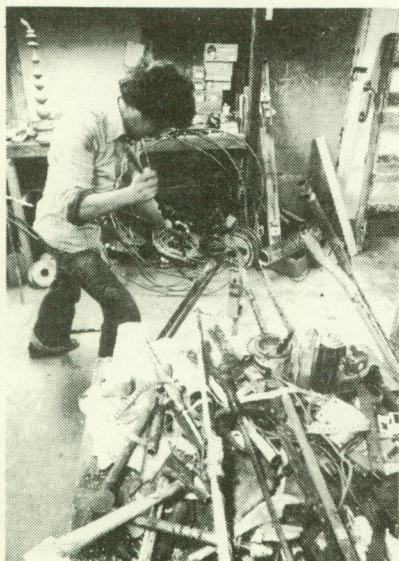
Some of the Order members who work within the context of the FWBO



Anjali



Buddhadasa



Dipankara

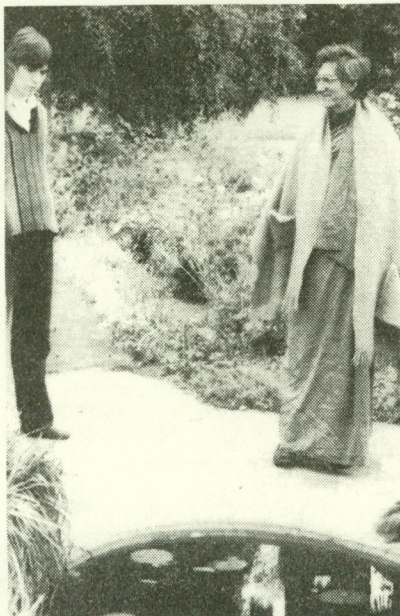


Ratnavira

level, and to the fact that all Order members have left home as individuals to enter the Spiritual Community. In the case of married Order members this means that they leave their family situation when ordained, but return to it as individuals who can who can transform that situation in accordance with spiritual values.

P

erhaps we are beginning to get some idea of what the Order is. One of the most important points to make is that the Order is not a group. It is a voluntary association of free individuals, each of whom has decided to leave all group values behind and relates on the basis of his or her common commitment to the Spiritual life. You cannot join the Order in the same way you can join a group, club, society or organisation. You can only 'join', by being ready to commit yourself to your own spiritual growth and to the Three Jewels. It is also not, therefore, a closed shop or an isolated élite. Anyone can enter the Order provided they are ready to give themselves wholeheartedly to the Spiritual life. It seems to be quite hard for most people to grasp this idea of a Spiritual Community. We tend to think so much in terms of groups, which we are either attracted to or repelled by, or of people being what we can call 'individualists', i.e. doing things in their own way without reference to others at all. This non-group aspect of the Order is one of the most difficult to convey to people who have not yet entered it. People who come into contact through our centres see Order members involved in teaching and administrative work, all wearing kesas, and it is very difficult not to see the Order as a group running an Organisation. The FWBO is a legal charity, but the WBO is a purely Spiritual phenomenon. Order Members come together to meditate, to perform puja, study and communicate, not out of compulsion, but because it is enjoyable, inspiring and delightful to do so. One quite naturally wants to communicate with other people who share the same ideals. The society we live in is in no way geared to Spiritual values and until each of us is much more



evolved we objectively need the support and encouragement of others.

One of the great things about being part of a spiritual community is that one sees others as changing growing individuals and they see you in the same way. Thus you can really be yourself, be truly and completely open and express yourself deeply, not just to one person, but to many. In this way your whole level of experience of yourself is raised higher and higher.

A

part from coming together for purely spiritual pursuits, Order members may choose to 'come together and work in teams to run centres, retreats, businesses, form communities, engage in any activities which will enable other people to come into contact with the teachings of Buddhism. In this way the Order comes together for spiritual communication and also to help the spread of the Dharma in the West in whatever way seems appropriate in the circumstances. So on entering the Order, one leaves the world and its values behind and begin to communicate purely on a spiritual basis, and then, quite naturally, in association with other Order members, moves outwards, back towards the world again, without becoming part of it, so that as many people as possible can benefit from the exist-

ence of the Spiritual Community.

Just as we do not come together out of compulsion, but out of choice,» so we will also feel free to express our commitment in many different ways. An Order Member does not *have* to do anything, in the way we usually think of doing things, i.e. for gain of some sort, for approval or appreciation, or simply to justify his existence. The only thing an Order member has to do on entering the Sangha is to give himself. He is not expected to express his commitment in any predetermined way. Because one is committed, because one wants to give oneself to the Three Jewels, because one has life and energy, one cannot but express one's commitment in *some* way. So it is in this spirit that Order members come together to set up centres and other activities through the FWBO.

T

here is therefore a two-fold aspect of communication in regard to the Order. Firstly there is communication within the Spiritual Community and secondly there is communication outwards towards other people not yet part of the Community. In order to Take Refuge in the Sangha, one has had to be in good and real communication with members of the Order, and this perhaps explains why the Order has had to grow rather slowly over the last 10 years. However there is no reason why the growth of the Order should remain slow. While we are more interested in quality than quantity, an increase in quantity will not necessarily mean a decrease in quality. Over the next 10 years more and more Order members will be 'let loose' in the world, there will be more and more points of contact between the Spiritual community and the world, and so many more people will realise the value of the Order and of the Spiritual Life. The Buddha himself gave certain guidelines which, if followed, would allow for the prosperity of the Order rather than its decay. The first of these conditions, that the Order should meet frequently and in large numbers, seems to be one of the most important. These meetings strengthen the individuality of



Order members with Ven. Sangharakshita.



all those who attend. In the Western Buddhist Order we fulfill this condition by getting together locally for weekly Order meetings, monthly for Order days which are attended by Order members from all over the country, and annually at the Order Convention, which is attended by Order Members from all over the world. We recently celebrated our 10th anniversary during a 10 day convention which was attended by over 70 Order members. During this period we 'came together'⁶ and communicated in various ways — through study, meditation and puja, lectures and talks as well as informally. The

effects of this large coming together will no doubt be felt throughout the whole Movement in the near future. While we continue to meet as often as possible and have in-depth communication with one another, then our outgoing activities in the world will prosper and flourish. In the next decade we will be concentrating on deepening our own spiritual practice as well as moving out more and more into the world and spreading the Buddha's teaching. We will be aiming to deepen our sense of unity, while also increasing our diversity and enabling ourselves to come into contact with as many differ-

ent kinds and sorts of people as possible, so that they too can see the value of the Spiritual Life.

W

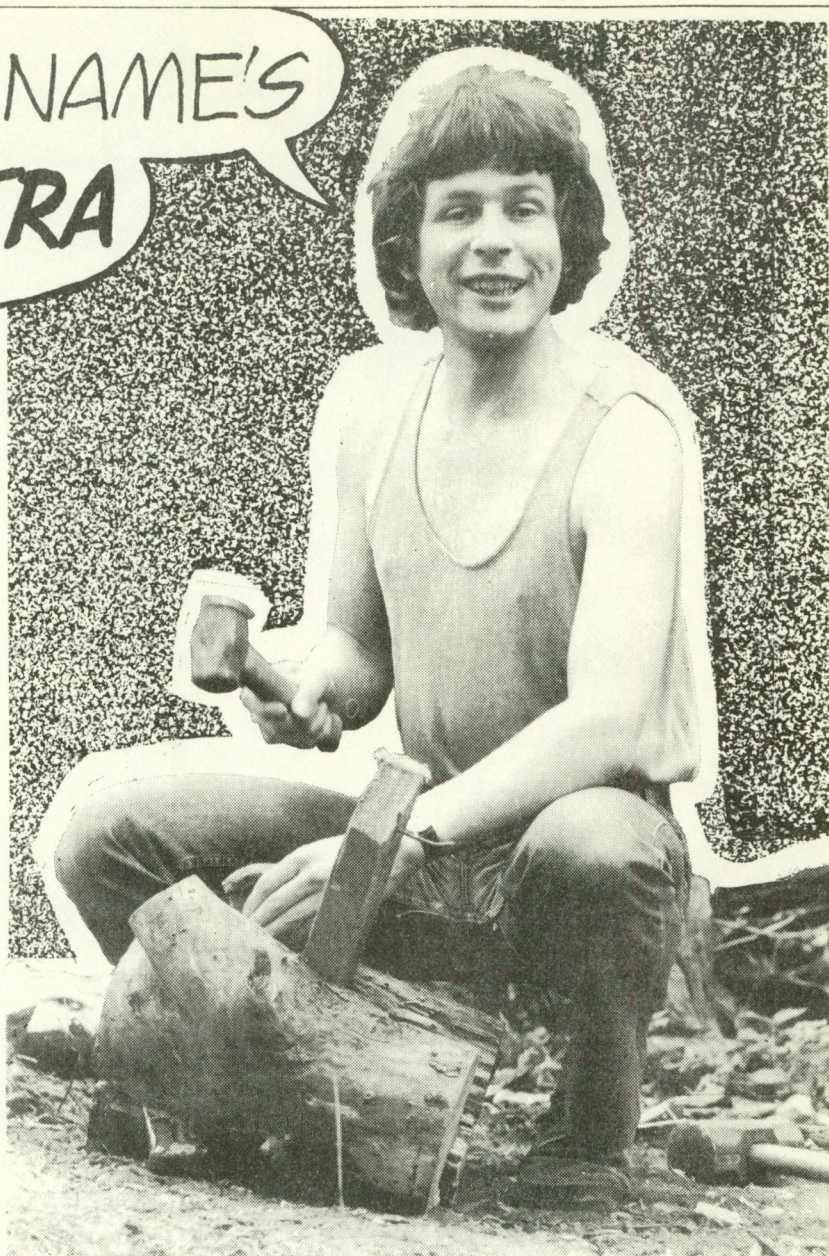
e are concerned, therefore, in the Order, with the dual task of transforming both individual life and the world, the two being intertwined. One cannot change the world purely by external social or political methods. Greed, hatred and ignorance exist in all of us, however lofty our ideals. On the other hand we cannot change the world by concentrating on ourselves alone. There has to be a movement inwards, towards the source of being, and a return to the world. In Buddhism, we cannot think in terms of becoming Enlightened ourselves, in a narrow selfish way, because that is in opposition to our Ideal. We are concerned with self and others, with individualism and altruism, with ethical practice and generosity. So although Order Members are committed to their own growth, they are also committed to changing the world, not only so that they may live in a micro-society built on their Ideals, but also so that this micro-society can enlarge eventually to include the whole world and all beings.

P

erhaps now, we can begin to see that although the Order is still small in numbers, its presence in the world is of great significance. Its founding, 10 years ago, marked a breakthrough into Buddhism in this country, and wherever the Order appears today a similar breakthrough is being made. The modern world, for all its material advancement and sophistication, is still ravaged by the fires of greed, hatred, and ignorance, by war, exploitation and prejudice. The existence of a growing Spiritual community based on love, contentment and wisdom, in the midst of such confusion, can and will have a profound effect on our society as we become more and more outgoing and begin to burn up the fires of the world with the flames of spiritual knowledge and wisdom.

HALLO, MY NAME'S DEVAMITRA

So what's it like to be a member of the Western Buddhist Order? Well it isn't quite like being a 'member' of anything else I've ever been a member of — definitely not like being a member of a football team or a theatre company. Sometimes it's like being a member of a foreign race — after all there can't be many Englishmen wandering around with a Sanskrit name: "Sorry, I didn't quite catch your name . . ." — "Devamitra" — "Ah yes, David Mitchell . . ." No matter how carefully I enunciate my name some people will insist on hearing what they are familiar with — so steeped are they in normality that perhaps they are unwilling to admit the possibility of divergence from the norm. Even if things aren't quite normal well they bloody well ought to be. After all this is England isn't it? And so the 'tra' slides into 'chell' and we can rest secure in the knowledge that here before us is a true-born son of Albion. Those gifted with a more imaginative auditory organ, perhaps sensing the influence of Erin's blood in my veins, endow me with descent from that obscure Irish clan the O'Mitras. Fortunately not everyone I introduce myself to for the first time mishears that unfamiliar combination of sounds, which I would fain be called by, and then of course an explanation is usually asked for. Upon being provided with one some people clearly dismiss me as a rather crankish young man and leave it at that; others wish to pursue the matter further — and there you have an opening. You could be talking to a potential Friend or Order member. As a spiritually committed individual I am interested in discovering others who are potentially so and opening up to them the possibility of treading the Path of the Higher Evolution. This is why I, as well as many other Order members, am involved in running an FWBO centre.



But one can feel like an alien in many other ways. To be a committed Buddhist is to be committed to the Three Jewels. To live in accordance with that commitment will mean that you will conduct your life in a very different manner to nearly everybody you meet outside the context of the spiritual community. I recently gave a talk to a group of apprentice welders at the City College in Norwich. I had been asked by a member of staff to talk to them about my involvement with Buddhism — how I became a Buddhist and what it meant to me etc. When I had finished speaking there was a look of disbelief enlivening the otherwise bored and

resentful faces confronting me. One could see the inevitable questions hovering on their lips: Is that all you do? Don't you *do* anything? Haven't you got a girlfriend? Wouldn't you like a car? The simple answers they received were obviously not easy to digest. As far as I am concerned I lead a very active and challenging life, but apparently it's not obvious to an outsider. On another occasion recently I was given a lift back to Vajrakula (the community in which I live), after addressing a group of young Christians, by a Czech woman who had been present at my talk. She observed to me that although she was living in a

foreign country she did not really feel herself to be an alien as she was a committed Christian living in a Christian culture; she thought that although I was an Englishman, because I was a Buddhist living in a Christian country, I would feel much more of an alien than herself. Perhaps her observation was correct, but probably not in the way she imagined. I would have as little in common with the 'born Buddhists' of a 'Buddhist' country who had no desire to pursue their own higher development as I have with Christians, committed or otherwise, who have no real conception of what spiritual growth is all about. The essential difference is between those who are making an effort to grow and those who are not — that is, between the spiritual community and the world.

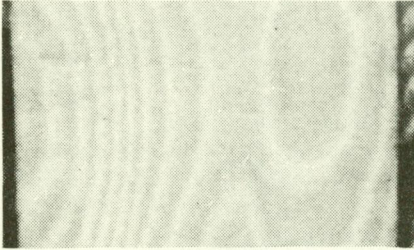
One of the most memorable Order meetings I ever attended was the ninth anniversary celebration of the founding of the Western Buddhist Order held at 'Four Winds' near Farnham, Surrey in April 1977. It was a cold, bleak, grey day and five of us had left Norwich in a van at about 6am in order to arrive at 'Four Winds' by 10am. We arrived an hour late to discover that, apart from four others who arrived at the same time, nobody else had yet made it. Apparently a coach with most of the WBO on board had broken down on its way from London. Eventually the coach arrived and I think events finally got underway at about 1pm. We had the use of a draughty, barnlike building, which had to be cleaned and tidied up before we could set up our shrine. In spite of the draughts, the cold and the greyness I recollect the occasion as one of warmth, colour and inspiration. It was the first time that I had met Purna and Udaya from New Zealand. Speaking with Purna for the first time in my life I felt somehow I had known him for a very long time. The bond of commitment that we shared was so strong that the fact that we lived 12,000 miles apart and had never set eyes on one another previously was no hindrance to communication — and yet he was not the sort of person I would have got to know, or had any feeling for, under any other circumstances. We had insufficient in common on a superficial level.

I remember Bhante commenting a few years ago at the time of the founding of the Order in New Zealand that for those New Zealanders about to be ordained it was a bit like taking a leap into the dark. So far as New Zealand was concerned the Order didn't exist in the sense that there was no chapter of previously ordained people to 'join'. I think there is always an element of this, however, even when there is an established Order to enter. When I was ordained just over four years ago I didn't really have a very clear idea of what I was doing. I just felt that there was a tremendous urgency about the act of Going to Refuge and that it was something that I had to do. If I could have seen in advance the consequences that this would have for me perhaps I might not have plunged in! The act of commitment is a catalyst which activates the total being. The effects of that activation are quite unpredictable, — one plunges headlong into the unknown,—but having come thus far what can one do? I remember at Kulananda's ordination Bhante placing the kesa around Kulananda's neck at the end of the ceremony and commenting with a roguish grin as he gently tugged at the kesa as if to emphasise his words: "And now there's no going back!" So, there's no going back; but that's not to say that there won't be times when you will feel like going back. At least at the beginning of one's spiritual career there will be moments when one's vision fades, perhaps even occasions when it seems utterly extinguished, and it's at these times that the inspiration and encouragement of other Order members is so helpful.

As an Order member I am particularly concerned with the advancement of Buddhism in the West through the medium of the FWBO, and this concern has led me into one or two areas of life that I would otherwise have had no particular interest in or sympathy with. For example, one of the most rewarding aspects of my work in Norfolk has been my visits to Blundeston Prison as 'Visiting Buddhist Minister'. Some of the people I meet at Blundeston are undoubtedly making a genuine effort to implement the practice of the Dharma in their lives under very difficult circumstances and I find my contact with them stimulating. This is probably the most unique contribution that I am making to the development of the Movement. I am the only Order member regularly visiting prison, but hope that sooner or later it will be possible for others to receive similar appointments. In the first four years since my ordination my work for the FWBO has included taking meditation classes and courses, conducting retreats and study courses, establishing a centre and community in Norwich, various administrative tasks, much painting and decorating work, the transcription of seminars and the writing of articles and pamphlets as well as giving talks to various outside groups and a good deal of time spent in individual contact with Friends and mitras. What the next four years will bring who can guess? As one's commitment deepens and one experiences an increasing access of energy one is able to rise to greater challenges and pursue more and more demanding objectives. Who knows where that will lead?

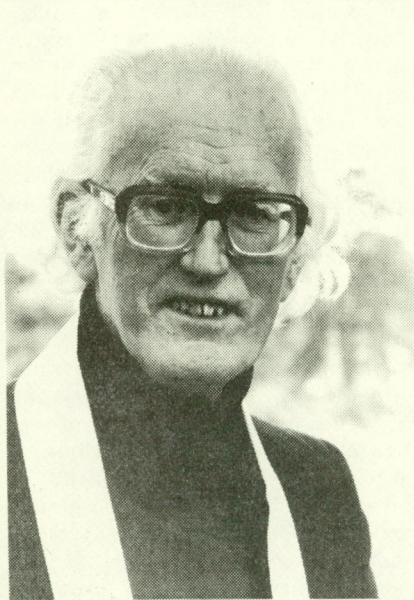


Going for Refuge

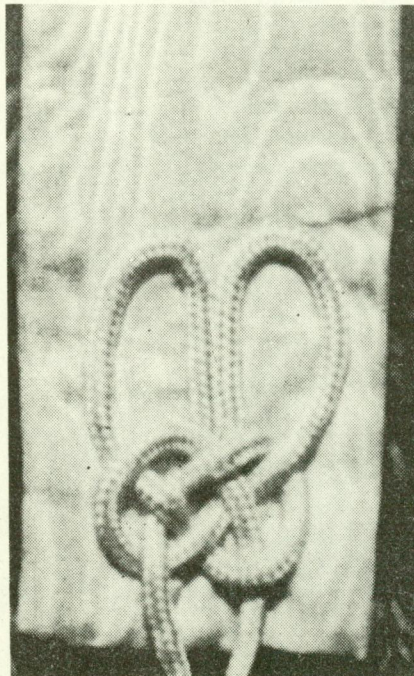


The moment when you Go for Refuge is probably one of the most significant moments in your life. How does it feel to be taking that step? We now hear from three people who joined the Order at the end of the recent Easter retreat...

NITYANANDA



Almost as far back as I can remember I think I have always felt that there is something more to life than appears on the surface. A certain sense of dissatisfaction with things as they are, with the 'world' as presented to us by our organs of sense, has always been a part of my consciousness, though for many years this feeling was partially buried, so that it was, in fact, almost entirely unrecognised and unacknowledged by the conscious mind. I can remember strong convictions which seemed to arise spontaneously from within me, to the effect that there is a timeless, transcendental Reality which is the true 'World of Reality' and that the world in which I was moving, speaking and acting was somehow a kind of 'shadow play', a kind of reflection of Archetypal Realities. These convictions came quite unannounced at some period during my middle childhood and were completely unsolicited by any outside sources such as reading, or of hearing others speak along these lines. These feelings were nourished and sustained to some extent by my upbringing in the Roman Catholic faith and I found the ritualistic and devotional aspects of this faith quite rewarding. However, in my middle to late teens I began to feel the dogmatically authoritarian nature of this faith more and more repugnant, and the bland assertion that this was the 'one true faith' became more and more unacceptable.



It was at this time that I first came into contact with Buddhist and other Eastern literature, and it can well be imagined how inspiring and illuminating I found this contact, confirming as it did my earlier intimations and liberating me, as it did, from the bonds of a narrow and dogmatic creed. A whole new dimension of existence seemed to be opened up and I experienced a tremendous expansion of thought and feeling.

I began to read and study the inspired writings of people such as H.P. Blavatsky, Dr. Suzuki, Christmas Humphreys, and Dr. Evans-Wentz as well as some of the great Scriptures such as the Dhammapada, the Bardo-Thodol, the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao-te-King. I may add, that after the passage of many years, these and other similar writings are still of the greatest inspiration to me, and they have lost none of their validity as far as I am concerned.

Another source of inspiration in these early years was that great poem, based on the Scriptures, 'The Light of Asia', by Sir Edwin Arnold. In the pages of this great work, the figure of the Buddha, the supremely Enlightened One, the Shower of the Way, the unsurpassed Guide and Teacher for our World Period, came to life for me. He was shown as the great example of one who, by great perseverance could overcome all dangers and difficulties and could achieve the goal of Supreme Enlightenment and it showed me that what one man

could do we all could do if only we were to put all our energies and inspiration into it.

In a few days time I shall be receiving the Upasaka Ordination. What does this mean to me?

It means, primarily that I shall be able to express my full commitment to the Three Jewels. Firstly – to the Buddhas, which is the Ideal of Enlightenment and which is embodied in all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and most particularly, in this context, in the person of my Teacher, Bhante, at whose hands I shall be receiving Ordination. Secondly – to the Dharma or Path leading to Enlightenment, this path being embodied in the Sangha or Spiritual Community of all who are striving to grow and develop as true individuals. In this particular context, it is, of course, the Sangha as embodied in the Western Buddhist Order.

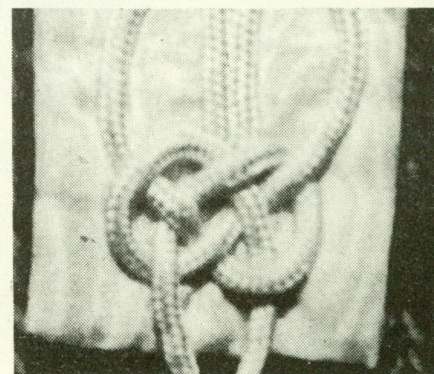
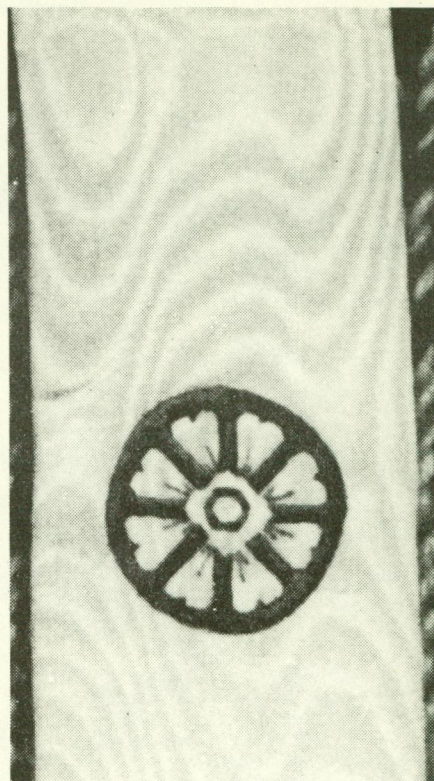
And why do I want to commit myself to the Three Jewels? It is because there is an urge within me which can no longer be denied, because I know that I am to a large extent in a state of sleep and I realize that it is better to be awake than asleep.

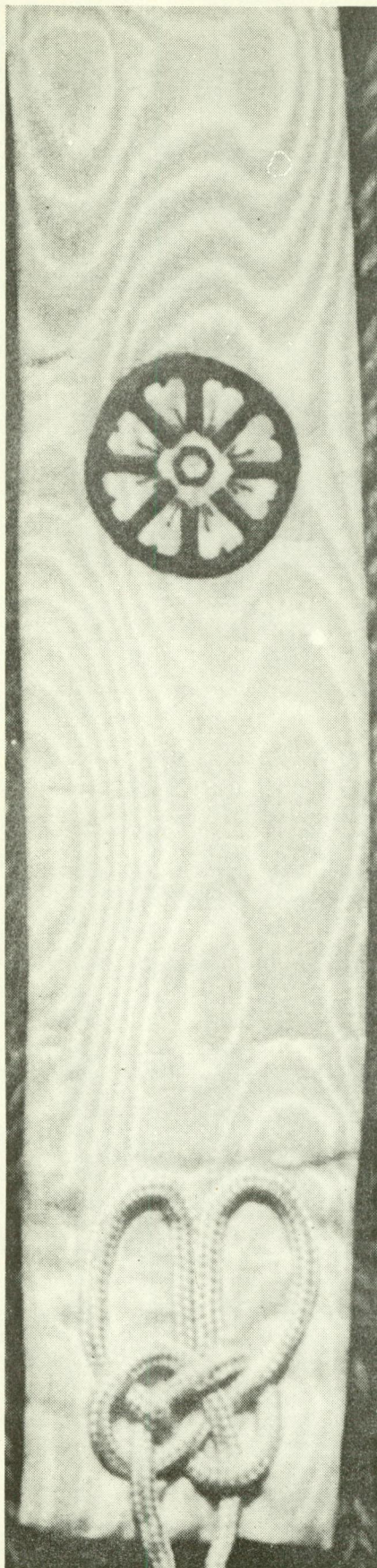
I am becoming more and more conscious that there is a 'something', and 'entity' or 'individuality' which is struggling to come to birth within me and that this birth will only be achieved when I receive Ordination. I realise that Enlightenment, or its very nature, can never be a 'private' affair – it can never be Enlightenment for oneself alone but *must* be Enlightenment for, and together with, all sentient beings in the entire Universe. This 'Bodhisattva Ideal' for me takes precedence over all else, and by receiving Ordination and thus becoming a member of the Sangha or Spiritual Community I shall be expressing this Bodhisattva Ideal because I shall be working with the other members of the Community who are also expressing their commitment to this Ideal.

So I am looking forward with eager anticipation to this coming birth. One cannot know what birth will be like until one is actually born and therefore I cannot anticipate in any great detail what effect this Ordination will have on my inner life. I know, however, that there will be an effect but I also know that the effects will probably take some time to be fully assimilated and that much within myself will have to die before the new birth can be fully effective. Although the first step will only be the first of many steps and that I shall never know complete satisfaction and fulfillment until the Bodhisattva Ideal is fully realised – Enlightenment for and with all sentient beings.

PRIYANANDA

Invariably when friends and relatives in New Zealand found out that I was travelling to Britain, they would ask, 'Are you going over for anything in particular?' And I would invariably answer, depending on how well I knew that person, 'Well, I'm going over mainly because I've asked for ordination, but I also want to get in touch with the Order over there, find out how the movement works there.' Considering that reply now I see that my two reasons for going – ordination and contact with the Order – are very closely, even inseparably, linked. As a natural consequence to ordination, I will find myself closer and closer to like-minded individuals. But what is ordination? What does it mean to me? I found that I had to answer this question many times, and over the last year I have been able to clarify my feelings about it.





My first contact with the Friends was some three years ago when I started going to meditation classes. My interest was purely in meditation which I had heard so much about. I had done some Yoga and read a little about Eastern religions, but my knowledge was scanty and I was definitely not interested in Buddhism. However, my interest in meditation had coincided with the Ven. Sangharakshita's visit to New Zealand. Shortly after I began the meditation classes he gave three lectures in Auckland. Looking back now I see that I was affected by his presence and by the 'no nonsense' approach that he had in the lectures and subsequent classes.

More than this, the first New Zealand ordinations had taken place that Summer, and I immediately, almost intuitively, felt that I understood their significance. Although I never sat down and thought 'What is this ordination business?' I accepted the existence of an ordination into a Western Buddhist tradition as valid. It was not until much later that I thought that ordination could possibly apply to me.

From the time of my first contact with the Friends, and over the next 2½ years, these various agents – meditation, contact with the living Western tradition of the Dharma, the New Zealand Order itself – had a slow, catalysing effect on my life. I'm not an impulsive person, and my coming to ordination was a slow process – no doubt, there are many who are willing to leap straight in! Without any doubt, being in New Zealand, and having to travel right across the world for ordination, makes it less immediate, less accessible than for someone in Britain or Europe. Perhaps it is helpful, in that extra time and distance involved means that one has to consider ordination even more wholeheartedly. Anyway I feel that this is true for myself.

When I actually considered ordination, about a year ago, an interesting question was highlighted. Many will consider this same question with ordination. Simply stated it is this: 'What do I *really* want to do in my life?' Strangely enough I had never really stopped long enough to ask this; always there seemed to be a blinkered avoidance of the vital question. After secondary school, I had gone straight to university and been through the mill of an Arts degree. But at the first enrolment and for the two subsequent years, I never really sat down and thought, 'Why am I doing this?' Vague justifications emerged: the need for academic qualifications, the value of higher education, even the good social life, but these did not seem to hold water. So that, by the end of those three years I had started to consider this all-important question.

Well, what *do* I want to do with my life? My ideas are still vague, and my conception of what ordination and the spiritual life are will probably continue to change after ordination and way beyond. They will grow hopefully as I grow and change as I change. But at present they stand as this: ordination is simply a dedication to my own development. It is also a partial answer to that question: that *to grow* is what I want to do, more than anything else, in my life. And I feel that this is the first time ever that I've done something, made a decision, and done that wholeheartedly.

Wholeheartedness is very important to me now – that is, to be completely sure about the way in which I am moving. The 2½ years since I first heard about ordination have been a period in which to grow more wholehearted – to gather more and more of the threads of my life into one strand, to have more of 'me' present when I finally Go for Refuge.

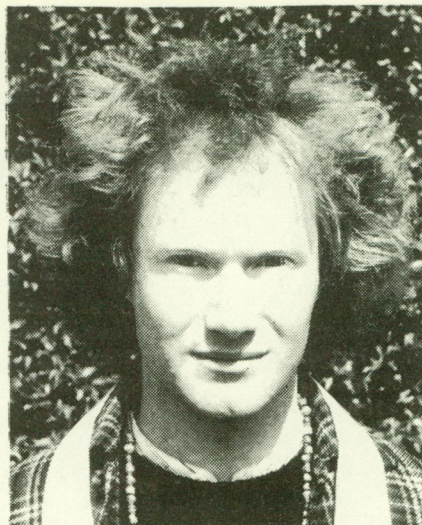
I started coming along to the Friends three years ago as I had somehow, not having read any books on the subject, come to the conclusion that there is absolute consciousness, and that if I started to go towards it and experience it, then I could do something about the suffering I saw in the world around me. This appears to be what the Buddha managed to do, and through his teachings I ought to be able to do it as well. Therefore, my having substantial contact with the FWBO for three years and now having gone for refuge in the Western Buddhist Order obviously means that I feel I can go towards this state within the context of the Western Buddhist Order. So let's take a look at this. Why did I go for refuge? A very simple answer is that I have found that meditation and contact with the sangha have really brought about a change in me, I like it and want it to continue and even increase, which it is doing and will continue to do if I make the effort, which I want to do. I find it difficult to express it clearly in a more thorough way than this as there were so many thoughts and emotions involved in my considering going for refuge.

Although there were times when my experience was and still is very different from this, there is something which seems to happen on a level I have never experienced before, and that arises out of my deepening experience of the Dharma. The way I experience this is as a completely mysterious and unfathomable enthusiasm for and attraction to the Three Jewels. It is so strange and unfamiliar that it almost seems like another force is taking over at times. But I think this is because of it being something completely new to my experience and hence seeming apart from me rather than a part of me.

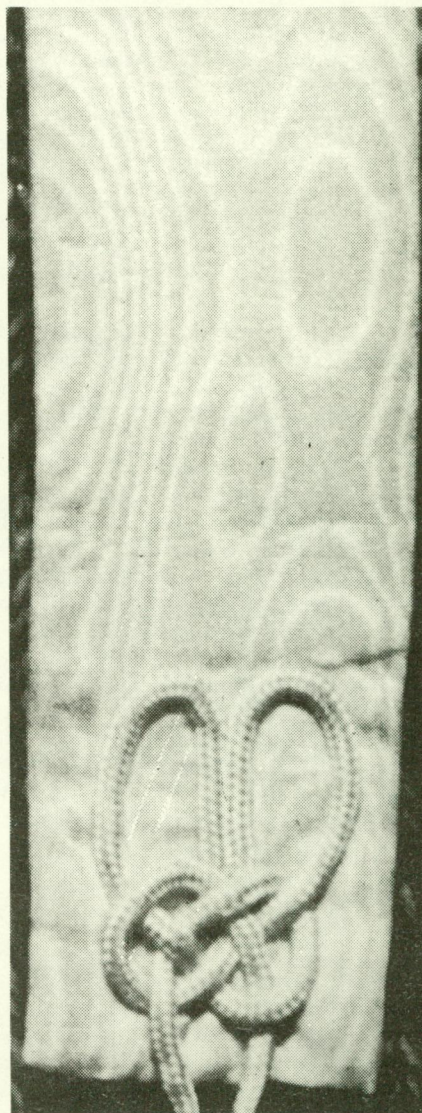
Now let's look at what commitment means to me. First and foremost it means that I have chosen to make the best of my life; to do the only really worthwhile thing. And this is, simply, to become an individual, in the true sense, to realize my full potential as a human being. More immediately, it means that I can have a much fuller contact with the Order, something which will take place in many ways, but here I'm thinking of one in particular. I felt, as a mitra, that because I was not in the Order I was missing out on various things which might help me in my practice, in particular those that arose out of other Order members' experience but which couldn't always be communicated outside the Order since they either weren't generally relevant or might have been misunderstood outside their proper context. Thinking further about the Order as *Sangha* it seems that one is just not able to experience this and appreciate it fully — without having made a commitment to the Higher Evolution, to the Three Jewels.

Something I was experiencing a few months ago was how, when things were getting a bit difficult, I would allow myself to become tired or to catch a cold. In other words I found excuses, or even created excuses, for not making an extra effort when it was needed. And with this realization came a very strong resolve not to allow myself to succumb to this means of escape or avoidance of what is positive again. In a similar way, reinforcing and extending this principle, the formal act of commitment is a statement that, "I am going to make an effort" — to eradicate such states as this and to develop an ever more and more positive and energetic state of being. And having done this it makes it that much easier to strive on. With respect to this I recently came across a very inspiring passage in H.V. Guenther's 'Mind in Buddhist Psychology' p.54.

"...through the power of alertness, sluggishness of body and mind is cleansed, and when one has alertness, one is drawn towards integration within. This integration through its mere spreading increases the feeling of bliss and by its mere increase, integration becomes ever more intense and so one becomes powerful to do away with all obscurations.



GUHYANANDA



BOOK REVIEW

ALTERNATIVE TRADITIONS

Communalism: From its Origins to the Twentieth Century. Kenneth Rexroth.

Peter Owen, London, 1975. Pp. 316 — xvii. Price £6.00.

The Great Heresy. By Arthur Guirdham. Neville Spearman, Jersey, 1977. Pp. 183. Price £2.95.

The Gnostics. Jacques Lacarrière. Foreword by Lawrence Durrell.

Translated from the French by Nina Rootes. Peter Owen, London, 1977. Pp. 136. Price £4.95.

Many people, dissatisfied with the present state of Western civilization and their own way of life, are looking for a viable alternative. Some turn to the philosophies and spiritual traditions of the East, hoping that they may find what they are looking for there. Others explore Western civilization itself, taking a second look at the various philosophies and spiritual traditions which, from time to time, threatened the dominant socio-religious 'orthodoxy' and were either completely destroyed by it or survived only in peripheral or subterranean forms. Kenneth Rexroth, Arthur Guirdham, and Jacques Lacarrière all look for their alternative in the West, though Rexroth's interest in Zen is well known, and it is no coincidence, perhaps, that their books should all come to our notice at the same time. It is no coincidence either, perhaps, that although based on wide reading all three books should be popular rather than scholarly in character—one, indeed, a best-seller in the original French. Although concerned with what is broadly the same field, the field of the 'alternative traditions' of the West, the American poet-critic, the English psychiatrist, and the French poet and wanderer, are all concerned with it in different ways, or at different levels. Kenneth Rexroth explores alternative forms of socio-economic organization, Arthur Guirdham what was once virtually an alternative religion, and Jacques Lacarrière an alternative philosophy. Even for those who, like ourselves, look to the East rather than to the West for our basic inspiration, all three books are of considerable interest and value.

By communalism Kenneth Rexroth means the theory of those who believe in libertarian communism and who are members of international communities, usually by no means always religions in inspiration. Like all 'communists', such people want to abolish the State and return society to an organic community of non-coercive human

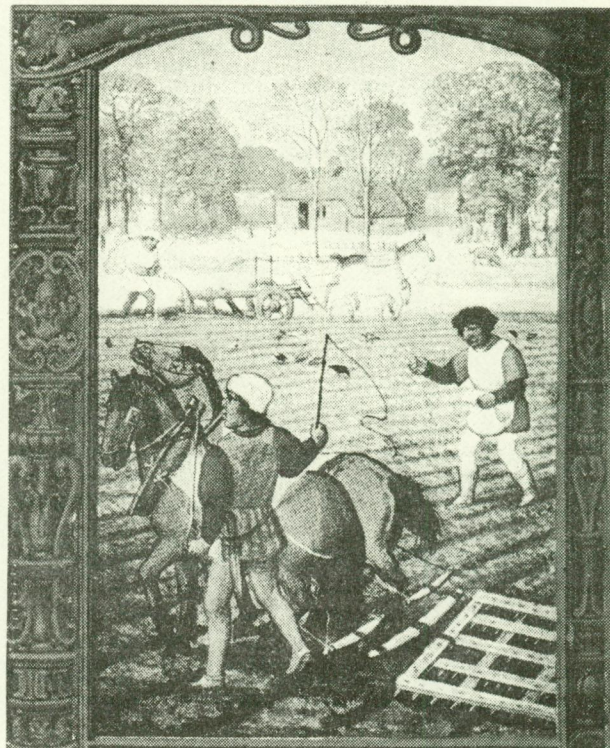
relations. *Communalism* tells how successful, or how unsuccessful, some of them were in doing this. It is a study of the history of communes and intentional communities, mainly Western, from their known beginnings to the twentieth century. Leaving aside palaeolithic hunting groups and the neolithic village, as well as the Essenes and similar groups, the communities described fall mainly into three categories. First, there are the monastic and semi-monastic communities of the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages, whether 'orthodox' like the Benedictines and the Cistercians, or 'heterodox' like the Waldenses, the Brethren of the Free Spirit, and the Taborites. Next, there are the various radical Reformation groups, some pacifist as well as communist, the most important being the Central European Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Hutterites, and the English Diggers. Finally, there are the American communes and intentional communities, beginning with groups of European origin like the Ephratans, the Harmonists or Rappists, and the Separatists, and eventually including not only Amana and The Shakers, but secular communities like New Harmony and the Fourierist phalansteries, as well as experiments like Brook Farm and Oneida and the transplanted, and immensely successful, Hutterites.

As one goes through this enthralling study, following the fortunes of communalism over a period of more than a thousand years, one is struck not only by the abundance and diversity of the groups and movements involved, but also by the amount of human energy that went into the search for an alternative form of socio-economic organization. The picture that presents itself is of wave after wave surging up from the depths of Western society and dashing against the bastions of the established order. Sometimes a breach is made, and the waters pour in, flooding the low-lying areas and forming, here and there, little pools that may last for centuries. More often, the wave is repulsed, and falls back baffled into the sea. Since early man went through a long stage of primitive communism, it is as though people had an inbuilt tendency to revert to a communal way of living whenever possible,

particularly in times of crisis. 'Whenever the power structure falters the general tendency is to replace it with free communism.' (p.xviii) This applies to power structures of every kind, 'Communist' as well as capitalist. One is also struck, going through this study, by the extreme adaptability of human nature. There seems to be no limit to the extent to which quite ordinary people are prepared to give up long-cherished attitudes and accept major changes in every aspect of their lives. Order or disorder, austerity or self-indulgence,—strict celibacy or complete promiscuity,—all are equally welcome provided they result in an ultimately more satisfying life for those concerned. What perhaps strikes one most in the history of communalism, however, is the violent hostility with which groups and movements of a communalist nature were regarded by the official Church, Lutheran as well as Catholic. Originally, of course, groups and movements of this sort, many of which had the avowed aim of reviving the communalism of primitive Christianity, could be incorporated within the existing order in the form of monastic communities. Rexroth in fact seems to think that monasticism was the Church's way of 'containing' libertarian communism and preventing it spreading through the rest of society. Be that as it may, when it could no longer be contained in this manner, and when communalist groups and movements started attacking the existing order of things, denouncing the Church for its manifold corruptions and denying the efficacy of the sacraments when administered by unworthy hands,—even denying that sacraments and priests are necessary to salvation at all, thus striking at the very root of the Church's power,—then the Church fell upon them with fire and sword and exterminated them without mercy wherever it found them.

from a study of this kind there is clearly much to be learned, and in the Epilogue Kenneth Rexroth helps us by drawing a few conclusions of his own. Secular communes, he assures us, have almost always failed in very short order. 'A simple belief that all men are brothers is not sufficiently well defined to inspire a strong commitment.' (p.295) The longest-lived colonies owed their cohesion and commitment to supernatural sanctions, besides being governed by individuals of powerful charisma. In more Buddhistic terms, the longest-lived colonies were spiritual communities, and recognized some kind of spiritual hierarchy, in however rudimentary a form. Ceremonies and the practice of confession are also factors making for cohesion, as well as a certain degree of interpersonal tension. Communism as such does not seem to have been a factor in the failure of most colonies, though many of those that fail, perhaps the majority, do so for economic reasons. On the contrary, 'Wherever there existed powerful forces for commitment and cohesion, a carefully screened membership, and intelligent leaders with wide practical experience, communism proved to be, economically, extremely successful.' (p.297) Rexroth also emphasizes that communal living (he is referring, of course, to 'mixed' communities) are in theory very advantageous to women, for most of the work of a housewife or mother can then be divided and distributed, so that each

woman has considerable leisure. Summing up, he says that in all the many books which have been written about the communalist movement in America in the nineteenth century, there is little disagreement as to the factors that make for success. They are: 'A religion, or at least a powerful ideology which all the members of the group accept, which should include the belief that the dominant society fails to provide sufficient value for a happy life, and is sick, or doomed, or dying, or, nowadays already dead, and that the commune is a saving remnant plucked from burning.' (pp.301-302) In addition the community needs a leader with powerful charisma, the ability to persuade people, equanimity, and a wide range of talents. There should also be an accepted method of assigning and rotating tasks, with both sexes sharing the boring jobs and housekeeping. On the negative side, a community cannot survive as such with a completely 'open-gate' policy. 'Selectivity is the first law of communalism The communes that are most successful today either do not allow visitors at all, or do not allow them to stay more than overnight, and prospective members are subjected to a searching novitiate.' (p.304)



In all this there is very little from which a Buddhist need dissent. The conclusions Kenneth Rexroth draws undoubtedly do follow from the histories of the groups he surveys, and to the extent of their applicability are valid for communes and intentional communities of all kinds. This is not to say that his study does not have its limitations, especially on the theoretical side. The most serious of these is that he does not make sufficiently clear the distinction between commune and intentional

community, or as we would say, between the 'positive group' and the spiritual community. This is because he does not recognize the importance of the principle of individuality, or see that whereas the group is of a collective and corporate nature a spiritual community is a free association of true individuals, i.e. of those who have developed self-awareness and emancipated themselves at least from the cruder forms of group conditioning.* Because he fails to recognize the importance of individuality, and therefore to distinguish commune from intentional community, he tends, at times, to see the spread of communalism in terms of a sort of mass movement. To the extent that communalism means communes, i.e. the positive group, the spread of communalism may indeed be a mass movement (some chapters of his study demonstrate as much), but to speak of the spread of the intentional community in this way involves a contradiction in terms. Failure to appreciate the importance of individuality has other consequences. As we have already noted, Rexroth tends to see communalism as a reversion to the primitive communism of early man, in other words as a sort of sociological throwback. Again, this may well



be true of libertarian communism as such, but it is not true of the spiritual community. The latter may indeed incorporate elements from an earlier form of social organization, but inasmuch as it consists of a free association of true individuals it is essentially not a regression but a higher 'evolutionary' development. There are other limitations that relate to monasticism. Besides seeing organized monasticism as 'a method of quarantining the Christian life', (p.30) and celibacy as a device for preventing [lay] monasticism from becoming a counter-culture, Kenneth Rexroth gives the impression that monasticism dropped out of the picture somewhere about the time of

* For further elucidation see my tape-recorded lecture on 'The Individual, the Group, and the Community'.

the Reformation, whereas the truth of the matter is that, both in East and West, the longest-lived of all intentional communities are monastic communities. Indeed, the monastic community has claims to be considered the spiritual community *par excellence*. Despite its limitations, however, which are limitations of perspective and interpretation rather than of informational content, and as such easily remedied, *Communalism* is required reading for all who are engaged in the creation of a truly alternative society. Though there are specialist studies of a number of the groups that Kenneth Rexroth describes, I doubt if there is any other book that discusses so many of them in such detail, or that paints such a vivid and inspiring picture of a movement which, despite all the setbacks it has experienced, remains the only real hope of mankind.



The 'heresy' of Dr. Guirdham's title is that of the Cathars or Albigenses, who are only briefly mentioned by Kenneth Rexroth (pp.36-37). Strictly speaking, Catharism was not so much a heresy as the latest manifestation of an entirely different religious and philosophical tradition, a tradition which tended to assume a Christian form in Europe, just as it tended to assume a Zoroastrian form in Persia and a Buddhist form in Central Asia and China. The Cathars indeed considered themselves the true Christians, and their Church the true Church, and to the extent that Christianity itself was of Gnostic rather than of Judaic origin they may well have been right. To the people of Languedoc they were simply the Bonshommes (good men). The ancient tradition of which Catharism was the latest manifestation was that of Dualism. According to Arthur Guirdham, its basic tenets were threefold. It believed that forces of good and evil existed in the universe from the beginning and would do so to the end; that the world was created not by God but by the Devil, who was identical with the Old Testament Jehovah, and that man was a spiritual being distinct from matter who in the course of successive 'reincarnations' purified himself by leading a moral and spiritual life until he was reunited with the Light. The Cathars denied the efficacy of the sacraments. They refused to believe that sins could be wiped out by means of divine grace, or that this grace could be dispensed through the official sacramental

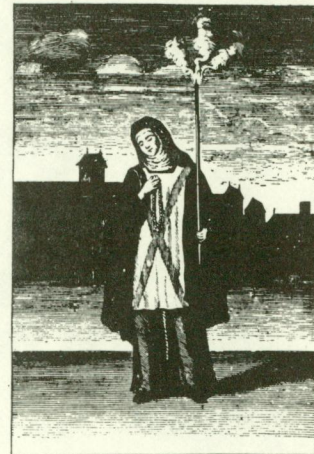
channels by the priests of the established (Catholic) Church solely by virtue of their ordination, regardless of their moral and spiritual character. The Cathar community comprised two kinds of followers. There were the Perfect, or Cathars proper, and the Believers. The Perfect, both men and women, practised absolute non-violence and chastity, and abstained from the eating of meat. The Believers, who formed the majority, while fully accepting the basic tenets of Catharism were less rigorous in practice. Catharism spread to Western Europe probably from what is now part of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It appeared in southern France at least as early as the beginning of the eleventh century and towards the end of the twelfth century was well established there, being particularly strong in Languedoc and the County of Provence, which then formed one of the most prosperous and highly civilized areas in the whole of Europe. In Languedoc it was indeed the dominant religion, being supported by all classes of people. (It was from Albi, a town in Languedoc, that the Cathars received the name by which they are best known. The term Cathar itself means 'Pure'.) The established Church became thoroughly alarmed. Earlier attempts to suppress Catharism having failed, in 1207 Pope Innocent III launched what has become infamous in

systematically vilified and misrepresented it. An abridged edition of M.L. Cozens' *A Handful of Heresies*, published by Sheed and Ward in its popular "Prayer and Practice" series as late as 1974, describes Catharism as 'poison' and accuses the Cathars of 'endeavouring by force of arms to uproot Christianity in southern France'!! (p.63) But now the tide is turning. The literature devoted to Catharism has increased enormously during the last twenty years, and the truth about the Cathars is beginning to be known. Most of this literature is in French, and Dr. Guirdham's publishers rightly claim that a book in English on the Cathars is long overdue. Part One of *The Great Heresy* deals with Catharism as it is known to historians, theologians and philosophers. Packing a great deal of information into fourteen short chapters, Dr. Guirdham des-



history as the Albigensian Crusade. The loot-hungry nobles of Northern France were called upon to crush the heresy by force of arms, and offered remission of all their sins for doing so. The Crusade lasted off and on for forty years. Hundreds of towns and villages were laid waste, and many tens of thousands of men, women and children massacred. The civilization of Languedoc was destroyed, and the whole area so badly devastated that the effects persist, it is said, down to the present day. Upwards of a thousand Perfect were burned at the stake. Catharism never recovered from the blow. In the wake of the horrors of the Crusade came the terrors of the Inquisition, and by the middle of the fourteenth century Catharism as such had ceased to exist.

Not content with exterminating Catharism physically, for the last seven hundred years the Catholic Church has



cribes the origins of Catharism, its brief flowering, and its terrible end, and gives a clear, fair-minded and sensible account of its beliefs and practices. In so doing he not only 'reveals truth' but 'exposes error'. He is particularly good, in fact, at showing the complete falsity of such charges as that Catharism was pessimistic, that it advocated mass suicide, that its attitude to sex 'was at its worst perverted and at its best so ascetic as to amount to a psychological self-mutilation' (p.28), and that its followers were the enemies of society. Such misrepresentations, glibly repeated by generation after generation of historians, both Catholic and Protestant, were often based (he reminds us) on isolated statements obtained from ordinary Believers under torture. To rely for solid unbiased information about the Cathars on the registers of the Inquisition is indeed 'comparable to insisting that the Gestapo is the best authority to enlighten us as to the nature and practice of Jewry' (p.24). The parallel between the Catholic Inquisition and the Nazi Gestapo is quite striking. 'Heretics were often condemned to wear a yellow cross, the dimensions of which were carefully stipulated, sewn on to the garments of the victim. The Nazis adopted an identical measure against the Jews'. (p.72) On balance, however, the worse of the two was the Inquisition, which 'developed into a systematised instrument of terror unequalled in human history. Over a huge area those innocent of heresy were as liable to suffer as those addicted to it. What it aimed at doing was to create an atmosphere in which Catharism simply could not live. That the latter lasted even as long as it did is proof of the tough-

10th ANNIV ORDE



The first convention of the Western Buddhist Order lasted two days and took place in the front room at Aryatara just over four years ago. The fourth convention which began on the 28th March and ended on the 8th April, lasted for ten days and required the facilities of an entire medium sized boarding school, somewhere deep in the Sussex countryside. Just over seventy Order members came together, from England, Scotland, Finland, Holland and New Zealand, not for an exhausting round of 'business', discussion or debate, but simply to meet: to be together, to convene.

A daily programme had been devised which seemed to allow for

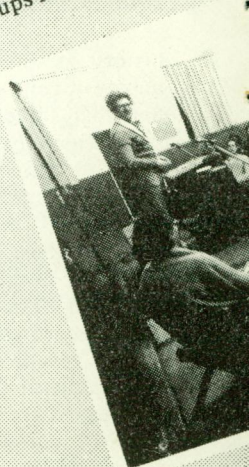
this 'convening' to take place in many different ways and on different levels. Each day began with a group meditation, and ended with a meditation and *puja* during which Bhante would guide us through some of the more popular visualisation and insight practices. There was also 'optional' meditation sessions in the afternoon — an opportunity for Order members to keep up with their personal visualisation practices, or with their 'Going for Refuge and protection' practices. Many days began and ended in silence.

The mornings, from breakfast onwards, were devoted entirely to Dharma study. Seven upasakas conducted seminars for the rest of us on various texts: *Dhyana for Beginners*,

The Udana, *Mind in Buddhist Philosophy*, the *Hui Neng Sutra* and the *Precious Garland*. These sessions were not only opportunities for those who had studied the texts with Bhante to share out their understanding and experience, but also times when Order members from different places and backgrounds could get to know each other in their hearts and in their minds.

The afternoons were kept free for people to do as they pleased. Some, well wrapped up against the relentless icy wind, would take to the rolling wooded hills for walks alone or accompanied by other Order members, while others gathered in small groups for various 'happenings'.

"Spiritual fellowship is the whole, not half of the holy life"



a poet
hectic
cussio
co-op

Bha
He
of
a

ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION

... reading, a slide show, a game of basket-ball, a discussion on the formation of housing co-operatives.

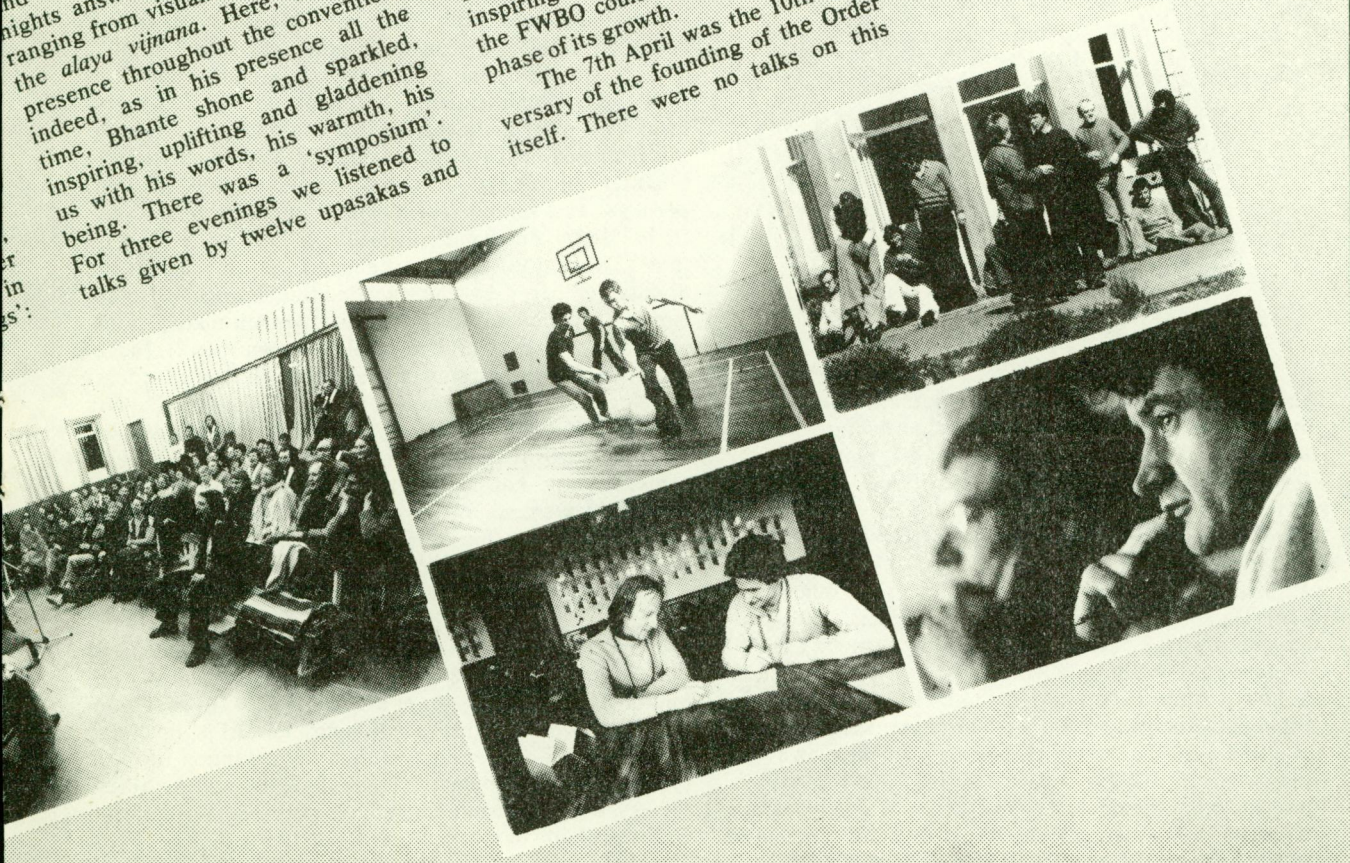
After dinner came the talks. Bhante spoke to us on five nights, gave three lectures: 'The System of Meditation', 'Going for Refuge', and 'A Vision of History', and on two nights answered questions on topics ranging from visualisation practice to the *alaya vijñāna*. Here, as in his presence throughout the convention, indeed, as in his presence all the time, Bhante shone and sparkled, inspiring, uplifting and gladdening us with his words, his warmth, his being. There was a 'symposium'. For three evenings we listened to talks given by twelve upasakas and

upasikas on various aspects of the spiritual life. We heard about work, play, silence, music, retreats, wandering, and so on. Some of the talks were of a very high standard indeed and, taken together, provided a strikingly rich and colourful vision of what the spiritual life involves. On April 6th, the 11th anniversary of the founding of the FWBO, Vangisa regaled us with some of his reminiscences of the 'early years', and Subhuti followed up with some inspiring predictions about how the FWBO could develop in the next phase of its growth.

The 7th April was the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Order itself. There were no talks on this

occasion, but instead an evening of rejoicing — in the shrine room: *metta bhavana*, chanting, offerings, special readings, and puja. This occasion, like the convention itself, was an extraordinary experience which cannot really be conveyed by any listing of events. Being with seventy people, every single one of whom has privately, publicly, formally and ritually declared his or her commitment to the ideals embodied by the Three Jewels, was like nothing else. Something pervaded the whole atmosphere. It was in the air, in the taste of the food, sensed within and around one, something strong and deep, and at the same time happy and joyful. In a word: *Sangha*.

Nagabodhi



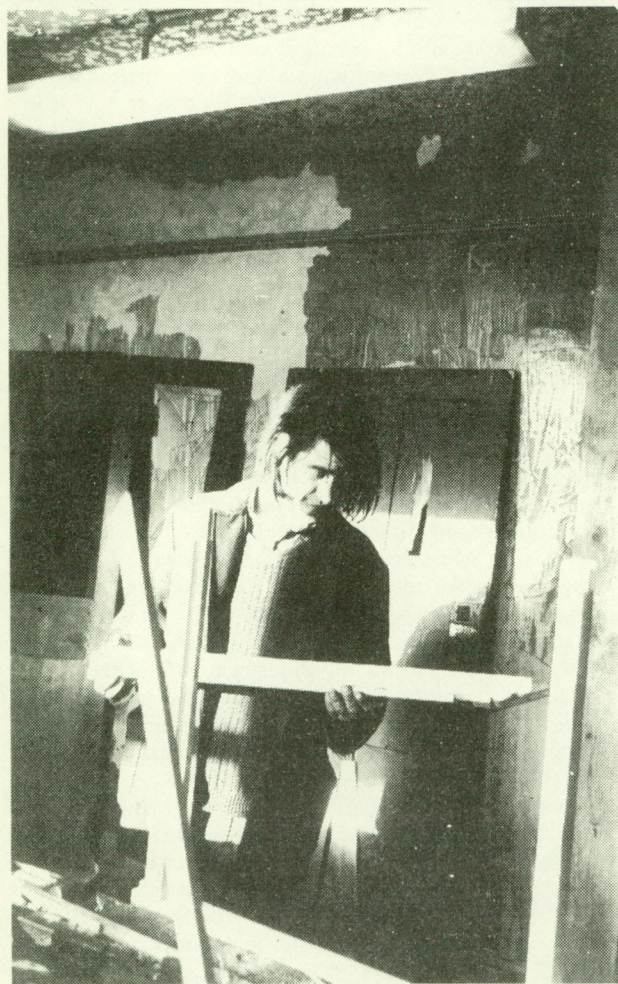
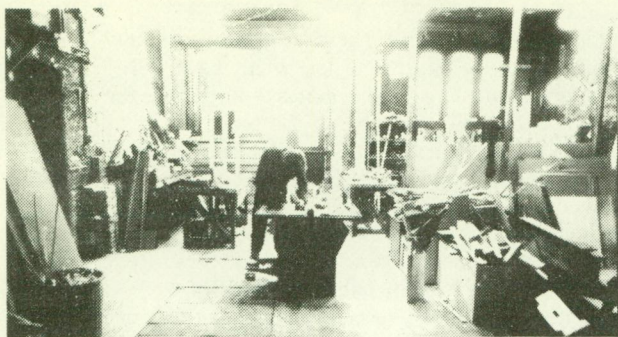
ness of its adherents. It is undeniable that the havoc wrought by the Inquisition far exceeds that achieved by the Ogpu and the Gestapo. The Jews and Poles were not wholly exterminated either actually or politically. In just short of a century Catharism, which had threatened the very existence of Catholicism in the Midi, had been reduced to a handful of clandestine activists. When one considers that Hitler had at his command all the devices for the dissemination of information and defamatory propaganda, the achievements of the Inquisition are truly impressive.' (p.75) If society had any enemies in the thirteenth century it was not the Cathars. The Cathars, far from being the anti-human monsters that they were made out to be, were in fact friends and benefactors of humanity. In particular, they sought to remove from people the insidious, soul-destroying fear of hell that, then as now, the Catholic Church so sedulously inculcated.



This, Arthur Guirdham says, was perhaps the Cathars 'most significant contribution to the welfare of the common man'. (p.23) As for their being against marriage—in Catholic eyes a most heinous offence—they were hostile to it not as an institution but as a sacrament. 'They did not believe that sexual contact was sinful and taboo until the hour of wedlock and that afterwards what was illicit and sordid became in some way sanctified.' (p.26) Had Catharism indeed been against the institution of marriage and (according to the Catholic Church) therefore against the family and society, it is difficult to see how it could have enjoyed the strong support of the Languedoc aristocracy. As Dr. Guirdham remarks, 'It is not in the nature of ruling classes to plan their own destruction in full, waking consciousness.' (p.29) In view of these and other considerations he therefore concludes that Catharism was not only 'a comprehensive and lucid philosophy' (p.26) but also 'sane and evolutionary' and

even—for what the compliment is worth—'contemporary'. Part Two of the book deals not with Catharism as it is known to historians, theologians, and philosophers, but with its deeper teachings as revealed to the author by a group of discarnate entities, all but one of whom were alive in the twentieth century. Basing himself on these teachings Arthur Guirdham deals, in the course of seven short chapters, with such topics as The Transmigration of Souls, Auras, The Creation, Jewels, The Sun and the Moon, Mechanism of Evil, and Alchemy. Even those who believe in life after death and in 'reincarnation' would probably prefer, pending further investigation, to consider the material contained in this section of *The Great Heresy* strictly on its own merits. One idea that I personally found very appealing—and quite in accordance with Buddhist teaching—was that flowers develop a 'soul' as a result of the attention paid to them by human beings, and that colour and perfume are the means by which they attract this attention.

Himself a spiritist as well as a believer in reincarnation, Dr. Guirdham tends to regard Catharism as having its roots in primitive Christianity—which he describes as 'a markedly spiritist religion' (p.102)—and Christianity itself as 'an episode in the history of Dualism'. (p.103) No one reading *The Great Heresy* with even a smattering of Buddhist knowledge could fail to notice a resemblance between Catharism and Buddhism or to wonder, perhaps, if Catharism had roots in Buddhism too. Dr. Guirdham is not unaware of this. He acknowledges that the likeness between the practice of Catharism and Buddhism must attract attention, and that vegetarianism and non-violence are common to both. At the same time, he is unable to agree with the late Maurice Magre, a devotee of Catharism, that the Cathars are 'the Buddhists of Europe'. According to him, this is a completely erroneous over-simplification. The philosophy of Catharism, he says, is quite distinct from that of Buddhism. Whether this is indeed the case can be decided only when we have a better knowledge of Catharist philosophy—as well, perhaps, as a better knowledge of Buddhist philosophy. (It is interesting that Dr. Guirdham tells us, earlier on (p.48), that the Cathars believed, as much as the oriental philosophers who provided the bedrock of Hinduism and Buddhism, in 'the necessity of ultimately transcending the world of irreconcilable opposites'.) Meanwhile, M. Magre's statement can be taken as true at least sociologically. After all, what he said was that the Cathars were the Buddhists of Europe, i.e. that they occupied analogous positions in their respective socio-religious contexts, not that the philosophies of Catharism and Buddhism were identical. Within their widely differing time-scales, the fortunes of the Cathars of southern France and the Buddhists of India, at least, were in some respects remarkably similar. One must also join issue with Arthur Guirdham on the subject of meditation. He appears to think the meditation involves emptying the mind, and that, when this is done too precipitately, it results in the mind being invaded by lower entities. (p.46) This is certainly not true of Buddhist meditation. Far from involving any emptying of the mind, Buddhist meditation involves the intensive development of skilful mental states. Nevertheless, despite misunderstandings of this sort, from what Dr. Guirdham has to tell us about them in *The Great Heresy* it is clear that the beliefs and practices of the



Cathars are highly relevant to Western Buddhists. (Those concerned with what the FWBO calls 'team-based right livelihood' will be interested to learn that the Cathars were 'ferocious workers' and that they had workshops in which men were trained in various cottage industries.) Even more relevant than the beliefs and practices of the Cathars, is their history. At a time when, in this country, non-Christians have been suddenly made aware that they do not have quite so much freedom as they had thought, it would be well for English Buddhists at least to remind themselves that the ghosts of Pope Innocent III and the Inquisitors are still very much abroad and that it is still possible for a religion to be destroyed.

Gnosticism is not an alternative tradition of the West in quite the same way as communalism, or even Catharism. Flourishing as it did throughout the second and third centuries in the lands all round the eastern end of the Mediterranean, it was an alternative tradition once, at least in places like Rome and Marseilles, but ceased to be such as soon as Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century. Thereafter it was subject to intense persecution and except as an underground influence survived, in the West, only in remote corners of the Balkans, where for the rest of the millennium it gathered strength for its journey to North Italy and southern France in the form of Catharism. For fifteen hundred years the West had no knowledge of groups like the Ophites and the Carpocratians, or thinkers like Basilides and Valentinus, other than what could be derived from the meagre scraps of information contained in the writings of such Fathers of the Church as Hippolytus, Irenaeus and Eusebius, all of whom were of course interested in showing Gnosticism in the worst possible light. The position with regard to Gnosticism was, in fact, remarkably similar to that with regard to Catharism, our knowledge of which was dependent for five hundred years on the records of the Inquisition. Only with the discovery of the Askew Codex (containing the 'Pistis Sophia') towards the end of the eighteenth and of the Bruce and Berlin Codices towards the end of the nineteenth century, and above all the discovery of a complete Gnostic library at Nag Hamadi in Egypt (the ancient Chenaboskion) in about 1945, has the situation changed—and changed radically. For the first time in fifteen hundred years we know enough about Gnosticism for it to be a genuine option for some at least of those people in the West who are looking for an alternative philosophy, and the appearance of Jacques Lecarriere's 'strange and original essay', as Lawrence Durrell calls *The Gnostics*, is one of the signs of this changed state of affairs. All the more is it such a sign, indeed, for being, as Durrell goes on to say, 'more of a work of literature than of scholarship' and 'as convincing a reconstruction of the way the Gnostics lived and thought as D.H. Lawrence's intuitive recreation of the vanished Etruscans'. (p.7)

Despite the fact that it was not a genuine option for so many centuries, Gnosticism is in principle the alternative philosophy—and religion—*par excellence*. An alternative philosophy, or an alternative way of life, is such only to

the extent that it is an alternative to something else which it rejects. Gnosticism parallels Buddhism in being alternative not just to some other philosophy or religion existing beside it in the world but to 'the world' or 'conditioned existence' itself. As the irredeemable product of *primaeval* error the world is radically evil, and man—who does not really belong to the world—should have nothing to do with it. Man is in his essence an alternative being, and for an alternative being the only appropriate philosophy—the only appropriate way of life—is one which is likewise 'alternative'. Being an alternative philosophy—an alternative wisdom, a counter-wisdom—in principle, and not simply by reason of its forcible sup-



pression by official Christianity, Gnosticism was an alternative philosophy from the very beginning. Describing the doctrine of Simon Magus, Lacarrière says that here in 'the very first years of our era' we find set out the fundamental certitudes of Gnosticism, which are that 'the world we live in was not created by the true God, it is the work of an imposter, and man's task will consist in rejecting the swindle of the world, together with the Biblical and Christian teaching which claims to uphold it and all the institutions through which it is perpetrated. Thus, from the start,' he concludes, 'the Gnostic identifies himself as a marginal creature, forced (by the historical evolution of society as well as by his own inclinations) to form alternative and secret communities which will transmit the Teaching.' (pp.49-50) Consequent on Gnosticism's certitude about the world is its certitude about man. Because his task is to reject the world, and because he is a marginal creature, 'man is called upon, in this struggle against the generalized oppressiveness of the real, to create a soul for himself, or if you prefer, to nourish, fortify, and enrich the luminous spark he carries in his

inmost being'. (p.50) There are different ways of doing this. One is by means of what Lacarrière calls an '*inversion of values and symbols*'—italicizing the words to emphasize the importance of the process. This process of inversion, or 'mechanism' as he terms it, which was an aspect of the counter-life led by the Gnostics, 'tended to favour, to invest with power, light and efficacy all those whom the orthodox tradition looks upon as the damned: Seth, the Serpent, Cain. It is these first Rebels in the history of the world whom the Gnostics were to raise to the highest dignity, to claim as the authors of their esoteric books. Their *mythical history thus transmutes itself into a counter-history which places the great rebels in the foreground.*' (p.85) Inversion of values and symbols is of course a form of deconditioning, and without deconditioning there is no creation of a soul. 'As I write this word, *decondition*,' Jacques Lacarrière says, 'I perceive that I am reaching the very heart of Gnostic doctrine. No knowledge, no serious contemplation, no valid choice is possible until man has shaken himself free of everything that effects his conditioning, at every level of his existence.' (p.97)

The Gnostic techniques for deconditioning oneself are of both the ascetic and the licentious type, some groups favouring the one and some the other. (Those who are *not* concerned with team-based right livelihood may be interested to find Bishop Timothy saying of the Enchites or Messalians, one of the licentious groups, sometimes called the Lazy Men, 'They spend their time doing nothing and sleeping'.) Whether ascetic or licentious, the 'single, solitary purpose' of all techniques, of all these 'violations of all the rules and conventions', was 'to be the brutal and radical means of stripping man of his mental and bodily habits, awakening in him his sleeping being and shaking off the alienating torpor of the soul'. (p.98) Adding that he finds it strange that all the books written about Gnosticism leave their authors untouched (one could say the same thing of many books written about Buddhism), and that he is well aware that one never writes a book that is not about oneself, Jacques Lacarrière wonders why he is particularly attached only to those that are known as the licentious Gnostics, that after all represent only one sect among others. 'Am I the unwitting victim of a phenomenon born in my own time,' he asks, 'one which leads us to interrogate ourselves more deeply than ever before on sexual questions?' (p.98) Or are there other explanations? He finds it difficult to make up his mind. There is little doubt, though, that Lacarrière is a product of the century of Artaud and Sartre, and that his reading of Gnosticism is the result, to some extent, of his French literary inheritance. He sees the general Gnostic attitude towards the world as one of 'decadence', and although, formally speaking, his definition of decadence is unexceptionable, the word cannot but carry with it a *fin de siècle* flavour hardly in keeping with what Durrell calls 'the grand poetic challenge of the Gnostics'. (p.7) He also indulges in occasional outbursts of lyricism on the subject of woman, her body, and her indispensability to salvation (i.e. men's salvation). His



'Strangers' in a familiar land: members of the spiritual community from Japan, Finland and England around the table — back in Balmore Street

particular conditioning shows itself most clearly, perhaps, in his failure to appreciate the importance of schools and communities, the formation of which he sees as somehow contrary to the spirit of Gnosticism. He appreciates that man is 'a stranger here'. Indeed, he devotes a whole chapter to the topic. With considerable eloquence he speaks of the Gnostics as 'the autochtons of another world', and describes 'their feeling of having fallen onto our earth like inhabitants from a distant planet, of having strayed into the wrong galaxy, and their longing to regain their true cosmic homeland, the luminous hyper-world that shimmers beyond the great nocturnal barrier.' (p.30) That 'I am *in* the world but not *of* the world', he says, is the most basic Gnostic formula. What he does not appreciate is that when one stranger,—one foreigner,—one Gnostic, happens to meet another he experiences not only a great relief but a great joy, and that it is out of this joy that the spiritual community is born. Because he fails to appreciate the significance of the spiritual community—indeed, seems not to believe in communities at all, or in the Oriental religions and philosophies to which, he says, those who reject the world in its modern form almost always have correlative recourse—Lacarrière seeks to discover what he calls a New Gnosticism in the pages of contemporary writers like Emile Coiran, whose works, he believes, 'match the loftiest flashes of Gnostic thought.' (p.127) But flashes, however lofty, are not enough. Literary attitudes, however striking,—literary reconstructions, however convincing,—are not enough. We need not only an alternative philosophy but an alternative religion and an alternative organization. Perhaps Jacques Lacarrière

should read Kenneth Rexroth and Arthur Guirdham—and vice versa. Perhaps all three should pay greater attention to the spiritual traditions of the East.

SANGHARAKSHITA

ALSO RECEIVED

ZEN AND CONFUCIUS IN THE ART OF SWORDSMANSHIP by Richard Kammer.

Published by Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Price £3.25.

THE BLUE CLIFF RECORD Vol Two and
THE BLUE CLIFF RECORD Vol Three

Both translated by Thomas and J.C. Cleary.
Published by Shambhala and distributed in the
UK by Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Price £3.60 each. Paperback.

ZEN AND THE WAYS by Trevor Leggett.

Published by Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Price £5.95 cloth, £2.95 paperback.

A PRIMER OF SOTO ZEN. A Translation of
Dogen's Shobogenzo Zuimonki by Reiho
Masungaga.

Published by Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Price £1.75. Paperback.

CENTRES and BRANCHES

ARYATARA SURREY

From Nagabodhi

The past three months have been the busiest and probably the happiest times in the history of our centre. The local council finally accepted our offer for two buildings in West Croydon, and, from the moment when we signed the lease, work has continued without interruption. And with what results! To the stupefied amazement of just about everyone who saw the building in its original shape, we were able to throw open the doors to 'Friends Foods', a clean, bright and attractive, well-stocked wholefood shop, just five weeks after starting the conversion work. Already, only another five weeks later, business is booming. Not only that, but the finest shrine room that I, for one, have ever seen,



has been created on the first floor. This will serve the residential community of four and also house the six week meditation courses which we have just started to give. Meanwhile, our inexhaustible, not to say work-ravenous, team of six full-time and numerous part-time builders and decorators are now making good progress in converting one of the back rooms into a vegetarian cafe/take-away.

The opening date is fixed for May 1st. So we have now very definitely established a 'beach-head' in Croydon, out of which all kinds of projects and adventures will no doubt come, and the size of our classes at Aryatara bears ample witness to the attractive power of the energy and positivity generated by the work and the team spirit, indeed, the whole vision - of which everyone at Aryatara seems to have a share.



AMITAYUS BRIGHTON

By Mangala

On Saturday April 8 just over six months after signing the lease, Amitayus, the new Brighton Centre, was formally opened by Bhante. I say opened but what really happened is that the place was dedicated, dedicated that is to the Three Jewels, or the three most precious things; the Buddha, or the ideal of Enlightenment, the Dharma, his Teaching, and the Sangha, the community of those trying to achieve that ideal.

The opening of any new Centre is always an important occasion, but April 8th, besides being the Buddha's birthday, was also the day after the Western Buddhist Order's tenth anniversary and two days after the FWBO's 11th anniversary. To cap all this, Bhante and seventeen others arrived direct from a ten day Order Convention, so a more auspicious time could hardly have been hoped for. During the celebratory meal with which we began, Brighton mitras and Friends were able to meet a much larger number of Order members than is usually possible.



After this, some 40-50 people went upstairs to the new shrine room where after a short introductory talk by Mangala, Bhante reminisced about his long associations with Brighton, which go back some 14 years, when he used to come down once a month to lead classes and give talks. It was also in Brighton, Bhante told us, that he bought his first rupa, or Buddha image, at the age of twelve, having seen it in one of Brighton's many antique shops.

He went on to speak of the significance of Amitayus, the Buddha of Infinite Life, and how he represents the eternal aspect or quality of En-

lightenment which is outside of, and beyond time - transcendental.

Then came the dedication ceremony itself, a short and very moving 'recitation', which Bhante informed us he had written himself for a similar occasion some time ago, having been unable to find something suitable elsewhere.

After the ceremony the three residents of the new centre made offerings on behalf of the assembly, and then the shrine was actually put to use, as Bhante led a short period of meditation which was followed by the chanting of mantras.

The evening brought to a fitting climax all the months of effort which had gone into transforming a dull, dingy building into a fine new centre, and there was great satisfaction and joy amongst all those who had contributed and participated in this process. Not only will Amitayus be the new centre for our weekly classes, it will also house a resident community and provide the basis for several right livelihood projects, including toy-making, light removals and decorating. It also means we can adequately cater for larger events such as Buddhist festivals and Order days, besides providing a more pleasant environment for our regular activities.

This doesn't mean we shall be abandoning George Street. Its central position makes it ideal for newcomers, so it will continue to house our introductory evening on Mondays, and of course the Windhorse Bookshop will be continuing to disseminate the Dharma. Our new address and programme can be found on the endpages of this newsletter. Hope to see you there.

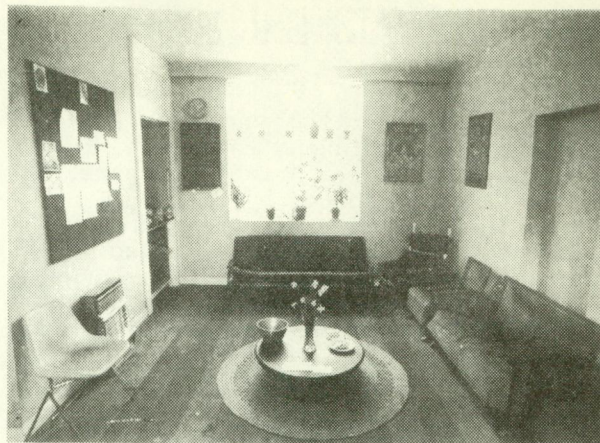


SUKHAVATI BETHNAL GREEN

From John W. Hunter

Having come and gone three times throughout the gradual growth of Sukhavati, I am delighted to be here now with the completion in view. The first time I came - in 1976 - Sukhavati was a black hole: full of charred beams and ashes - the remnants of a fire - (quite an odd thought, a fire in a fire station, where else?). It was winter, and the room I shared had no glass in the windows, only a large polythene sheet, which amplified the motions of the wind, and was far from draught-proof. Dirt and dust were everywhere, and the only source of water that worked was the cold water tap on the second floor. The shrine room was on the ground floor, and there were so many stones in the ragged old carpet that you got gravel burns from sitting, while plaster fell on your head whenever the door banged shut or someone walked unmindfully across the floor above. But it was fun; the work was crude, physical, and hard, and I collapsed into bed at ten each night after the Puja to ensure that I would be up at six the following morning to meditate. Friday night was bath night, round at the local public baths, where you left a half inch layer of scum on the water and came back looking like a beetroot from the excessive heat. The weekends were a time of diversions, when we rushed off to the cinema to purge the thoughts of work from our brains, and hastily squandered our hard-earned £2 a week support. A lot of people came and went, often caught up in their own confusion, and looking for someone to lead them to a quiet pasture. There was not time for this so they drifted off again. I too drifted off when the weather grew hot, only to return like a migratory bird the following winter.

This time Sukhavati was a shade of grey. Cleaner than before but still quite dark. Some areas were almost complete, with a better organised office and a new kitchen on the first floor. This time no work was being done on the building; instead (because we had run out of money) outside work had been undertaken to raise some. This too was fun. Each morning a van load of people would set off to the job and almost create a miniature Sukhavati on the site and so get on with the work. We had several different jobs in vari-



The finished common room



Our correspondent back in the 'fun' days

ous parts of London, all of which eventually went smoothly to completion. Meanwhile back at Sukhavati, we had intermittent hot water, and sometimes you could come out of the shower blue if the hot water ran out half way through. And a shrine room on the third floor, clean and freshly painted; and glass in all the windows. I stayed till the temperature rose up into the

60's then was off again, winging northwards.

When I returned in November 1977 it was to something completely different. This time Sukhavati shone. Although very little work had been done on the building itself, somehow it was different. The members of the community had stabilized themselves. The hard core of 'Sukhavatins' had eventually emerged from the confusion of the endless procession of 'visitors' and established themselves very firmly. The Manpower Services Commission grant was expected soon and our money problems looked solved so work on the building was proceeding once again. A new and exciting office system had been established, with Prakasha and Kulananda joining Subhuti to complete the office team. A new form of internal entertainment has been instituted: alternate Friday evenings are now community nights where we entertain each other and discover the fun of show-biz, and appreciate the previously hidden talent of many of our members. There is no longer the mad burst of escapism on Saturday nights as more and more people become content to remain here and enjoy what Sukhavati has to offer. We have also discovered that we can improve our living standard! The common room was recently painted, and one or two people have begun to paint their bedrooms. Slowly the idea of Comfort (a word rarely heard before) has begun to poke its shy head around one or two pleasant corners. The hot water now works continuously, and the food is always good - a new housekeeping team ensures that the standard is kept very high. Meanwhile the transport business, the press, and Friends Foods all function efficiently and are continually looking for ways to expand.

So, Sukhavati here now, as I write this, is an excellent community, with an ever increasing standard of living, and an efficient and friendly team of people to ensure that it continues in this way and to see that it improves too. The emphasis from now will be to finish the restoration work on Sukhavati as soon as possible. It is imperative that it is completed before Bhante goes to India and New Zealand at the end of the year, so that he can be here to open it. With the Manpower Services Commission grant finally through, and an eager work force, I look forward to the final stage when Sukhavati is seen, on its completion, as the dazzling light that it undoubtedly will be.

MANDALA WEST LONDON

News from Ratnavira

Until recently West London has been regarded very much as a backwater in the movement as a whole. A year ago, Mandala, a constricted and poorly attended basement centre in Fulham, stood in sharp contrast to the still flourishing Pundarika. The situation has greatly changed since then. With Mandala now the only centre in north and west London, a lot more attention is now being paid to it, more energy is being injected into it, and classes have picked up tremendously. In addition we hire a hall in Swiss Cottage two evenings a week, thereby maintaining a presence in North London, and have just completed a very successful meditation course there.

Centre activities are largely in the hands of the one remaining community in this part of London, plus three Order members from Sukhavati who come over for classes regularly. There appears to be considerable interaction between the fortunes of centre and community: as the community becomes stronger and the level of commitment of its members deepens, so does positive energy going into centre activity increase. And conversely, as classes begin to take off, so does the community become more inspired and confident. I feel that we have just moved out of a period of quiet consolidation, of founding a stable base for activity, into a new phase of growth, with new people becoming involved and everybody thinking in more expansive terms.

The community itself has just moved from Archway (the last remnant of FWBO activity in the area thereby disappearing) to West Kilburn. This marks a considerable improvement in physical environment. We are renting the house (due for conversion into flats) on a temporary licence from a short life housing organisation called Patchwork, which more specifically encourages communal living situations. There are 500 people living in Patchwork houses, so maybe here is a good contact for future members of the Sangha.

It would be no exaggeration to say that money is a perennial problem, or at least a perennial difficulty. A two-pronged approach seems to be evolving. On the one hand we are still holding the more traditional fundraising events: jumble sales, sponsored walks, etc.



These are still necessary, and since needs seem to expand to fill the energy available, I'm not sure if we will ever outgrow these methods! Our most recent jumble sale saw a much improved atmosphere to that usually found at such events. In addition however, right livelihood projects are slowly lumbering into action to put both centre and community on a more stable financial footing. The van business benefits both: it is being managed by mitra Tony Tribe and while still in its infancy is doing well so far. Please phone 960 3515 for cheap rates and a friendly service! Less conventional but of great interest and potential is the newly-formed bike business. Secondhand bicycles are bought, made roadworthy, then resold, at present through newspaper advertisements, but eventually maybe a market stall and shop. This is in the hands of another mitra, Keith Kench, and should involve several people in the future, working to help centre finances.

It's really good to work, live, and meditate together. Things can be hard-going, it can be easy to feel downcast. But looking back over the past few months, I see so much that is good, that so many positive things have happened, that I cannot help but look forward with eager anticipation to the time ahead.

AMARAVATI WANSTEAD and MANDARAVA NORFOLK

From Sanghadevi

Since the last report work has been continuing on the house at a steady rate. The two basement rooms are

finished. The 'coal hole' which is in the basement too has also been converted into a pleasant room, and all three rooms are now occupied. The kitchen has been fitted out with work surfaces, shelves and a new ceiling and is now fully functional. This has given us more space in the dining room and enabled us to have one end as a sitting room. One bathroom has also been painted and decorated.

In March we held our first long 8-day working retreat. Everyone in the community worked on the house as well as 11 other women mitras and Friends. We concentrated on our proposed new shrine room and in spite of being hampered by the unexpected discovery of dry rot we managed to complete a major part of the work. A wall was demolished, plasterwork repaired, ceilings painted, walls papered, paintwork burnt off and windows replaced. We also half finished decorating another large bedroom. Thank you to all our visitors. Our next working retreat is 28th-1st May, perhaps we'll see you again then. Helping hands are welcome anytime, for a few hours or days - just phone to let us know you are coming.



We have also done more work on the garden, digging and planting seeds. The recent acquisition of a Council allotment means we can grow quite a few of our own vegetables, whilst flowers from the garden can be used on the shrine.

Before the Order convention we had a day retreat for the community. We concentrated on meditation and it became a 'metta day' with four sessions of this practice.

Over the Order convention other members, as well as the upasikas, of the community, also went away. Maggie helped to cook on the convention, Helen went to Devon, Anne and Kay went to Wales and Cornwall respectively on solitary retreats while Anne Farnham went to Norwich to work in the Rainbow restaurant. There are now 12 community members, Anjali having joined us in February and Marichi in April.

In February the first women's Order/Mitra day was held at the EEMC and was attended by 28 people, and was an enjoyable and energising occasion. The next Order/Mitra day will be held here at Amaravati on Sunday 14th May when the new shrine room will be dedicated.

I visited Mandarava before the Convention to find the kitchen and dining room, and the shrine room, freshly decorated. The shrine room is lovely - with a rather 'Tibetan feel' - with its newly red, yellow and blue beams and white walls. The community there now consists of Malini and four mitras. There will be a long retreat open to all women at Mandarava this summer from 4th-26th August.

VAJRADHATU NORWICH

Report from Mahamati

No breakthroughs for FWBO Norwich in these past three months. Well, for particular Friends, Mitras and Order members maybe there have been. I hope so: one person there is now enjoying a double session of meditation every morning, somebody here has freed himself from a long and in retrospect rather uncreative 'relationship' and feels "let out of doors" after so many years of domestic restriction; and others too are discovering deep feelings beginning to emerge in them in response to their regular practice of devotion through the Sevenfold Puja. And one could go on. It is remarkable that beneath the external calm, the pleasant friendliness, the thoughtful approaches of many of those who pass through our centre here in Norwich, just what explosions and upheavals are going on inside themselves, in their homes, and at their work. And it is good that this should be so; good that something of peacefulness occupies the centre, especially in the shrine room, good also that move-

ment is taking place in the lives of those who spend time there. I am thinking in particular of our weekly regular's class: double meditation followed by Sevenfold Puja. Some of us had thought that this 'routine' would need a break every now and again. But no, we can't do too much of meditation and puja, indeed probably being together like this only once a week isn't really enough. There is present on these evenings at least a little bit of vision, something to inspire and guide us in those transformations that take place, sometimes pleasurably, sometimes painfully, during the rest of the week.

Yes, I did say no breakthroughs: I was thinking not so much in terms of the personal lives of those of us who through our own involvement with Buddhism bring the Friends into existence here in Norwich, but more of the FWBO as an active and outward-going movement, an expression of the people putting energy into it certainly, but something more than this too. Work for the FWBO is to build up an organisation (without the perennial organisational 'hang ups') which can create the conditions for more and more people to benefit in better and better circumstances from the Teachings of the Buddha. So what have we been doing in the last three months?

No breakthroughs yet, but we're learning to swing the hammer! And we're making an impact. Six week meditation courses are definitely "in", for the time being at any rate. We are holding these courses regularly, sometimes two concurrently, and they are always fully booked (20-30 people each). In our continuation courses we introduce Buddhism directly for the first time (although invariably there have been many questions before this: people want to know). It is, I suppose, bound to be a minority who will want to go further into Buddhism, and want to find out what the FWBO has to offer. Most will complete the course and then - well, unfortunately we very often don't know what they will do, whether they will meditate regularly for example. This minority (between twelve and fifteen from the last two concurrent course), we are learning to meet the needs of. Especially we are realising the benefits of having more than just a couple of Order members attending the classes. Welcoming along Mitras and close Friends also, the level of meditation in the shrine room is visibly raised for everybody, and commun-

ication becomes warm and lively. We do aim to hold Communication Courses regularly at the nearby palatial Assembly House, but any problems in this area have to be tackled first when they arise, at the centre. In this respect, some of us have become aware just how like a dentist's waiting room our downstairs room is, and we are going to see what we can do about it. On the other hand, as somebody has pointed out, if one takes a wrong turning on the way up to the shrine room, then one will quite literally finish up in the dentist's anyway!

Devamitra has continued his work of asking for and taking up invitations to visit different groups to tell them about Buddhism and the FWBO. At City college he has talked to biology students, catering students, and telegraphists, whilst some engineering students visited the centre. These latter were not very forthcoming, but on being encouraged to speak their minds several of them said that they were dead bored and would rather be at college doing something useful. But there is encouraging news too: Devamitra talked to and discussed with the telegraphists for two consecutive weeks, and in the second week he found that many of the initial barriers were broken down and interest was aroused. Whilst a visit to our centre one afternoon of a lower sixth class from Bowthorpe School resulted in five of them, including their teacher, booking for our next meditation course. Other groups contacted include St. Andrew's Church Youth Group, fifth formers from Acle High School, and a group of Christians at Keswick Hall Teacher's Training College.

And we have held a benefit dinner, our third in well under a year! But such events cannot begin to support the activities of our movement. We are reliant to a large extent upon Dana, upon what people give. An inadequate amount of money comes in this way: partly because some of our Friends and Order members have incomes beneath the 'poverty' line, and partly because some people do not yet appreciate the importance of giving in order to further the growth of the Dharma. It often seems to take months for this to sink in, if it does at all. Even so, those of us quite deeply involved in the FWBO in Norwich want to find ways of raising the necessary money ourselves. Before too long we hope the present Rainbow Restaurant will expand into larger and more suitable premises, a cooperative will

be formed, and, hopefully, other examples of Right Livelihood will develop under its wing.

MANCHESTER

From Sagaramati

Although there has been a very small FWBO community living in Manchester since last July, and, since October, members of the community have been running classes there, nothing has been mentioned in any Newsletter to date to hint at our presence here. The reason for this is simple and near at hand: laziness. There are now four of us living in a rented house in South Manchester, a couple of miles from the city centre: Ratnaguna, who moved up from London last February, and Ratnajyoti, John Wadkin (a mitra) and myself (Sagaramati), who hearing the death rattle of the old North London Centre, Pundarika, headed north last July.

Some people may ask why we moved to Manchester. Why not Liverpool? Leeds? Newcastle? Wigan or Buenos Aires? In my own case there seemed to be little or no reasoning processes involved in deciding to move to Manchester - at least no conscious ones. It reminded me of a time at school when I used to upset my maths teacher who, when trying to get me to prove by means of some alien law why the angles of an isosceles triangle were equal, went red in the face when I answered: "But sir, I can see that they're equal, why the hell should I have to prove what is obvious?" Going to Manchester was the 'obvious' thing to do.

Apart from running a couple of meditation courses and a Dharma course, I can't honestly say that we've been exactly 'outgoing' since arriving here. We do however have our little wild flings out into the surrounding areas: in February Ratnaguna and I visited Lancaster University and gave a talk to the university's Buddhist Society. Later in the same month we visited Bradford University and gave a talk in the Peace Dept. I also visit the Leeds Buddhist Group once a month.

According to a poster hanging in the Manchester Corporation's Estates Dept., 50% of England's population live within a 60 mile radius of Manchester. Apart from the 'obvious', that's a very good reason for being here.

HERUKA GLASGOW

Report from Dhammarati

In September 77, it felt like Heruka was in a prison. The Centre was in a basement flat, with bars at the window, in Gray Street. The tiny shrine room was hardly big enough for the small core of Friends still coming. It was a frustrating feeling - potential locked in.

Months of searching paid off. In October the Bodhisattvas sprung us. We moved into a 6 room house, a top floor flat in the west end. Possibilities opened up like the new Glasgow skyline; by November a full centre programme was underway.

Our posters on walls all over the city got our name literally 'on the streets' and new people began to come around; fresh water into a still pool. Meanwhile we rewired and redecorated. Some fifty people on our first beginners' course watched a mural appear before their very eyes on a shrine room wall (Maureen painted it). And gradually you feel the Sangha get wider. February saw our second generation of mitras born - Ann and Charlie from Glasgow, Peter and Leslie from Aberdeen, Morgan from Dundee, and Joss who's living in the Edinburgh centre now. A weekend retreat on the Isle of Cumbrae every month kept people charged up through a busy time, and provided a good way for newcomers to get into a bit more meditation.

The Order Convention in April made a natural break in our programme, and activities were more or less suspended for two weeks. At the time of writing we're ready to take up where we left off; to consolidate what has been quite fast initial growth. The next few months will also see beginners meditation, and concurrent courses in Glasgow and Edinburgh, starting almost at once.

We'll be making the first moves in setting up a Right Livelihood situation, a wholefoods co-op, as the economic base for future growth. Further courses are planned. New communities seem likely. A city centre Centre? The Order Convention opened up a new skyline: we got a glimpse of new possibilities. It provided good contact between people from all centres and communities. I got a strong feeling of individuals growing, the centre growing with other centres. The next few years look good.

EDINBURGH

From Uttara

It's now exactly a year since I first moved to Edinburgh. This period has seen the gradual growth of a small but functional and operative centre. There people are able to come in contact with the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha in all their many forms. During that year our centre was visited by a number of guests from other centres, not to mention the regular visits we have had from the Heruka Order members. Thus there has been quite a lot of coming and going in the place. Andrew Galloway, who used to live here, moved to Heruka to have more contact with the Order there.

Just after Andrew left we had a six week course on meditation and after that course we had a few more Friends who were wanting to know more about Buddhism and what the FWBO has to offer. So we had a followup course which has gradually built up a core of interested people. One of these, Joss Hicks, has moved into the flat with me, helping to set up FWBO Edinburgh. We are now on the lookout for another suitable person to move in.

I think that the two most important things that have happened during the year were that Andrew and Joss became Mitras, and that we've started holding regular classes. It is a gradual move towards there being a definite Sangha in Edinburgh. In the flat we have built a new shrine. We received from Upasaka Chintamani a rupa which he made specially for Edinburgh, and also from Sukhavati a gift of the Sutra of Golden Light series of tape recorded lectures. We have been slowly building up a complete set of Bhante's tapes and are also trying to get together a library of Buddhist books. If anybody has any books or tapes that they don't need, then please send them to us - they will be most appreciated.

The next step for us in Edinburgh is to start another six week course in meditation, and to set up a right livelihood situation to support the centre properly. Spring is once more with us and we are beginning to see emerging from the ground flowers and on the trees many buds unfolding and bursting into bloom; so also we can see yet another Friends centre slowly coming into being.

AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND

News from Purna

These last few months over the New Zealand summer have been quite a busy period for the Auckland Centre, probably busier than we've seen it for quite some time. A yoga course and an introductory course in meditation over November and December of last year were very successful in terms of the new people they attracted to the Centre. But in many ways the most important thing in the last few months has been the marked change in attitudes and involvement brought about by our 'New Centre Appeal'.

We moved into our new premises in 79a Hobson Street a few months ago, before the lease on our old premises had fully expired. This has meant that for the last few months we have had to maintain rent on two premises, and added to this was the need for funds to carry out the fairly extensive renovations and repainting required on our new Centre. Our approach to fundraising in the past had always tended to the negative - money was a necessary 'evil' the handling of which had to be tolerated for the furtherance of work in more 'spiritual' areas. The dana bowl would sometimes be pointed out to people almost apologetically, and major costs would invariably, always, come out of the same few pockets. Faced with the immediate need for quite a lot of money and after some of us having our attitudes influenced by the type of fundraising being carried out in some of the English Centres, we decided a whole new approach was needed to fundraising, a far more active, outward-going orientation to it seemed to be called for,

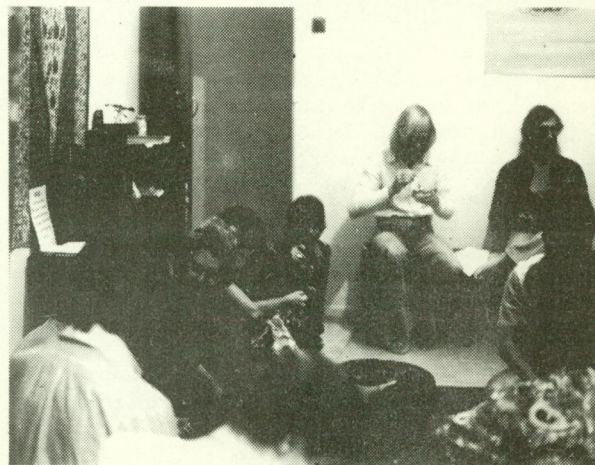
During December we launched a 'New Centre Appeal' with a 'Work-A-Week', jumble sale, house painting job, and a lot less timidity about letting people know about our financial needs. Financially the Appeal was quite successful, we managed to raise \$1200 by the new year, but what really seemed to emerge strongly from the Appeal was the increased support from people that it engendered. We had people who had previously seemed very little involved coming forward and doing a bit of house painting or contributing to the 'Work-A-Week'. They seemed glad to have an opportunity to express quite concretely

their support for what the FWBO is trying to do, opportunities that in the past had just not been apparent or available to them.

Necessity has also brought about changes in other areas. The departure of some of our Order members to England in March to attend the Order Convention in Sussex has meant Centre administration and classes have become increasingly the responsibility of some of our senior Mitras. Secretarial and treasury work is now effectively handled by Mitras and as an experiment during the few months that some of the more active Order members are absent, a team of four Mitras is leading one of the class nights, a combined taped lecture and meditation instruction class. These increased opportunities for active involvement really seem to be bringing out a few 'hidden lights' and I'm confident that the next few months will witness some marked changes in the growth of many of the individuals involved with the Auckland Centre.



Upsaka Udaya leading a Puja



An evening at the Auckland Centre

HELSINKI FINLAND

By Marichi

Sometimes Finland seems a long way away from the rest of the FWBO to us here in England, simply because of the physical distance between us. Bhante helps redress the balance by his increasingly regular visits to Helsinki, and he has just spent another couple weeks there. His last visit was last September, when as usual he saw lots of people, conducted several mitra ceremonies and held the first FWBO ordination in Europe itself - a very welcome and historic step. He was also able to spend two concentrated days with the burgeoning Order itself, talking, meditating, eating, playing chess, generally making contact. FWBO Helsinki grew out of the efforts of two Finnish Order members, Vajrabodhi and Bodhishri, who had learned meditation at the early FWBO classes in London, and were anxious to continue to practise and spread the Dharma when they returned to Helsinki.

Things slowly grew, attendance at classes became more stable, the Order members more confident in the effects of their work. An Order member came from England to help spread the load: first Buddhadasa, then Vajradaka, now Hridaya - they all soon fall in love with Finland and miss it when back in England. Hridaya's Finnish gets better and better. He goes to language classes at the University where he also teaches English conversation, learns a lot about the social and political structure of Finland in the process - when he was over here for the recent Order convention he was even beginning to look a little Finnish.

Meanwhile the Finnish Order has been slowly growing, first Maitreya, then Gunavati, Sarvamitra, and most recently, Sumati, the upasika ordained in Finland last September; they are all interestingly different from each other. (Sociologically it is also interesting that there are as many women in the Order in Finland as there are men). One of the essentials of any spiritual community, and of the Order in particular, is that its members have to find ways of relating to each other through what they have in common - in this case the Dharma - rather than the more instinctive and usual similarities of temperament and common backgrounds.

One of the wonderful effects of the Order

convention was how everyone there seemed to feel, more strongly than ever before, their connection with the Dharma, alive and pulsing within them. For those, like the Finns, who came from centres that are isolated from other chapters of the Order, this effect, this recognition of connection with the Dharma and with all those committed to it can be life-giving. Bhante's current visit inevitably will have enhanced this feeling, both in the Order and with the growing number of mitras. There are now mitras both in Helsinki and in several other major towns, and meditation classes have also begun to be held outside Helsinki, so Bhante's visits are beginning to take him further into the Finnish mainland.

There are also increasing numbers of Finns visiting English centres. There has been a Finnish mitra working at Sukhavati for several months now. He will also spend a month or so at Padmaloka before he returns to Helsinki in June or July. This summer too there will be Finnish mitras that we got to know well in England last year coming to the women's retreat at Mandarava. Jinamata, now living in Berlin, is planning to spend the summer in Finland. Hopefully the traffic from Britain will increase soon.





*'Seek' a delightful solitude
endowed with beneficial
influences as a hermitage'*
from *'The Precepts of the
Gurus'* translated by
W.Y.Evans-Wentz.

'Seek a delightful solitude'

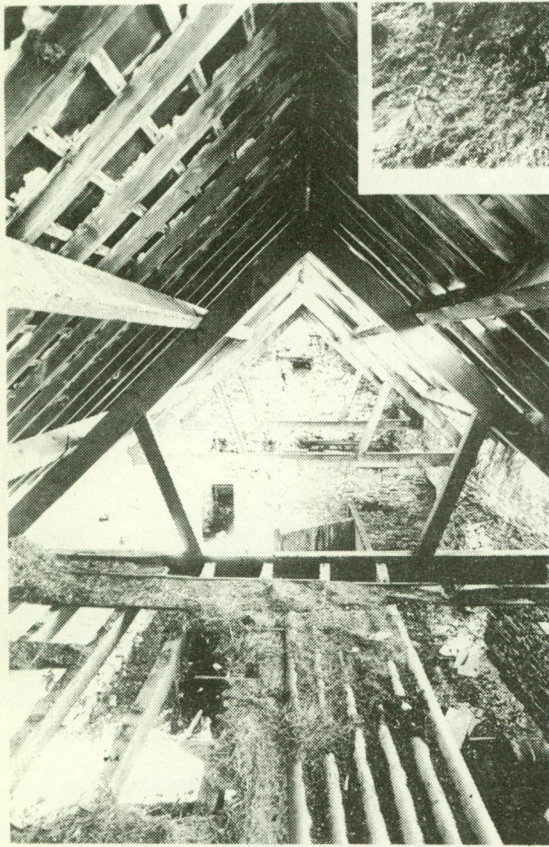


Meditation is one of the most important activities in the spiritual life. Even those who have only tried a basic meditation exercise like the Mindfulness of Breathing a few times will have realised the importance of silence a calm and peaceful situation, simplicity and beauty of surroundings. These two farms near Corwen, North Wales, combine all these qualities and are thus ideal for use as the FWBO's new meditation centre.

The buildings stand on the side of an isolated valley over looking a swiftly flowing tributary of the River Dee. All around are sheep and cattle fields, oak woods, pine forests and hilly scrubland. The houses are at the end of a lane and are used only by shepherds and gamekeepers, and the occasional lost tourist.

A small resident community will occupy one house, maintaining a daily routine of meditation and silence. The Ven.Sangharakshita will spend a few months of each year at the other and will conduct meditation retreats and seminars for invited groups of up to 10 people staying in a converted outhouse.

This centre should be ready for use by April 1979 after the conversion and renovation work is completed. The £10,000 necessary for equipping the centre, purchasing a share of one house, and converting the guest accommodation, is to be raised jointly by all centres.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WOMENS' SUMMER RETREAT

From Friday 4th Aug – Sat 26 Aug there will be a three week open retreat for women at Mandarava. You can come for any part of the time, except for the last week which will be closed (no comings or goings). Cost: £4.00 per day. 10% discount for whole period. Booking forms will be available at centres & from the Retreat Organiser at Mandarava.

WEST COUNTRY SUMMER RETREAT

There will be an open, mixed retreat in Toddington in the West Country from 1st to the 20th August. Beginners welcome. For further details contact the Retreat Organiser at Mandarava, 385 8637

EUROPEAN RETREAT

The European retreat will again take place at 'Stenfors' in Vaxjo, Sweden. It will run from 28 July until 6 August. Ven. Sangharakshita will be in at-

tendance for some of the time. For further information contact Upasaka Hridaya at our Helsinki centre.

FESTIVALS

This year Wesak, the anniversary of the Buddha's Enlightenment, falls on 22nd May. Dharmachakra day, the anniversary of the Buddha's first discourse, will be celebrated on 20th July. Contact your local centre for details of their arrangements.

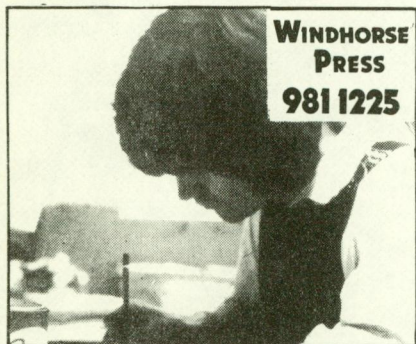
MIDSUMMER FEAST

Mandarava are holding a Midsummer Feast on 24 June. It will open at 2pm, and there will be a children's tea party at 4pm. There will be an evening meal with music and entertainment at 8pm. The meal will cost £2.00 and everyone will be very welcome. For further details contact Mandarava..

Available from WINDHORSE PUBLICATIONS
A New Edition of

The Three Jewels an Introduction to Buddhism by Ven. Sangharakshita

On sale at Centres and Bookshops. Price £2.00



**WINDHORSE
PRESS
981 1225**

WINDHORSE TRANSPORT

Sure-footed & Fast

LONDON RATES
Transit Vans from
£3 per hr. + 10p per mile.
Phone for BOX VANS & long distance rates.
01 981 1225

Sunrise Wholefood Restaurant



16 North Road
Brighton.

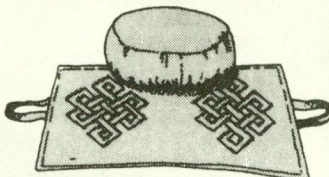
Vegetarian, vegan and macrobiotic dishes served.
Tuesday to Thursday 12 - 3p.m.
Friday and Saturday 12 - 10p.m.
New beach lunch take-away service too.

Friends Foods

Delivery Service

WHOLESALE & RETAIL ORDERS
DELIVERED WITHIN 7 DAYS
FOR PRICE LIST & TERMS CONTACT
51 ROMAN ROAD LONDON E2
01 981 1225

Kusa Cushions



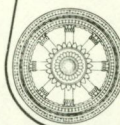
Custom-made meditation cushions.
Large selection and colour range to choose
from, including single cushions or cushions
with matching sitting-mat/carrier.

Write for further details and price list to

KUSA CUSHIONS, Amaravati,
30 Cambridge Park, London E11 2PR
Telephone 01-989 5083

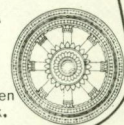
Dharmachakra Tapes

Ven. Sangharakshita's lectures are
available on cassette at £1.95 per
lecture. P and P 12p. for the first
lecture, and 6p for each subsequent
one. (for airmail prices please apply).
For new extended catalogue send
40p plus postage to:-



**DHARMACHAKRA
TAPES**

Vajrakula
41b All Saints Green
Norwich, Norfolk.



THE WINDHORSE BOOKSHOP

**20% OFF all orders
over £10 !**

**Booklists from
18 George Street,
Brighton BN2 1RH**

RETREATS

PADMALOKA RETREATS

Men's Retreat: 5th - 25th August

Mitra/ Ordination Retreat:

25th August - 1st September

To book, please contact the
Retreat Organiser at Padmaloka
(minimum period one week, £3
per day).

About the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order was founded in 1967 by the Venerable Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita, an Englishman who has spent twenty years in India as a Buddhist monk. He returned to England in the early Sixties, and saw the potential for disseminating the Teachings of the Buddha in the West. He felt the need, along with others, for a more spiritually active and authentic type of Buddhist movement in this country and therefore founded the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order. A year later, in 1968, he founded the Western Buddhist Order itself, in order to provide a full experience of Spiritual Community, and full opportunities for complete commitment to the Buddhist way of life.

The Western Buddhist Order is a Spiritual Community of voluntarily associated individuals who have come together through their common commitment to the Three Jewels: that is, to the Buddha, or the Ideal of Enlightenment; to the Dharma, the Path of the Higher Evolution of the Individual; and to the Sangha, the community of all those with the same ideal. All members have formally Gone for Refuge to the Three Jewels in public and private ceremonies with the Ven. Sangharakshita, and are thus dedicated to their own development and to working, along with other Order members, in spreading the Dharma in the West.

The Order is neither lay or monastic. The Going for Refuge is the central act in the life of a Buddhist and the lifestyle one leads is secondary. The exact number and form of precepts taken is simply a working out of this commitment in one's life. Order members are of all ages, of both sexes and of different nationalities. All are committed to the Three Jewels and to the following of the ten basic precepts which cover all aspects of natural morality. That is, morality which naturally springs from a skilful state of mind, rather than morality of a merely conventional kind.

The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order is the legal body and organisational matrix, through which Order Members work. Order Members wish to create conditions whereby others can come into direct contact with the teachings of the Buddha in a practical, dynamic and living way. In our public centres and Branches we hold classes and courses in meditation and basic Buddhist teachings, yoga classes, lectures, seminars, courses in communication and retreats. We publish a quarterly newsletter and celebrate all the major Buddhist festivals. We are aware how difficult it is to develop spiritually in unco-operative surroundings and are therefore creating situations where people can live, work and practice together. We run two wholefood restaurants and a wholefood business, have our own printing press, publications department and design studio and many other businesses. Each centre and community aims to be as self sufficient as possible and new businesses and ventures are springing into life continually. In the main each centre and community is autonomous and has its own flavour through the ideal underlying all is the same. Thus we try to provide both unity and diversity and many different situations so that all those who come into contact with us can find a channel into which they can direct their energy.

The Friends is not an organisation, society or club and has no formal membership. Anyone who comes along, or who is in contact in any way, is a Friend.

FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER

CENTRES AND BRANCHES

The Office of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order:

Sukhavati, 51 Roman Road, Bethnal Green, London E2. Tel: 01-981 1225

The Office of the Western Buddhist Order:

Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Nr Norwich, Norfolk Tel: 050 88 310

CENTRES AND BRANCHES

U.K.

*East End
Meditation Centre*
119 Roman Road
Bethnal Green
London E2
Tel: 01-981 1225

Mandala
86d Telephone Place
Fulham
London SW6
Tel: 01-385 8637

Aryatara
3 Plough Lane
Purley
Surrey
Tel: 01-660 2542

Grdhrakuta
9 Aylcliffe Grove
Longsight
Manchester

FWBO Brighton
19 George Street
Brighton
Sussex
Tel: 0273-693 971

Vajradhatu
41A All Saints Green
Norwich
Norfolk
Tel: 0603 27034

Heruka
13 Kelvinside Terrace
South
Glasgow G.20
Tel: 041-946 2035

OVERSEAS

FWBO Helsinki
Albertinkatu 21c 12
00120 Helsinki 12
Finland
Tel: Helsinki 669 820

FWBO Wellington
P.O. Box 12 311
Wellington North
Wellington
New Zealand

FWBO Christchurch
P.O. Box 22 — 657,
Christchurch
New Zealand

FWBO Auckland
P.O. Box 68 — 453
Newton Auckland
Auckland
New Zealand

COMMUNITIES (Visitors by arrangement only)

Sukhavati
51 Roman Road
Bethnal Green
London E2
Tel: 01-981 1225

Amaravati
30 Cambridge Park
London E11 2PR
Tel: 01-989 5083

Golgonooza
119 Roman Road
Bethnal Green
London E2
Tel: 01-981 5157

Beulah
95 Bishop's Way
London E.8.

Padmaloka
Lesingham House
Surlingham
Nr Norwich
Norfolk

Mandarava
Street Farm
The Street, Aslacton
Norwich, Norfolk
Tel: Tivetshall 344

Vairakula
41B All Saints Green
Norwich
Norfolk
Tel: 0603 27034

Ratnadvipa
22 Macroon Road
West Kilburn
London W9
Tel: 01-960 3515

REPRESENTATIVES

David Austin
'Selsey'
St Stephen's Coombe
St Austell
Cornwall
Tel: Grampound Road
882401

Upasaka Aryavamsa
Elleholmesvagen 11
S-35243 Vaxjo
Sweden

Upasaka Uttara
12 Bruntsfield Gardens
Edinburgh
Tel: 031-229 7940

Upasika Vajrayogini
Ringdijk 90
Postgiro 16 2586
Rotterdam
Netherlands

Upasika Jinamata
Gleditschstr. 44
1000 Berlin 30
Germany

Correction p. 36

AUGUST 1 - 20

WEST COUNTRY SUMMER RETREAT

Contact the Retreat Organiser,
Ratnadvipa, 22 Macroon Road,
London W.9 3HY
Tel. 960 3515

Cost is £4 per day or £70 for the
whole retreat.



SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER AND MITRATA.

To Windhorse Publications, 3 Plough Lane, Purley, Surrey.

I enclose cheque/cash/PO/IMO to the value of £.....

being my subscription/renewed subscription to

Newsletter

Mitrata

for years.

(Subscription rates: NEWSLETTER – £2.00 inland, £2.50 overseas p.a.
MITRATA – £3.00 p.a.)

Name:

Address:

DANA APPEAL

I enclose cheque/cash/PO/IMO to the value of £.....

being my contribution to:

WINDHORSE PUBLICATIONS

SUKHAVATI

(Tick as appropriate)

Name:

Address:

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

FROM THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY

APPROVED BY THE FACULTY

DATE OF ADOPTION

BY THE FACULTY

IN THE YEAR

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DOES HEREBY

RESOLVE

THAT

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DOES HEREBY

RESOLVE

THAT