

GOLDEN DRUM

A Magazine for Western Buddhists. Price 1 25 August—October 1991 (2534) No.22



THE ART OF GENEROSITY

GOLDEN DRUM

AUGUST—OCTOBER 1991 (2534)

Published by Windhorse Publications
for the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order

© Windhorse Publications 1991

Editor Nagabodhi
Editorial Assistance Shantavira
News Simon Blomfield
Book Reviews Tejananda
Outlook Advayachitta
Design Paramabodhi
Printing Aldgate Press, 84b Whitechapel
High Street, London E1

**Subscription address and advertisement
enquiries:** 136 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 3AU

Subscriptions £5.50 pa (UK &
surface mail) £7.00 pa (airmail)
Subscriptions may be paid directly into
Girobank account no. 10 439 6105

DATA PROTECTION ACT

If you receive your *Golden Drum*
through the post it means that your
name and address (only) are kept
on our computer files. The Data
Protection Act requires that we
inform you of this.

Advertising rates: Full page £80,
½-page £45, ¼-page £25, ⅛-page £15.
Booking deadline for issue 23:
23rd September; artwork by 7th October.
Discounts are available for series
bookings. Inserts charged at £40.00
per 1000. Bookings and fuller details:
354 Crookesmoor Road, Sheffield,
S10 1BH. ☎ 0742 684775

- 3 **Editorial** Freedom in the free market
- 4 **The Practice of Generosity** Why is generosity so important
in the Buddhist tradition?
- 6 **The Dana Economy** How to turn work into an act of giving
- 8 **An Incomparable Field Of Merit For The World** If we want a
thriving Buddhist movement, we will have to be generous
- 10 **An Everyday Generosity** Some of the obstacles that stand
in the way of generosity
- 12 **Encouraging Others to Give** How the Karuna Trust raises
its millions
- 14 **Book Reviews** *Vision and Transformation, The Wheel And
The Diamond, and Old Path White Clouds*
- 18 **Outlook** Trends and developments in the Buddhist and
non-Buddhist world
- 20 **Around the world** Activities and events around the FWBO



FREEDOM IN THE FREE MARKET

From a distance the FWBO must seem rather well-off. With its urban public centres, communities, Right Livelihood businesses, and rural retreats, its increasingly professional publications and video releases, and its social welfare projects in India, the FWBO must look like an organization with a lot of money behind it. How many people walk into the shrine-room at the London Buddhist Centre, for instance, and, seeing the superbly crafted woodwork and the glowing golden Buddha, wonder where all the money comes from?

I just wish that they could be at next week's international gathering of FWBO centre chairmen and chairwomen. Because I prophesy that a moment will come when someone will ask whether we can find a bit of extra money—to develop Guhyaloka, to support a part-time Press Officer, to maintain another Dharma worker in India ... whatever, to be told that every centre is fighting a desperate battle just to meet its own running costs.

So what has happened? Has the FWBO finally run out of luck? Is this the crunch? Well, perhaps it would be had things ever been different. Had there once been a time when we were awash with vast sums of money—given perhaps by a sympathetic pop star or some Eastern HQ—then to find ourselves without any now would be a cause for alarm. But we have never had any. It has always been like this—on one level a constant struggle, and on another level a remarkable adventure. Because, in the end, people have always resolved the crises by giving.

Sometimes they have found a few spare pounds or dollars, more often they have given of their time and talents—to organize or take part in fund-raising activities, to do some building work, some painting, some typing, some accounts. A great number of people have given *all* of their time—to run our centres, organize social projects, publish books, taking back, when the situation allowed, just enough money to support life and maintain health. Thus the Movement has grown. And thus it is that the FWBO's material institutions are nothing less than crystallizations of the generosity of the people who built, and are still building, them.

But perhaps we should not forget that the FWBO was founded in 1967, the year of the fabled 'Summer of Love'. To a considerable extent it was a child of the Sixties, and its growth during the Seventies was underwritten by the revolutionary social ideologies—and youthful idealism—of the time. It was relatively easy, in those days, to drop out of a career, experiment with communal living, or tinker around with cottage wholefood enterprises. After all, everyone else seemed to be doing it, or at least dreaming about it.

So, no, we were never really given any money. But we were perhaps given some of the attitudes and ideals that made it

easier for us to make a life out of building—with scant resources—something as radically alternative as the FWBO. For many of us, much of the struggle since then has been to ensure that, as the given idealism of our early youth-cultural conditioning faded away, a corresponding quantum of authentic spiritual inspiration and commitment was available to take its place. Having a Movement to keep alive has probably moved that struggle to a higher place on our personal agendas than it might otherwise have occupied.

If the cultural norms of the Sixties and Seventies were kind to the FWBO, offering some support and very little opposition, then the Eighties were rather different. Perhaps for the first time since its birth, the FWBO found itself surrounded by a coherent, and hostile, prevailing ideology. God had very little to do with it, but Mammon was very active. Peace, love, and communal dreams became old hat, and to strive for a highly individualistic kind of material security and success became widely accepted as the highest ideal.

When monetarist economists and politicians unleashed their juggernaut upon the world, I wonder how many of us recognized the threat it posed to us. I wonder how many of us even see it now.

Of course, the threat is only a threat if it is not recognized as a challenge. But if you find yourself more willing to get involved with an FWBO project if there is some cash involved; if you find yourself offering to pay someone to do something around your centre before you have really looked to see whether anyone wants to volunteer; if you find yourself wondering whether you haven't been 'exploited' by the FWBO because 'it' is paying you a fraction of what the market says you are worth; if months have gone by since you last gave (in any way) more to a project than you thought you could afford; if you find yourself feeling more inspired by the spectacle of a rock star singing a couple of songs for the Kurds than you do by the *Jataka Tales*, then you are under threat. The challenge is quite straightforward: it is to remember how to give.

There are those who have argued that a little more of the free market spirit might be good for the FWBO's various enterprises. If I beg to differ it is not just because I do not believe that we have the capital and management resources to join the fray on equal terms, and certainly not because I am in any way opposed to efficiency, energy, and success. It is just that we must look for these things, not in the generation of a bit more material self-interest among our team members, but in a continuing and deepening willingness to give ourselves wholeheartedly, and in as many ways as we can find, to the ideals and projects that we believe in. That has always been our strength. That, after all, is what a spiritual life and a spiritual community are all about. And without *that* spirit we are finished.

Nagabodhi



Tara—an embodiment of compassionate generosity

conventional 10–50p, to a more thoughtful pound note, to a slap-happy fiver, or even an occasional tenner, we knew we were doing things right, knew that people not only appreciated what we had to offer, but that they were beginning to change. They wanted to give, and there could be no clearer indication of the Centre's spiritual success than that. (How grim it has sometimes felt, in later years, to hear centre treasurers bemoaning the discrepancy between heads counted at classes and 'charges' collected!)

But why should *giving* be singled out in this way? Why is generosity such an effective barometer of a community's, or an individual's, spiritual development? What about fidgetless meditations, 'vibrant' pujas, or straightforward friendliness? These certainly could be symptoms of spiritual growth, but they are not infallibly so. Someone may be able to sit still for fifty minutes because they have supple limbs and a reasonable amount of self-discipline—or a fear of standing out in the crowd; a puja may be hearty and harmonious, and a tea-break cheerful, simply because people are enjoying good company, in a spiritual context but on the more mundane level of group activity. But to *give* in some way is to *give up*: it is to say that something which I have until now identified as belonging to, or even being a part of, myself, is no longer to be seen in that way. It is a little death, an act of identification with something beyond oneself, and, therefore, an act of self-transcendence—a blow for freedom from the subject-object dichotomy. On a lower level, and no less valid for that

THE PRACTICE OF GENEROSITY

Nagabodhi explains why generosity is the quintessential Buddhist virtue

Let me begin with a confession. Back in the late seventies, when Aryatara Community still hosted FWBO Surrey's centre activities, there was a little ritual we observed which might have disturbed some of our Friends had they known

about it. At the end of every class and retreat, as soon as the front door had closed behind our last guest, one of us would rush to the *dana* bowl, plunge in his hand, and announce the days 'takings'.

Naturally this had something to do with the

precarious state of the Centre's finances—in those heady days we didn't charge for classes, and retreat prices covered little more than the cost of the food, candles, and incense consumed. But there was more to it than that. As the average donation rose from a

it is an expression of gratitude, an acknowledgement of the recognition that one has found something worthwhile—so much so that one now wants to support it. Frankly, if there is no giving, then there is probably no spiritual life.

Thus the Buddhist tradition has always prized generosity as a virtue of the highest conceivable magnitude. The Pali *Jataka* tales show the Buddha-to-be practising generosity again and again, in myriad lives, as he blazes his trail towards Enlightenment. Generosity is counted as the positive reflex of the second moral precept (to abstain from taking the not-given) observed by all Buddhists. Arguably it is the inevitable reflex of the first precept too, for 'to avoid harming living beings and to act with love towards them' can hardly be anything less than a call to generosity. Lay-people throughout the Eastern Buddhist world are exhorted to practise generosity, *dana*, by caring for the material welfare of the full-time monks and nuns—almost to the exclusion of any other practice. And the hero of Mahayana Buddhism, the bodhisattva—who devotes every ounce of strength to the pursuit of the highest goal *for the sake of all beings throughout time and space* is little else than a pure embodiment of generosity. Indeed, the first virtue that an aspiring bodhisattva is urged to perfect is not morality, patient forbearance, vigour, meditation, or even wisdom, but generosity. If there is a quintessentially Buddhist virtue, then generosity is it.

On the highest level, generosity is the natural expression of the kind of insight which undermines attachment to the idea of a fixed, limited, and unchanging

self. It is the 'empty'—spontaneous and unselfconscious—response of an 'empty'—unlimited and free—being to a perceived need out there in the suffering world.

Closer to home, perhaps, an act of giving is the spark thrown forth by the impact of a strengthening faculty of mindful awareness upon a deepening root of loving kindness and compassion. If we feel love for someone, then how can we turn our back on their needs if we have it in our power to help them?

At the end of our Sevenfold Puja we recite the verses of 'transference of merit and self-surrender'. In imagination we give up our 'personality'—our wisdom, our confidence, our virtues, our concern—our possessions, and our 'merits'—the fruits of all our practice—for the benefit of all beings. For many of us this recitation is highly provisional; perhaps we even feel a little uncomfortable and hypocritical as we mouth words that we do not feel ready to honour. But the Sevenfold Puja is an imaginative exercise, a meditation practice which, like any other meditation practice, works its effect on us slowly, over time. Gradually, our 'rehearsal' of the progressive moods of worship, salutation, Going for Refuge, confession, rejoicing in merit, entreaty and supplication, and self-surrender will become more heartfelt, more authentically true of our real attitudes and impulses.

So with giving itself. Ultimately we will give 'without regard' for ourselves. Ultimately we will not feel that yawning gulf between self and other, and we will want to care for others just as naturally as we now care for ourselves.

Meanwhile, however, there is nothing to stop us from 'rehearsing' the feelings and actions of an Enlightened being. When we sit down to meditate, after all, we try to adopt the posture of a Buddha in the hope that this will help us to attain a Buddha's state of mind. So, when we get up to act, why shouldn't we try to adopt the *actions* of one too? Why not turn our life into a gift? If our goal is the transcendence of the self-other dichotomy, then there is a very good case for putting some of our effort into the 'other' end of the equation, and not just concentrating on ourselves.

Two major factors seem sometimes to cloud the issue of generosity: the fear of guilt, and a failure of the imagination.

Many people feel reluctant to give out of a fear that they might be motivated by guilt rather than generosity: that they might be responding to moral blackmail, feelings of inadequacy, or (the handy catch-all:) their 'Christian conditioning'. They think of the old Salvation Army slogan: 'Give till it hurts!' and perhaps finding that the very *thought* hurts, hold themselves back. Thus to walk blindly past an over-actively brandished collecting tin, or to maintain a dinner-time conversation while volunteers are being sought for the washing-up, comes to be counted as something of a victory. This seems rather sad.

Certainly, the 'sage', as Lao Tse tersely puts it, 'has his "yes" and his "no"'. We should not forget that we are ourselves a part of the 'objective situation', and must therefore be careful not to burn ourselves out with too many minor, or foolhardy, acts of generosity at the expense of

what we might really have to offer the world. Ideally, too, our generosity should be a consciously directed aspect of our life's purpose; it would be silly to take on so many tasks 'on the side' that we are unable to fulfil a commitment to a single major project. In sorting out such confusions some reference to the complexities of our psychological conditioning may be helpful. But to subject every generous impulse to an inquisition, or to concentrate on the 'problem' of our conditioning rather than on the development of a more wholehearted commitment to something that really is worthwhile, seems suspiciously over-protective.

A failure of imagination occurs when we forget all the things that we have to give. Because we may not have much money, or very many material possessions to give away, we may forget that there are any number of things that we *can* give. We can give our time, our talents, our physical strength, our confidence and emotional positivity, our care, our knowledge, our experience and wisdom, our selves. Probably at every moment of the day we are being confronted by at least one opportunity to give. A chance conversation can be superficial or deeply rewarding; a job can be done adequately or superbly; a call for help—including the unspoken one—can be responded to or not.

Rich or poor, we each have the power to make the world a better, more magical, and fulfilling place. What an extraordinary power that is. When we exert it, everybody gains.

THE DANA ECONOMY

For Vajraketu and his colleagues, Windhorse Trading offers the chance to turn work into a form of giving

Christmas starts early at Windhorse Trading. During March and April we travel extensively abroad, looking for products to sell through our wholesale business and our growing chain of shops. By the middle of May we have spent much of our annual buying budget, which this year is £800,000 (US\$1.3 million). The goods ordered will arrive in our warehouse between July and October, and (we hope) will be sold out by Christmas. The business itself currently supports sixty people working out of eight different sites.

6 In our relations with other businesses, and the world in general, we operate much like any other business. We try to make a profit. We borrow money from banks. We sue people who don't pay their bills. Naturally we apply our practice of the ethical precepts to all aspects of our work—we don't lie, or cheat, or sell harmful or exploitative products, and we are as open and friendly as we can be in all our relationships—but many non-Buddhist businesses try to do the same. What primarily distinguishes us from more conventional businesses is our internal organization, and the fact that our motivation in making profit is so that we can give it away to support the work of the FWBO.

Our internal organization is governed by the principle of 'give what you can, take what you need' and implicit in this is the assumption that any surplus left after needs have been met is given away. I propose to look at these two aspects separately—firstly *dana* and secondly 'give what you can, take what you need'.

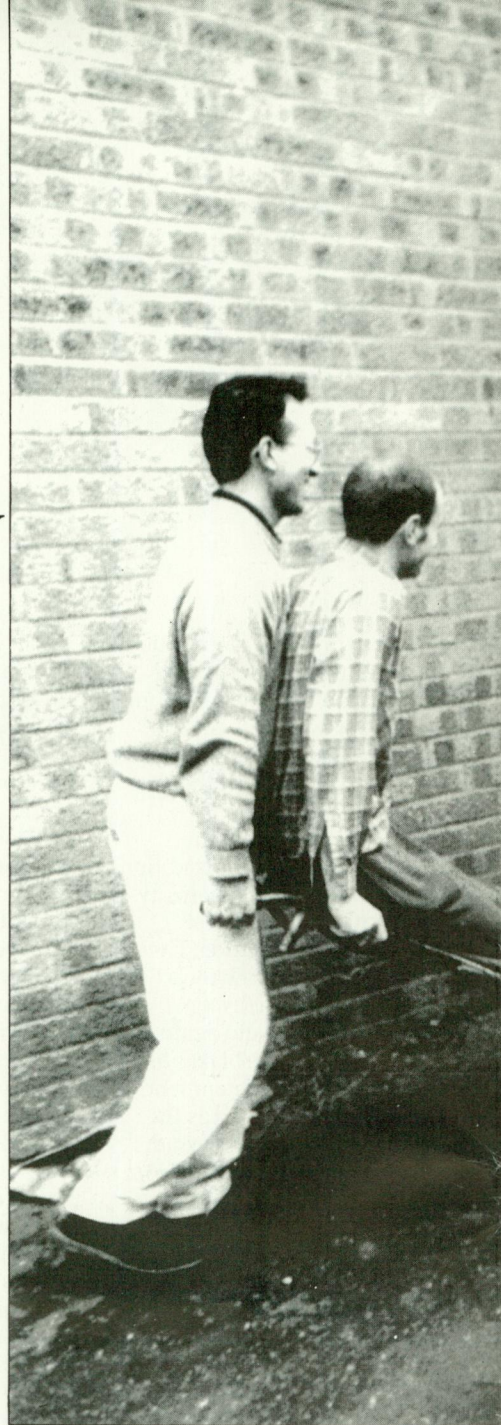
Dana is the easier of the two aspects to explain. Those who set up the business, and almost all of those who now work in it, are deeply committed to the Dharma and to the FWBO. Those who are not deeply committed are at least provisionally committed, and for them working in Windhorse Trading is part of their exploration of the FWBO and the Buddhist way of life. Given this prevailing level of commitment it is hardly surprising that we should want to generate as much money as possible to support the FWBO's work.

In Buddhist-sociological terms, one could say that the *dana* economy is in part an attempt to bridge the monk-lay divide that has so bedevilled the social history of Buddhism. The conventional approach is for the monks to lead a life of meditation, study, and other spiritual practices and for the lay people to support them to do so. In many countries in the East this has become so institutionalized that lay spiritual practice beyond merit-gaining *dana* is reduced to the symbolic, or is non-existent.

By emphasizing the primacy of going for Refuge to the Three Jewels (rather than life-style) the FWBO is trying to break down the monk-lay split, and our Right-Livelihood businesses are applying that spirit to our economic arrangements. There are approximately twenty Order members working full-time in Windhorse Trading. Much of the *dana* that we give goes towards supporting other Order members to spread the Dharma in various ways, through urban Buddhist centres, retreat centres, through writing and publishing. We do not measure the spiritual commitment of the individual (in so far as it can, anyway, be measured) by what he or she is doing. Those supported to meditate or to teach the Dharma full-time are not regarded as more committed than those who work in order to support them, or vice versa. We share the common vision of spreading the Dharma in the world and our particular role in bringing about that vision is merely a question of the division of labour—each does what seems most appropriate.

In fact, though we at Windhorse Trading give quite a lot of money to different individuals and areas of the FWBO, it hardly seems like giving, since those we give to are not obviously separate from us—we share a common vision, and the work that they do is as much on our behalf as the work we do for them.

Secondly, there is the principle of 'give what you can, take what you need'. Easy to grasp, hard to practise. Everyone who works in the business expects to give of their time and efforts up to the limits of their abilities (not that these limits are



Fueling the *dana* economy

thought of as being fixed), and to receive in return everything they need to live a healthy spiritual life. In its most ideal form—and some areas of the FWBO have operated like this—it means a 'common purse'. No personal money or possessions whatsoever, you just take what you need. More for administrative reasons than ideological ones, we do not operate quite like this at Windhorse Trading. Everyone gets their living expenses met, all retreats paid for, a sum of pocket money (the same for everyone) and any special needs are met on top of this on a regular or *ad hoc* basis (for example, those with families get the extra they need to meet their commitments; the business would pay if someone lost his or her contact lenses). All of these arrangements are quite separate from the role one fulfils in the business; financial support is not linked to levels of responsibility or ability.

An obvious question is: how are needs assessed? Well, it isn't easy. The system works best when, as in the men's team running the office and warehouse in



Cambridge, everything is done communally. We live together, work together, and the commitment to the collectivist ideal is high. The business meets the running expenses of the communities we live in, and occasional *ad hoc* needs are usually met automatically by the individual going to the treasurer for money. For larger sums, or when a stated need is not immediately recognized by others as a need, wider discussions are held.

Recently we have expanded by co-operating with other FWBO centres in the opening of shops. This has meant we are now supporting many people who do not live communally, either out of choice or because the communal option is not yet available to them. We are still working out the implications of 'give what you can, take what you need' in this context, trying to find the ideal balance between leaving it up to the individual to assess his or her own needs, and the collectivist approach which argues for each individual's needs being open to

comment by those he or she works with.

Problems really only arise when a less committed person assesses his or her needs as being well beyond the conventional norm. Donald Trump could probably argue that he needs a more lavish life-style because he is used to one, but the rest of us would not be happy at supporting him in it, even if he was conventionally worth it. We have occasionally had to part company with people from the business because we could not agree on what were needs and what were 'wants', even when it was quite clear that in pure business terms they were worth what they were asking for.

A related problem occasionally arises where individuals show a markedly stronger grasp of the 'take what you need' part of the formula, with a less developed commitment to the 'give what you can' part of it—in this situation the business can take on the role of the State as the Great Provider which the individual has a 'right' to demand from.

With both needs and commitment hard to assess, there is plenty of scope for rationalization.

The reasons we advocate Right Livelihood businesses as a central aspect of our approach to the Buddhist way of life go well beyond the issue of *dana*, even if *dana* was the original starting point. One does not have to work in an FWBO Right Livelihood business to practise 'give what you can, take what you need', it is a principle that really should underpin every Buddhist's life. For us, work is a dynamic spiritual practice, and co-operation and collective responsibility are accepted within the FWBO as self-transcending virtues. It is not within my current brief to talk about these other aspects, though they give those of us engaged in Right Livelihood as much pleasure and meaning as the opportunity to support the Dharma financially. Nevertheless, the Dharma has given us all so much, and we are grateful for the opportunity to give something in return.



AN INCOMPARABLE FIELD OF MERIT FOR THE WORLD

'When we give to the Sangha then we begin to be part of it.' Subhuti throws down a challenge...

Feeding the monks is, in some 'traditionally Buddhist' countries, many lay people's main religious act. To give *dana* to the Sangha, as such feedings are called, is a highly meritorious act which will gain for the giver much benefit in their present life and will help to ensure a favourable rebirth.

As we will see later, this traditional belief contains a solid core of truth, but over-literal adherence to it has contributed to the stultification of real spiritual life which is so common in many of the

traditional strongholds of Buddhism. Lay people can easily feel that they need make no further moral or spiritual effort since they are gaining merit by feeding the monks. The monks themselves, all too often, are simply conforming outwardly to the lay people's expectations of what a monk is in order to get fed, compromising any ideals they may have for the sake of a full begging-bowl. The Buddha's noble quest for an authentic life is completely submerged in a comfortable symbiosis.

In the West, by contrast,

many people, Buddhists included, are rather wary of giving to religious groups. Apart from a robust Protestant feeling that a man should make his own money and not depend on others, what holds us back, perhaps, is our awareness that so many religious groups seem to exploit their members for the personal gain of their leaders. Again and again we see it, whether in Rajneesh's ninety-odd Rolls Royces or the extraordinary fortunes made by American Televangelists.

But because it is sometimes

done does not mean that it is always done. Whilst it is only responsible to ensure that whatever we give is used efficiently and for the purpose intended, we must remember that money is needed if a spiritual movement is to fulfil its objectives. Our own contact with the Dharma and growth in it has usually come about because others have generously given money and time to establish the facilities from which we now benefit. This very copy of *Golden Drum* is subsidized so that you do not have to pay the full cost of



price in gold—and it is a very high one.

Where is this wealth going to come from? It can only come from us, who do care about the Dharma and want to see it spread. Some income is gained from charges for classes or retreats—usually enough only to cover the barest of running costs. Some funds do come from business enterprises started for the purpose by members of the Order. Hopefully, many more will join them and the businesses themselves will become yet more successful.

But the great majority of those who attend FWBO centres, read *Golden Drum*, or are otherwise sympathetic to the Movement, work in 'ordinary' jobs, earning 'ordinary' wages. Many do already give, sometimes substantial sums, but no doubt most could give more and could give more regularly. I believe that the time has come for us to consider tithing our incomes. If every Order member, mitra, and regular Friend, whether working for an FWBO Right Livelihood business or not, gave between five and ten per cent at least of their annual income to whatever aspect of the Movement most appealed to them, then we might have the kind of resources we need in order to carry out our work.

To be provocative, I wonder whether employment which does not include us giving such a sum towards the work of the Sangha can really be considered Right Livelihood. We may not be harming anyone through our work; it may not be deleterious to our own mental welfare; it may even be of some benefit to society—but, assuming we are earning a reasonable wage, if there is not a substantial element of giving to the work of the Sangha, are we not just building up resources for our own little lives just like most people in our consumption-culture? I think that here are grounds for self-examination across the board in our Movement.

Whilst I would like to put forward this suggestion very

strongly, I would not like it to induce in anyone feelings of guilt which lead them to give in order to salve their consciences or to gain approval. Giving of that kind usually does harm to the giver and often results in difficulties for the receiver too! I would like us to make a deep and considered appraisal of the reasons for giving to the Sangha, to assess our own resources carefully, and then to give whatever we can in a free and happy spirit. That is the only kind of giving which can really help the Sangha to grow and which is of real spiritual benefit to the giver.

So, what are the reasons for giving to the Sangha? Why is the Sangha an incomparable field of merit for the world? First of all, we must be clear what we mean by Sangha. Anyone who knows anything about the FWBO will be aware that, for us, Sangha does *not* refer only to those leading a monastic life, as it so commonly does in the Buddhist East—although such people are definitely not necessarily excluded. In its broadest sense Sangha includes all those who are, to some extent, going for Refuge to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—who are to some degree committed to the Buddhist Path. At the heart of the wider Sangha is a body of men and women whose commitment has reached a point where it is recognized as being effective under most circumstances. In the context of the FWBO, these latter make up the Western Buddhist Order.

When one gives to members of the Sangha one is giving to them as the embodiment of the principle of going for Refuge to the Three Jewels. One is giving in order to help them continue to go for Refuge, and to go for Refuge more deeply. One will give whatever one can and whatever seems necessary. Especially, giving to the Sangha means giving to its members the resources they need in order to spread the Dharma and to provide facilities for its practice.

Why we give is by now, I hope, obvious. We give because it is needed. We give because of what the Dharma represents as the means to fulfilment for all humanity. We give because we recognize the value of going for Refuge to the Three Jewels and want to support it. If we do not support the work of the Sangha it may not survive for our own and other's benefit.

But the matter goes further than that. The Sangha is a field of merit: by 'planting' our gift in it we reap abundant benefit for ourselves. By giving to the Sangha we give expression to our appreciation of its true value. In expressing our appreciation, we strengthen it. And when we experience strongly the value of the Sangha, we open ourselves up to it more and more wholeheartedly. The 'merit' that comes from giving to the Sangha is our own increased responsiveness to it and the values it upholds and the happiness and satisfaction which flows from dedication to it.

If, on the other hand, we do not give expression to whatever feelings for the Sangha we do have—and give expression in the act of giving—then those feelings will wither and die and we will derive little or no benefit from our contact with its members.

So far I have been talking as if the Sangha was a body separate from ourselves to which we give. But it is not really like that. When we give to the Sangha then we begin to be part of it, because we are thereby aligning ourselves with it. Giving to the Sangha becomes giving *within* the Sangha. Within the Sangha everyone appreciates the value of the Three Jewels and, ideally, everyone gives to everyone else who is, to any extent, embodying them. The Sangha is a joyous field of giving where the economics of exchange are gradually transformed into the economics of generosity.

There is so much more we can all do to bring about that new economy of *dana*. It is so easy—all we have to do is give!

its production. We must not let a habitual suspicion stand in the way of our generosity.

There is little doubt that if a really dynamic and effective modern Buddhism is to become established as a widespread force for change in the world, a very great deal more money is going to be needed. Books must be published—and, in many countries, distributed free or at subsidized prices; centres must be established—usually paying today's inflated property costs; Dharma teachers must be trained and supported—there is so much to do which demands a great deal of money. If the Dharma is to be communicated to everyone who might respond then we are going to have to pay the

AN EVERYDAY GENEROSITY

Danavira tells the story of an act of generosity that nearly wasn't

When I think of everyday generosity, I think of the city streets. I see, for example, Tottenham Court Road at Oxford Street, by Centre Point, and the milling crowds pressing through each other and the world. I visualize the many figures walking or waiting, full of heartbeats, each bearing its own history and the wide future. I have always lived in cities myself so it's no surprise that I see these images when I think of everyday generosity, and not village life or the cycle of the earth and sky. It's in the city lights, and on the city pavements, that I see implied a generosity as common as footsteps, the work of the everyday, for the implication of these images is people.

In this connection I remember a small act of a kind of generosity from my own life. Years ago I was walking home along Sauciehall Street in Glasgow. It was one of those nights that pass by nameless. Low cloud was scraping overhead lit by neon. Raindrops and wind blustered off the buildings. It was that dead time that the cinemas go in and before the pubs come out, when most of us are tucked up in our lives but the dispossessed wander as on a high tide of loneliness. He had passed me before I knew, what we call a 'down and out'. Hearing his shuffle, I turned and saw his dim form move from shadow to shadow. I thought 'I should give money to this man. That would be Buddhist.' So I walked after him.

Walking, I thought that this was not spontaneous. That moment had gone with the stranger himself and like him had been unseen. I started feeling artificial then, uncomfortable with what I was doing. I grew hesitant. I became frustrated with myself. Why couldn't I just give? Or not? Why couldn't I turn around and saunter off back into my own world, everybody else did! These were my thoughts.

He had heard me coming, plodding after him. He stopped. I walked up to him, looking at him, watching myself. He was worried. He was making himself still, moment by moment freezing himself into a blur before me. I took a pound note out of my pocket and put it into his hands. He never looked at me. Our skins lightly touched. He felt the money and became startled. I stepped back. He thanked me in a voice more like an echo and he moved on without looking back. I did the same.

When Nagabodhi called to asked me if I wanted to write something on 'everyday generosity', the man and the situation I have outlined above came immediately to mind. I wrote it out and afterwards wondered why it should have occurred to me. After a while I realized that some of the ingredients of the situation might be quite common around moments when we

have the choice to give and that it would be useful to mention them.

It is interesting that the man had gone past me before I knew about him. It was a near empty street, so why did I not see him? I was probably lost in my own thoughts. Probably I was worrying about myself, or walking a tightrope between competing fantasies, or lost in what used to be called a slough of despond. Whatever was happening to me, my experience was the not uncommon one of walking down a road taking nothing consciously in. In general the problem here is a lack of awareness. Specifically we can often live our lives with only a rudimentary awareness of the external world, preferring to inhabit an inner one, a world of familiars, in a dance of habits. This is like preferring electric light to the sun.

When I think of being habitual I think of a lack of fluidity with ourselves. Our minds get stuck in a repetition of patterns and our lives end up like those old roads that wear themselves into the earth with use. Being habitual limits us. I am assuming that we all want to feel ourselves vibrant and alive. I also assume that to do this we need to be as fully aware, as self-conscious, as we can. Being self-conscious and being habitual are opposing poles. The latter impoverishes us, with the former we mature.

A common impoverishment that arises from living habitually is the development of self-centredness. We can end up believing more and more that the world should turn about our cares, our worries, and our desires. Finally we don't see other people's suffering as it is. They can become drapes for our life or rags. Lost in myself, in Sauciehall Street, I did not see this other person and his manifest suffering as he walked towards me. At that moment he was no more to me than the black wall of the department store behind him. But his footsteps reminded me that he was not made of stone, he was human and there was work for my heart.

Another barrier to everyday generosity which arises out of living habitually can be seen in my deciding to give something to the man because 'that would be Buddhist'. I was by now at least aware that someone else was there and that this was an opportunity to give. However I was giving because that is what *Buddhists* are expected to do. My response was not wholly a response to the man. In part it remained a response to myself. I wanted to be a Buddhist. This is what *Buddhists* did. I would do it. I have some sympathy for myself here for I was young and new to the Dharma, but I cannot disguise the fact that my response was superficial.

Being superficial in this context means

that I did not have to *engage* with the man. We did not actually need to communicate. I could keep him at arm's length and yet have the emotional option of feeling pious. Nevertheless, what was really going on in me soon surfaced: I became uncomfortable, artificial, grew hesitant, and then became frustrated with myself. I felt divided about bothering or not. And at the core of it all was my lack of wholeheartedness. Ironically, the right way for a Buddhist to give in the situation would have been the opposite. A Buddhist aims to engage, aims to communicate, and aims to be wholehearted. By these means one opposes habitual living and fosters awareness.

So there I was, in the street, hesitant in pursuit of a stranger, feeling artificial, and growing frustrated as I became confused. It is no surprise that I began to doubt what I was up to. I was an undecided heart. Subsisting on vagueness, unwilling to think clearly as I walked, I feared the loss of the crowd and the crowded apathy of the world. The stranger stood out though, if only in a wrap of misery.

Unsurprisingly, as I approached he must have wondered what was coming. A policeman? A misguided mugger? Or was I, perhaps, a tract-carrying 'do-gooder' offering to kneel with him in a shop doorway under the shelter of prayer? Whatever! I dare say he experienced considerable relief when it was only me with a pound note in my hand. Vagueness and being undecided are barriers to giving. They leave us unwilling to act because we are not wholehearted. The moment of everyday generosity drowns then in our habits, the future is the same as the past.

What can we do about these barriers to everyday generosity. The first step is probably to follow Dogen's advice and *want to*. The short answer on how to is to become more aware, and this is why Buddhists practise meditation. Here I would recommend the *metta bhavana*, or 'development of universal loving kindness', as it helps, in the words of the Buddha, to bring about the heart's release. Being creative, wholehearted, and thinking clearly all help to overcome our difficulties in giving. Gradually we make progress, patient with ourselves, going step by step, freeing our fettered heart into generosity.

The flesh of the Buddha held up a flower. Who would have thought we carried such a possibility in our own lives—this chance to practise generosity on the streets of the everyday, and to feel within ourselves the heartbeat of the heart's release?



ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO GIVE

In these days of 'compassion fatigue', do people still want to give? Mahamati thinks that they do

12 **B**y all accounts the work of our Movement in India has been very successful, commanding respect from many people both within and beyond the Buddhist world. TBMSG's Buddhist activities and Bahujaan Hitay's social activities are going a long way to alleviate some of the suffering and distress accompanying the poverty and social injustice caused in no small part by an oppressive caste system which, although not legally extant, still very much influences Indian social life. In reality it is only a small beginning, but an impressive start has been made.

In order to be able to support this work more than 150 Order members, mitras, and Friends have knocked on hundreds of thousands of doors over the last eleven years in ten English cities in search of finance for Aid for India and the Karuna Trust. In this way they have found between them over 7,000 regular supporters, who so far have contributed nearly £3,000,000 to the charity. As a charity we can only exist because there are many people who feel strongly enough about what is happening in India to want to give to an organization which is making

progress in dealing with the vast problems which face her as a nation. Furthermore, we can only exist because of the Karuna fundraiser who is committed to finding these people. The Karuna fundraiser commits himself or herself to encouraging others to give.

There are many people who are very aware of the problems which face India and other third world countries but simply feel overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the problem. They feel impotent and powerless to do anything, and the little money that they can give seems a mere drop of water compared to the seemingly limitless ocean of suffering which covers the world. The problem is exacerbated by the many different types of 'aid-agencies' who all regularly appeal for money. Spoilt for choice, and sometimes confused as to what is the best course of action to pursue, many people don't give at all, even though the urge is there. As a consequence, there are many more people who would like to give, who would feel very happy giving, if only they could feel that their gift was actually doing some good, actually having a real effect, rather than silently and anonymously disappearing into a bottomless pit of sorrow.

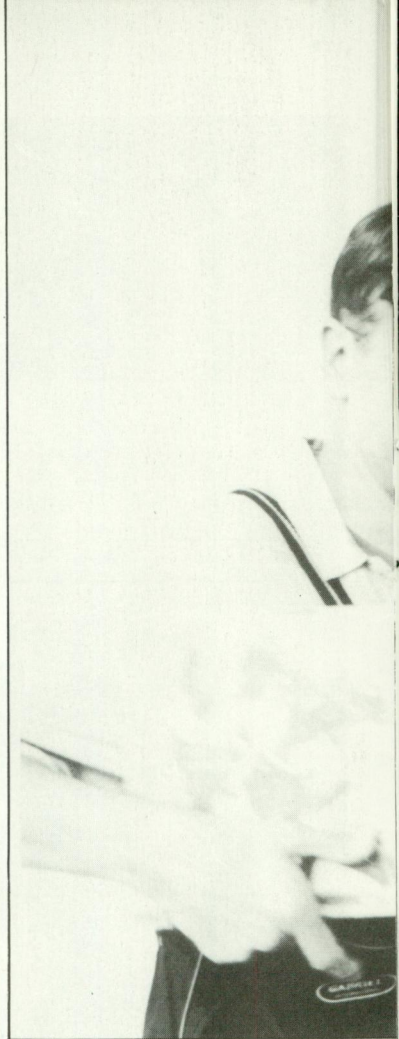
As part of a fundraising team, the Karuna fundraiser has to inspire the trust of any potential donor that the charity and its work is important enough that it is worth funding. The fundraiser needs to communicate their conviction that both the social and educational programmes, and the Buddhist values upon which they are founded, actually work in practice, for it is this communication of faith which is at the heart of successful fundraising. The ability to communicate this vision encourages people to give with confidence. And whenever a new supporter is found there is a deep sense of satisfaction both for the fundraiser and for the supporter. So often the new supporter will express heartfelt gratitude to the fundraiser for having visited their house, even whilst at the same time the fundraiser is expressing delight that they have decided to give their support.

All Karuna fundraisers receive a training over several days which includes talks, videos, discussion, and role-play. A recent popular introduction into the training has been 'voice workshops'. But in the end no gimmicks or techniques are used to create a successful fundraiser—success depends entirely on the quality

of one's communication, especially the practice of giving.

At first many fundraisers find that they lack confidence. Their approach to people may be rather apologetic: the unspoken message they communicate is, 'I am very sorry to trouble you'. When approached in this way, most people will form an immediate impression of the person coming to their door, that for whatever reason they have come, it can't be very important. Unfortunately it is very difficult to alter that initial impression. As a fundraiser you should feel certain that your mission is important, that what you are doing is worthwhile, and, in that way, your self-confidence will usually communicate itself to whoever you meet—they will take you seriously. Even if, for some reason, they feel that they cannot help, they will treat you with respect.

Another common difficulty at first is that fundraisers talk too much. This may be because they are eager to communicate as much as possible about the excellent work which the Karuna Trust is supporting. Another reason may be that they are anxious that if they pause for breath the person whom they are meeting will





take the opportunity to tell them that they are not interested. However, people are always more likely to give their support if you allow them plenty of opportunity to speak themselves. They may have particular questions, so that then you can find out what they want to know, not what you want to tell them. In any case, they will always appreciate that you are receptive to them, that you are not putting any pressure on them, and that you respect them to come to their own individual decision.

In the *metta bhavana* meditation practice we try to develop openness and friendliness towards all the many kinds of living beings. A Karuna appeal is a very good opportunity to overcome prejudices and reactions which can so easily arise in our minds. For example, you may knock on the door of a rather upper-class, matronly figure with a brusque manner who seems almost to shout at you as you stand bravely on her door-step. Your mind may immediately classify her as 'definitely not interested'. However, as you persevere with an attitude of openness and friendliness you discover, perhaps, that beneath the rather off-putting exterior

there is an extremely generous person. Many such examples could be given. In fact fundraisers regularly make friends with the people they meet, and sometimes when they least expect it.

In the mindfulness of breathing practice we try to develop single-minded attention to the object of concentration, leading to clarity of purpose and heightened awareness. Such single-minded attention is no less required of the successful fundraiser, leading to what some fundraisers have referred to as the '*dhyana* of fundraising'. In order to bring about such heightened awareness it is necessary to keep the mind firmly on the task at hand, which is to be open to each different person you are meeting, and to communicate to them the importance of the work in India for which you are fundraising. Hardly surprisingly, many distractions may arise in the mind, perhaps simply the thought that you would rather be doing something else (this thought arises of course when the work starts to seem too difficult)—but with single-minded purpose the reward of the *dhyana* of fundraising is something that leaves you

Potential donors, potential friends

elated and deeply fulfilled in your work.

Many people in the Movement do feel strongly enough about Karuna's work to consider giving themselves to an appeal, although some just have too many commitments to afford the time to give the nine weeks that an appeal takes. Many of those who do decide to do an appeal use it as a 'bridge' to doing something else. A very high percentage of those who have used the appeal in this way report back that it marked some sort of turning point for them, even that it was the most productive two months of their entire life.

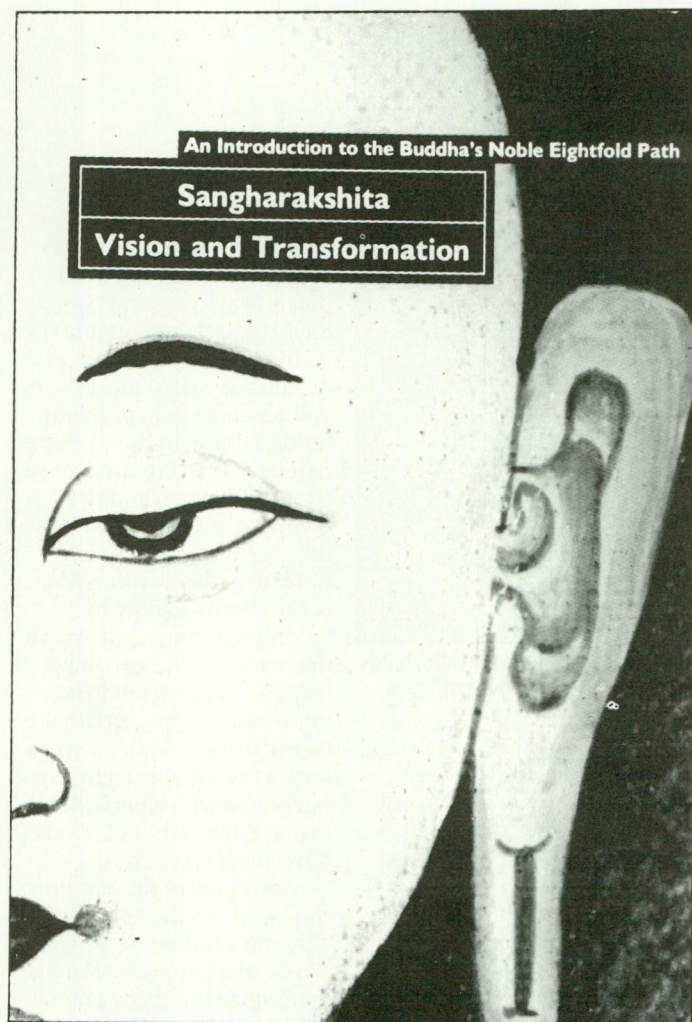
One of the greatest and most commonly appreciated aspects of the Karuna appeals is that through your own efforts you really can do so much to help others. On just one appeal, by reaching the average target, you would have raised over £30,000 which would come in over a period of seven years. In real terms, that means that twenty-five children would be supported in hostels, and given an education which they would never have otherwise had. Or that money could go to support ten kindergartens, giving pre-school education to over three hundred children

each year. And education is one of the surest and most potent ways to give a people their strength and dignity back.

In order for this work to continue we need more volunteers to help us in our fundraising activities. What is required of any fundraiser is a strong sense of wanting to give, and faith in the efficacy of the charity. It is not too difficult to develop confidence in the charity simply by becoming more familiar with the work that we are doing. Indeed, it is hard not to be impressed by the work that is taking place in India, there is such a remarkable feeling of happiness which pervades so many of the activities of our Movement there.

And some of this happiness can be felt on the appeal back at home. During the nine weeks of an appeal, a strong team spirit builds up among the appeal team members and many deep friendships are formed. For nine weeks the fundraisers meditate, study, eat, live, and work together in an intensely powerful situation. A very strong feeling of Sangha quickly develops. This is essential, for at times the work can be hard going. Often the appeal demands a heroic effort from people, and it nearly always requires a significant stepping up of spiritual practice. But at the end it has always been worth it. Everyone who completes an appeal is stronger, brighter, more self-confident, happier, and proud that they have achieved something worthwhile. They can feel satisfied that they have given of themselves, and by giving in that way they have encouraged others to give. Through the act of giving they have sown the seeds of happiness far and wide.

FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING



Vision and Transformation: An Introduction to the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path

by Sangharakshita
pp.169, paperback
price £5.95

Vision and Transformation is based on a series of eight lectures given by Sangharakshita during 1967, the year in which the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order was founded. This book seems to be the only one currently in print which specifically focuses on the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, one of the best known and most fundamental of all his teachings.

The exposition of the Noble Eightfold Path forms part of the Buddha's first discourse, found in the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* of the Pali Canon. The Eightfold Path

provides an extensive working out of the meaning of the Fourth Noble Truth—that of the Path, or Way, leading to the cessation of *dukkha* (suffering or unsatisfactoriness).

The book starts with a clear and thoughtful introduction from Chris Pauling, who helped edit the transcripts of the original lectures. His delight when he first heard the message that the lectures contained is well expressed: 'It was as though a very solid and obvious brick wall had been pointed out to me—a wall which had been blocking my path, and which I had been trying to walk through as though it was not there. Once seen, this wall was so large and self-evident I could hardly believe it had escaped my attention for so long,' (p.8).

The main text consists of

eight chapters covering the eight stages or (more literally) 'limbs' of the Path. Sangharakshita shows these eight limbs as in turn forming two Paths: the Path of Vision (Chapter 1) and the Path of Transformation (Chapters 2–8). Describing the significance of these two Paths, the author writes, 'The aim of this great Buddhist teaching of the Path of Vision and the Path of Transformation is to enable us to bring the whole of our life up to the level of its highest moments. This is what it means to evolve spiritually. This is what it means to follow the Noble Eightfold Path. It means to achieve Perfect Vision by one means or another, and then transform our whole being in accordance with that vision.' (p.21).

The first lecture deals with the topic of *samma-ditthi*, or Right—or Perfect—Vision (the Pali word *samma* comprises both meanings, though Sangharakshita prefers the implications of the word 'perfect'). This is perhaps the most difficult chapter for the reader new to Buddhism. It covers complex concepts such as *shunyata* (difficult even for the experienced Buddhist!) which might benefit from a more extensive treatment. Perfect Vision, as Sangharakshita clearly points out, is not just a matter of intellectual understanding: 'It consists in an actual insight into the true or ultimate nature of existence itself, and it is of the character of a spiritual experience ... much more real ... more personal, more true, than any intellectual understanding.' (p.60).

The subsequent chapters are more easily accessible. They are concerned with the

Path of Transformation, one chapter dealing with each of the limbs in turn: Perfect Emotion, Speech, Action, Livelihood, Effort, Awareness, and *Samadhi* (for which Sangharakshita suggests there is no adequate English translation).

In a short review it is difficult to do justice to the material contained in this book, covering as it does so many important topics. For example, in Chapter 3 we learn that Perfect Speech is not just truthful, but also affectionate, loving, helpful, and conducive to concord and harmony. In Chapter 7 we are treated to a very thoroughgoing description of Perfect Mindfulness in terms of four levels of awareness: of things, oneself, other people, and Reality.

In many ways *Vision and Transformation* can be seen as a manual of spiritual practice, with each chapter highlighting important areas of personal practice and serving as a timely reminder of where our efforts can be best directed. The book provides a tantalizing introduction to the many-faceted jewel which is the Buddha's teaching and is certain to encourage many people new to Buddhism to go on to further study. Sadly, for those in whom such interest is created, the book gives little guidance to further reading, a limitation which one hopes will be rectified in a later edition. The book may also act as a counter to the tendency among Western Buddhists to get caught up in the esoteric aspects of Buddhism before getting a proper grounding in the basic tenets of the Buddha's teaching.

Satyapala

THE GREATLY PRECIOUS GURU



Suvajra The Wheel and the Diamond
The Life of Dhardo Tulku

The Wheel and the Diamond: The Life of Dhardo Tulku

by Dharmachari Suvajra
Published by Windhorse
pp.159, paperback
Price £5.95

Dhardo Rinpoche, friend and teacher of Sangharakshita, exemplifies what we have to learn from the Tibetan Buddhist tradition—just as that tradition is the context in which the pattern of his life makes sense. Here was an exceptional individual who realized the importance of spiritual friendship (as opposed to the more formal guru-disciple relationship), in communicating the Dharma.

Suvajra recounts how, at the age of three, he was recognized as the 'tulku', or incarnation, of the previous Dhardo Rinpoche, abbot of

Drepung monastery and an important high lama. The monastic training which he underwent from this age was remarkable for its strictness; also remarkable was the overwhelming devotion shown to him by the Tibetan people. The result, as Suvajra says, 'was an outstanding individual who was both strong and outspoken, and keenly aware of his responsibilities to other people.'

The book brings to life Rinpoche's exacting monastic education, the circumstances which led him to leave Tibet, and tells how, two years after his appointment as abbot of the Tibetan monastery at Bodhi Gaya, the Chinese invasion of Tibet permanently cut him off from his homeland, threatening the whole of Tibetan culture with

extinction. The preservation of this important tradition became Rinpoche's life work.

Later, Rinpoche was invited to become abbot of Ghoom monastery near Kalimpong, (made famous in Lama Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds*). It was here in Kalimpong in 1953 that he met and befriended Sangharakshita, who was then a young *bhikshu*. Rinpoche was delighted by the ease with which Sangharakshita understood profound aspects of Buddhism, and later became his preceptor, conducting his Bodhisattva ordination. He encouraged Sangharakshita to return to the West to spread the Dharma. In later years, after Sangharakshita had founded the FWBO/TBMSG, Dhardo Rinpoche made no distinction between Sangharakshita's disciples and his own.

The trickle of refugees arriving in Kalimpong from Tibet gradually turned into a flood. In 1954 Rinpoche founded a school—the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Cultural Institute—to provide an education in Tibetan subjects for Tibetan refugee children, some of whom were orphans. Rinpoche once commented that only two things interested him: keeping alive Tibetan culture and rendering assistance to the poor. As Suvajra makes clear, the school attempted to do both.

The school faced a long struggle for finances (which came to an end in 1986 with funding from the Karuna Trust) but Rinpoche was supported by his love for the children. Despite running the school and his many other involvements, his door was always open to them. When I

visited the school in 1988 I was impressed by the cheerfulness of the children, and struck by Rinpoche's kindness and attentiveness towards them. Painted high up on the outside of a classroom I saw the motto which he gave to the school, a motto which he clearly embodied in his own life: 'Cherish the Doctrine. Live united. Radiate Love.'

Dhardo Rinpoche died shortly after his return from a pilgrimage to the Buddhist holy places of Nepal in 1990. Suvajra was fortunately able to attend his cremation, and records these events movingly in the book.

I read this biography prepared to find flaws. However I found no serious ones, despite the speed with which the book was written and published. Instead I would like to rejoice in its merits: in the wealth of fact and anecdote about Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, bringing far-off events and places into sharp relief, and in Suvajra's feeling for Rinpoche's practices (Suvajra received initiation and teachings from Rinpoche). The photographs of Rinpoche at different ages also help greatly in bringing the narrative to life.

Suvajra has given us a readable and effective account of a remarkable man—one who stepped out of his role as an important high lama to give assistance to the poor and who provided access for his pupils to the rich cultural tradition in which he was so deeply immersed. I am sure that this biography will communicate the spirit of Dhardo Rinpoche to those who will never meet him, and that his memory will become a permanent part of the heritage of the FWBO.

Chris Warren

FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

Old Path White Clouds

by Thich Nhat Hanh
published by Parallax Press
pp. 599, paperback
Price £20.00

A historical novel is a fictional work based on actual events and actual people, and set in real-life history. The author, through the skilful blending of truth and fiction, evokes a strong sense of period, allowing the reader to travel back through time, and enter the flesh and blood world of the period. This is exactly what Thich Nhat Hanh has done with the story of the Buddha in *Old Path White Clouds*.

16 The book traces the life of the Buddha, partly through the eyes of a young buffalo boy, Svasti, and partly through the eyes of the Buddha himself. Through the passed on accounts of people such as the Buddha's son, Rahula, his closest companion, Ananda, and an elderly nun, Mahapajapati, who was of course the Buddha's foster-mother, the book tells the story of the Buddha's life—though not always chronologically. However, there is a smooth continuity to the story, so it is easy to follow. This is enhanced by Thich Nhat Hanh's inimitable gift of story telling, which is suitable for both children and adults. In its style, the novel is more of a children's book which can be read, appreciated, and enjoyed by adults.

Although the book could be understood and enjoyed by a young person, it nevertheless manages to contain much of the Buddha's essential teaching. In chapters entitled 'The Morning Star Has Risen', 'All Dharmas Are on Fire', 'Dependent Co-arising', 'Love is Understanding', 'The Round of Birth and Death', and 'Neither Full nor Empty', as well as in many others, Nhat

Hanh succinctly expounds the Buddhadharma in his characteristically fresh and joyful manner. In fact, it seems that most, if not all, of Thich Nhat Hanh's teaching is contained within this one book, at least in germinal form, so if you were thinking of buying any of his books, I would wholeheartedly recommend this as a general introduction to his work.

It is interesting to note that the author has managed to avoid mentioning the many miracles and magical events which traditionally surround the Buddha's life. The sources for the story almost all lie in so-called 'Hinayana' texts: the Pali *Nikayas* and the Chinese *Agamas*. The book contains an extensive and useful bibliography of all the scriptural sources used in the story. Likewise, in the actual tale, many of the Buddha's discourses are recounted, detailing when, where, and to whom the discourse was directed. In this way *Old Path White Clouds* serves as an education in the Buddha's personal life. For example, it tells us who the Buddha's close friends were, of his friendship with King Bimbisara and King Pasenadi, as well as of the many people from all walks of life whom he befriended as he walked across India spreading his teaching. The novel does not shy away from the difficulties that the Buddha faced in his life, especially with regard to the Sangha; in the author's own words, 'If the Buddha appears in this book as a man close to us, it is partly due to recounting such difficulties.'

There are many other things which I enjoyed about the book, but one which stood out for me strongly was the emphasis on the social and political ramifications of the Buddha's life and work. I found the themes of tolerance and acceptance brought out

very well, especially at the beginning of the book, when the Buddha refused to accept the traditional caste system and insisted on all humans being treated as humans.

There is a beautiful passage in which Prince Siddhartha, soon to become the Buddha, offers drinking water to the 'Untouchable' buffalo boy Svasti before drinking it himself and then passing the vessel on to a Brahmin—which would of course be anathema to anyone who believed in the sanctity of the caste system. Thus, in a small way, a symbolic blow for freedom is struck, not just against the cruel and unjust Indian caste system, but against any regime which limits and oppresses human freedom. While reading this passage I could not but be aware of its pertinence to what is going on in India at the moment, with the Buddhist revival helping to free hundreds of thousands of ex-Untouchables from the inhuman cage of the caste system.

I liked this book very much, but I am not entirely without criticism. Some readers might find the overall tone of the book rather sentimental and cloying. There is no distinction made between the Buddha's actual teaching and Thich Nhat Hanh's personal interpretation of what the Buddha taught, or fictional context-building, which could be misleading for those not already familiar with the original material. But it is fiction after all, so that can perhaps be forgiven. Apart from these slight flaws, which may be enough to upset some serious-minded readers, I found the book informative, delightful, and inspirational. As for the publisher's bold claim that it 'is destined to become a classic of religious literature', though, we shall have to wait and see.

Amritavajra

Also received

Transformation and Healing

Thich Nhat Hanh
Parallax

Breathe! You Are Alive

Thich Nhat Hanh
Parallax

Our Appointment with Life

Thich Nhat Hanh
Parallax

The Good Retreat Guide

Stafford Whiteaker
Rider

Space in Mind

ed. John Crook and David Fontana
Element

The Formative Mind

John Davidson
Element

Catching a Feather on a Fan

John Crook
Element

Letters from a Wild State

James Cowan
Element

The Tao of Peace

Diana Dreher
Mandala

Discover Palmistry

Nathaniel Altman
Aquarian

Discover Runes

Tony Willis
Aquarian

Discover Graphology

Margaret Gullan-Whur
Aquarian

The Ceremonial Circle

Sedonia Cahill and Joshua Halpern
Mandala

Super Tarot

Sasha Fenton
Aquarian



clear vision

Clear Vision is the film and video wing of

Newsreel 1

the FWBO. A growing catalogue of over 30
Sangharakshita in Conversation — The Special Edition
titles contains documentaries, lectures and

interviews. The video programme is a unique form of communication. To watch

The Cave

Sangharakshita present a talk is a far richer experience than to just hear or read it. To see the Dhamma at work in India and elsewhere leads to a greater, informed
The Death Ritual of Dhardo Rimpoche
appreciation.

The first bi-annual programme featuring news from around the world including the latest European ordinations and a feature on FWBO Germany. Available 1st September. £29.99 (45 mins).

Sangharakshita reads his own evocative and moving short story set in northern India at the time of the Buddha. £29.99 (65 mins).

'What is Buddhism'
with Padmasuri
'The Buddha'
with Suvajra
'Buddhist Meditation'
with Ratnaguna
'Buddhist Morality'
with Subhuti
'Buddhism in the Modern World'
with Dhammaloka
'The FWBO'
with Nagabodhi

At Clear Vision's invitation, Sangharakshita recently joined six senior Order Members to film a series of six interviews. The acclaimed result is a set of six invaluable programmes, appropriate for all people from newcomers to ordained Buddhists. Each programme is up to 60 minutes long and offers a continual source of inspiration as Sangharakshita, with uncompromising clarity, presents a definitive introduction and exploration of Buddhism and the FWBO. £29.99 per title or £120 per set.



The prices listed are for groups and organisations. We now offer home-use only copies at £9.99.

The Message of Dhardo Rimpoche

At only £9.99 Clear Vision videos make excellent gifts. The latest releases are listed on this page and the complete catalogue is available on request. Prices do not include

The Five Pillars of the FWBO

postage. All titles are colour VHS (PAL) and can be ordered from Clear Vision, 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton, Manchester M21 1LD. Telephone 061-881 0438.

The fascinating, colourful and moving record of the ceremonies surrounding Rimpoche's funeral. Preceded by the performance of a puja by Rimpoche. £29.99 (42mins).

A new talk by Sangharakshita exploring the full meaning of the motto chosen by Rimpoche for his school; "Cherish the Doctrine, Live United, Radiate Love". £29.99 (45 mins).

A thought-provoking talk in which Sangharakshita explains how we as individuals, and as the FWBO, need to 'know ourselves' and illumines five great pillars with which we can achieve this. £29.99 (70 mins).

Bahujan Hitay

A documentary highlighting the work of The Karuna Trust in India, especially the children's hostels. Narrated by Tom Wilkinson. £18.00 (25 mins).

DUTIES TO THE UNBORN

A court case has recently taken place in Britain in which a girl, legally a minor, had her 'right' to have an abortion upheld, despite the girl's mother wanting her grandchild to be born—and being willing to look after it. There is something distasteful, not to say unethical, about such a decision.

Abortion is a curious issue in the Western world, for it is very often the one form of killing that is legally sanctioned. Indeed it is rarely even considered as killing; circumlocutions, such as 'termination of pregnancy' and of course the word 'abortion' itself, are used instead.

Accompanying these circumlocutions is a marked tendency to use language that dehumanizes the developing child in the womb. Strangely, too, those who take a stand against abortion are often regarded as the ones holding to the unethical position, and arouse strong feelings of indignation.

The traditional Buddhist position is quite unambiguous: abortion is clearly a form of killing and therefore in opposition to the spirit and letter of the first precept.

In the West the unethical nature of abortion has perhaps been lost from view because the major contributors to the debate have too often confused things by bringing in other issues which are actually irrelevant. Thus Roman Catholics—though strongly against abortion—argue from a position that is both narrow with regard to sexuality and absurd in their rejection of all forms of contraception; such a position undermines more general agreement with their position on abortion *per se*. On the other hand feminists, concerned to obtain for each woman the right to determine what happens to her own body, seriously play down the fact that abortion is a form of killing. Indeed feminist literature on the subject can contain repellingly dehumanizing language, and is one-sided in its talk of rights. Why do feminists not speak of the rights of the unborn child? Such a position betrays a double standard, especially when feminists are not slow to condemn male violence.

The frequent use of the term 'rights' in the context of the abortion issue begs a question. Implicit in the use of this term is usually an assumption that the identification of rights is an adequate basis for ethical and legal judgements: very rarely is there any discussion of the corresponding duties.

Rights and duties are complementary poles of an underlying unity. One person's right to walk the streets unmolested corresponds to other people's duty not to molest them. Without a clear recognition of duties the language of rights can be a cover for selfishness, masking a lack of concern for others, as the talk of rights in abortion demonstrates. Duty, of course, as a discussion point, has gone out of fashion. It is time it was revived. If no one has any duties, how can anyone really have any rights?



Croatian National Guardsmen go into action

FREEDOM OR FOOLISHNESS?

At the time of writing yet another country seems to be heading towards bloodshed, as Yugoslavia breaks up in what appears to be a civil war between its different regions. The weakening of totalitarian communist rule, in Yugoslavia and elsewhere, has released the spectre of ethnically based nationalism, so that members of ethnic groups assert their group's rights at the expense of the stability of the wider

state to which they belong. Whilst their feelings are understandable, especially given the force or brutality with which communist rulers have kept that state together, do their rights outweigh their duties towards members of other ethnic groups to work together to overcome the legacy of the past? Are they engaging in heroic attempts at self-determination or in criminally stupid acts of self-interest?

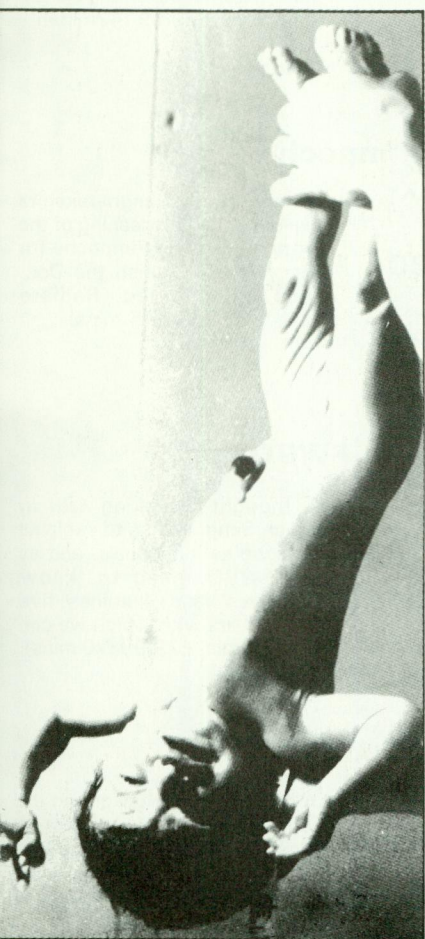
LAW, TRUTH, AND RESPONSIBILITY

Also in Britain, the Court of Appeal has finally upheld the appeal of the Maguire family, falsely convicted of being involved in IRA bombings on the basis of scientific evidence discredited last year by an inquiry undertaken by Sir John May. This of course follows the release of other people of Irish descent also falsely convicted of involvement in IRA bombing campaigns.

These cases, along with others, have brought about a widespread distrust of the British judiciary and police. But it is perhaps instructive to consider the wider processes involved, which are far from being confined to Britain.

First there is what could be called 'group-think', demonstrated by the IRA in killing innocent people because they are members of a

group called 'the British', fallaciously held to be collectively responsible for bad treatment of another group called 'the Irish'. Group-think is again demonstrated in the behaviour of some policeman and judges in imprisoning innocent people who are members of 'the Irish'. Then the readiness of some senior judges to place responsibility for a crime onto innocent people is paralleled by a curious reluctance to accept responsibility for their own mistakes, so that they 'protect' the legal system at the expense of those innocent people, whilst the guilty go free. The only justification for the legal system, to protect the innocent and bring the guilty to justice, is thus quietly but effectively undermined. Justice in Britain would seem to be not only blind but senile.



The SCHOOL OF *Oriental* M A S S A G E

Diploma in

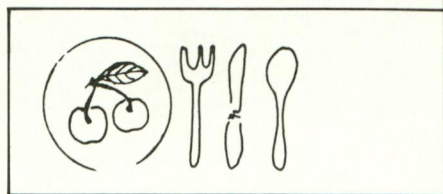
TRADITIONAL THAI MASSAGE

at St Ann's Hospital, London
Starting November 1991

For full detailed brochure contact:
The School of Oriental Massage
8 Paston Place, Brighton, BN2 1HA
Telephone: (0273) 693622

C H E R R Y O R C H A R D

v e g e t a r i a n



r e s t a u r a n t

'One of the best'
traditional vegetarian
restaurants in London.
Cosy but elegant ...
prices are very reasonable"

Company

Open Tues - Fri. 12-3, 6.30-10.30
Sat 12-10.30. Closed Sun & Mon.
4 minutes from Bethnal Green tube

241 GLOBE RD. E2. 081 980 6678.

New from Windhorse Publications

THE BUDDHA'S VICTORY

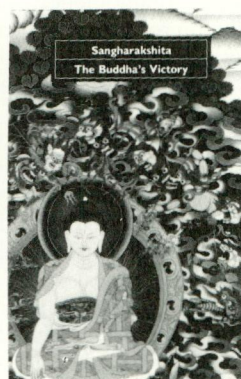
by Sangharakshita

The Buddha's life has been highly idealized. For many, the rag-robed mendicant who lived in ancient India has become a semi-divine being, eternally preaching his transcendental message from the mountain tops.

As we try to follow his teachings today the ideal can inspire us, but there are times when we need to meet the Buddha in human form.

What obstacles did he conquer to gain Enlightenment? How did he teach his followers? Why did he hesitate before admitting women into his Order? How did he face death? What sort of a *man* was he?

In this book Sangharakshita introduces us to the human Buddha, and reflects on some major turning points in his life. In doing so he poses as many questions as he answers, and makes us think anew about our life and goals.



96 pages, Paperback
Price £4.95/\$9.95

ISBN 0 904766 50 0

TEXTILE TOUCH

(Marlies Hyman)

Fiat 2
22 Florence Road
Brighton BN1 6DJ
☎ 0273 562608

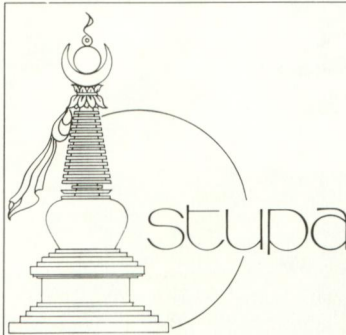
Professionally Handmade

MEDITATION CUSHIONS, MATS AND ADJUSTERS

Available in many different colours

Stuffed with natural Vegetable Fibre/Kapok

Please write or telephone for more information



Individually
hand turned & carved
Wooden Stupas

Various sizes & styles
(*Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana*)
For Ashes / Relics & Contemplation

further details, please send large S.A.E. to :-
Stupa, 7 Zetland Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 7AG
Tel: 0272 427124

AROUND THE RETREAT CENTRES

Going on retreat has been a part of the life of the FWBO for as long as it has been in existence. From this there grew permanent retreat centres and, thus, the phenomenon of living on retreat. There are now a considerable number of retreat centres around the world. In India, the Saddhamma Pradeep Retreat Centre at Bhaja sometimes caters for hundreds of men and women, and a second Indian retreat centre is being constructed. Aryaloka, in New Hampshire, USA, is running its busiest programme ever this summer, and there are new retreat facilities in Germany, Spain, and Australia. Meanwhile, the Glasgow Buddhist Centre is engaged in a search for a retreat centre of its own and there is the prospect of two women's retreat centres opening in the UK. Amid all this activity, *Golden Drum* focuses on some of the principal centres already in existence and sees how they are progressing.

PADMALOKA—A CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

It is now over three years since Subhuti and Suvajra took over responsibility for conducting men's ordinations and turned Padmaloka Retreat Centre in Norfolk into a place devoted principally to this end. Subhuti's early talk (amid concerns that the business of being selected for ordination had become a little too rigid) was of 'glasnost', 'perestroika', and 'a process which was a non-process'.

Three years on, the men's ordination course is faring considerably better than Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms. In particular, the last year has seen the emergence of the theme of spiritual friendship, or *kalyana mitrata*, as the keynote of the course. This has taken several forms. Firstly, members of Padmaloka community have been concerned to deepen their own links with one another and have put aside considerable amounts of time simply for this purpose. Secondly, the senior members of the Order

who lead the ordination 'process' are reaching out more than ever to develop friendships with the men who come to the retreats, each of them taking a particular interest in men from one region of the FWBO. Thirdly, the spiritual importance of friendship is increasingly emphasized. Subhuti comments: 'The process of deepening friendship on the basis of a common commitment to the Three Jewels (the ideals central to Buddhism) is identical with the spiritual path itself. Furthermore, the Order is in the end nothing more than a network of friendships since it has so little organizational framework and no power structure.'

In February last year, Subhuti delivered a series of nine lectures on this theme and these are now studied in transcript form on retreats. But in order that the experience of deepening friendship becomes part of people's day-to-day

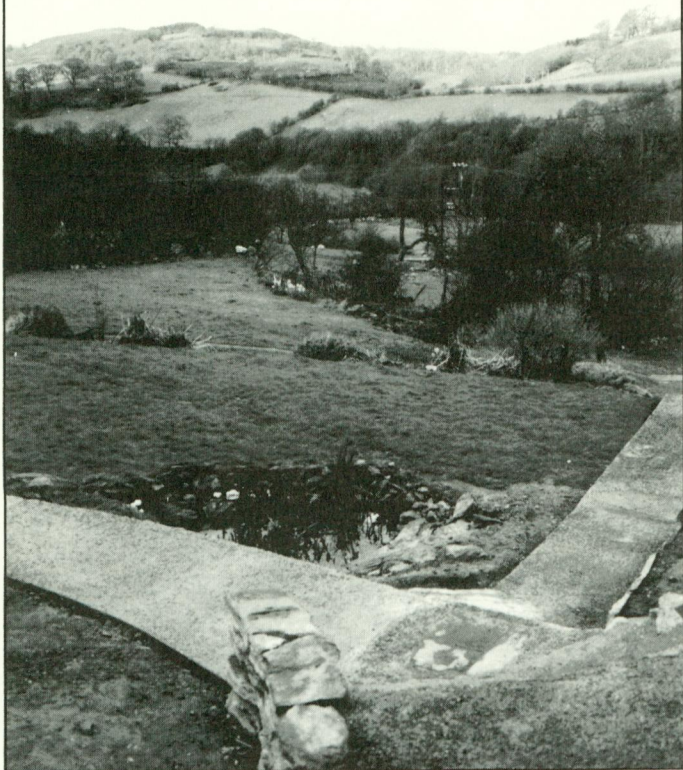
experience, all men who have asked for ordination are encouraged to seek out two *kalyana mitras* who can help them establish themselves in the Order. The relationship of *kalyana mitrata* is then formally acknowledged in a simple ceremony.

But intending *kalyana mitras* need help, too. To that end, a series of special retreats is being held for them at Padmaloka. On these, Subhuti gives a series of talks and the participants discuss their own experience of *kalyana mitrata*, both as givers and as receivers. They are encouraged to look at their own strengths and weaknesses as *kalyana mitras* and to address the issue of how one learns to be a true friend.

Nowadays, a visit to Padmaloka has become a considerable pleasure, and the Centre's influence is gradually pervading the whole of the FWBO.



Enjoying companionship at Padmaloka



The view from Vajraloka

IMPROVEMENTS AT VAJRALOKA

Vajraloka, the FWBO's meditation centre in North Wales, is acquiring a new face, a new image, and new facilities. The centre has now had ten years of uninterrupted life as a place devoted to the practice of meditation, and the facilities are being developed.

After a fruitful fund-raising drive last October, and after a successful search for voluntary workers, a major renovation project got under way in January and has now been completed. During this period a half-derelict barn was converted into a shower and toilet block, new paths were laid out, and a new kitchen and dining room were created.

During the conversion period, the community emphasized that work should be treated as a practice and that the project should provide people with an opportunity to work in a better fashion: more mindfully, less frantically, and with more enjoyment. Chittadhara reports that the team-spirit was remarkably good and that motivation was excellent. Nonetheless the community still considers the conversion work to be only half complete. The rear of the barn remains unconverted and a whole new floor remains to be installed. More work needs to be done. The community are hoping to do this next year and are now looking for people who can help.

Since 1986 the resident community has been

concerned to impart basic skills central to the effective practice and teaching of meditation. As a result it is now generally acknowledged that there has been a major shift in attitudes to meditation in the Movement and that the level of teaching at our local centres is higher than ever. This means that people now tend to come to Vajraloka better prepared and, in turn, this has enabled the community to move forward in its own approach. Buddhist tradition divides meditation into two types or stages, the first being *shamatha*, or concentration, and the second, *vipashyana*, or practices aimed at the development of Insight. In 1991 there will be two retreats based around Insight practices, and the community members themselves are concerned to deepen their own practice in this respect.

Two-and-a-half years ago a meditation class was started in hired premises in nearby Llangollen. A core of regulars has now built up and the Vajraloka community is to be heard making the rather provocative claim that the surrounding locality 'must have the highest proportion of meditators in the country'. Perhaps so if the country in question is Wales! Local support appears to be concentrated in an unpronounceable village called Bettws Gwerfil Goch.

SATELLITES FOR TARALOKA

Taraloka, the women's retreat centre in Shropshire, has responsibilities to women throughout the Movement and, as a consequence, has to fulfil a number of functions. It is a first point of contact for some women, it holds retreats for Friends, mitras, and Order members, and (by no means least important) it is a resident community. On the one hand this means that there can be long waiting-lists for Taraloka retreats, but on the other hand even such success cannot make Taraloka self-sufficient. At a recent AGM, members were presented with an overview of the first five years of Taraloka's existence. It emerged that Taraloka was unlikely to be able to meet its entire running costs from retreat income alone and that there would always be a need for fund-raising ventures in the future.

At least one area of Taraloka's activity, the women's ordination process, is clearly going from strength to strength. May saw the 'birth' of a new Dharmacharini when Jill Wittmer from Auckland became Guhyaprabha. Four more women, all from the UK, were ordained on a two-week retreat in June.

Four of the key members of the Order team on the pre-ordination retreats have decided to live together in a Going for Refuge community —with the eventual aim of forming a Going for Refuge

retreat centre. The community's members have begun fund-raising for capital and on-going support and there are plans to run Christmas shops in Manchester and Glasgow to help achieve this. This year, profits from Taraloka's seasonal fund-raising project 'Festive Flair' will be divided between Taraloka and the new community.

Meanwhile, another group of women has been meeting to discuss the creation of a meditation centre for women. Whilst all this activity is an indication of the growth of the women's wing of the FWBO, the likely advent of two more retreat centres for women in the not too distant future raises all sorts of implications for Taraloka. Joint discussions by all those involved in the three projects have been taking place and there is a strong feeling among the women of wanting to work in harmony towards creating a joint vision for the future.



Samavahita, ordained this June at Taraloka

RIVENDELL GETS ESTABLISHED

Rivendell Retreat Centre, the retreat facility of the Croydon Buddhist Centre, often astonishes visitors with the beauty of its Sussex setting, the quality of its facilities, and the strength of its meditative atmosphere. It has now been functioning for five years and presently has an experienced community comprising Satyabandhu, Jyotipala, Ratnabodhi, and Mats Larson who have worked hard to develop the quality of its teaching. The result is that it has gradually grown better and better established. Beginners' weekend retreats are now held once a month and consistently fill Rivendell to its capacity of twenty men

and women. The Centre is also getting known throughout the Movement as a facility for gatherings of such groups as the mitra convenors or practitioners of a particular *sadhana*.

Another new feature is the development of classes for local people. Even though it has become known largely through word of mouth, the regulars' class now attracts sixteen people each week and there is a waiting list for beginners' courses. All of this means that Rivendell breaks even financially, the only threat to its security coming from the financial precariousness of its parent centre in Croydon.

A VISION FOR GUHYALOKA



Subhuti

22 Guhyaloka, in southern Spain, currently hosts the final retreat in the men's ordination course and this spring saw the ordination of fourteen men. But Subhuti has plans to develop it much further. Simon Blomfield talked with him about them.

Could you outline your vision for Guhyaloka?

It will be a place where there is a permanent monastic community of men, a certain number of whom will be living there for a longish period of time—five, ten years, or maybe even longer. Their function will simply be to live together and to lead a spiritual life. In the end, I envisage there being up to fifty men living in the valley. They won't necessarily be living together in one monastic community, some of them may be living separately.

Then there would be a number of people staying for shorter periods, for six months or a year, sharing in the common life, and having the experience of an intensified spiritual life and practice. There would be a small community living at the bottom of the valley, which would guard the full-time

community from the outside world and provide food and so forth. Those in the permanent community would just be following a daily routine of meditation and study, etc.

For people who have never been there, could you describe what Guhyaloka is like?

It's very beautiful. It's a fairly remote mountain valley in the south-east of Spain, in a range of mountains that start to rise about five miles from the coast and rise very steeply, very quickly, up to 2,500 feet or more. Guhyaloka is situated in the heart of that mountain range, about fifteen miles from the sea. It's reached by a rough road through mountain passes.

The valley itself is in limestone country and it is bordered on both sides by steep limestone cliffs. You approach it from the bottom—at the top end of the valley is a very steep drop, which you can only get down on foot or on a mule. If, as we hope, we manage to acquire all the land in the valley, it will be possible to seal it off from the world completely. From end to end, the valley is about two miles long; the part that we own at the moment is about three-quarters of a mile long and about a quarter of a mile wide. There are a lot of trees, mainly Corsican pine and holloak bushes. There are some terraces with almonds and olives on and there are some very beautiful corners, worlds within the world of Guhyaloka.

We have three main areas of building. At the bottom is an old farmhouse presently being converted, which is where the resident community currently lives and which will be where the 'service community' lives in the future. About half way up is the bungalow where Sangharakshita stays whenever he visits, and right at the top of our part of the valley is the retreat centre, with accommodation for about twenty, a shrine-room, and a kitchen.

In order to fulfil your plans to expand, what will need to be built?

In the short term, the retreat centre will need to be better built, because it is only really a summer facility and it can get quite cold in the winter. We do want to make sure that it is not too 'comfortable'—not too isolated from the environment—because one of the most attractive things about living there is that you are very close to nature, so we envisage building small groups of huts amongst the trees, so that people have the feeling that they are living in the midst of nature. The main thing we need to do immediately is to rebuild the retreat centre so that it is permanent. Eventually, we would like to get more land, particularly above the present retreat centre, and build a permanent facility for the long-term community—the present retreat centre remaining for the ordinations.

Who do you think would be attracted to live in new permanent community?

I suppose the short answer is men who want to live that sort of life. That is, a very simple life dedicated to, and based upon, the practice of the Dharma, a life of *brahmacharya*, or celibacy, in which they try to live as much in the spirit of the Dharma as they possibly can. There are definitely people, men and women, who don't become involved with our Movement because we don't provide that sort of facility. I think there are men and women within the Movement who would like to live like that but who have no opportunity to do so. Perhaps such people will be those who have really had enough of the worldly life for the time being. There will be other people who will come for short periods in order to refresh their experience. I think that all Order members will benefit from going away for six-month periods and some will find it good to be away for much longer, even ten years, perhaps even permanently.

How does this tie in with the current ordination process?

Would there be people living there before and after ordination?

That's certainly possible. But I think it is quite important that the new community doesn't have to *do* anything. Of course, it should be open to others who want to come for short periods, but I think it is important that there is a community which is just a community. Most of our communities have a function, or the people in them have quite definite jobs. But if we have a community which is *just a community*, we'll experience and explore the significance of community life to a far greater extent than before. So, whilst initially the community will be very much tied up with the ordination process, in the end I don't see that as being the case. The ordination process would continue to take place at Guhyaloka, but, in my dreams anyway, we'll have so much land that you could have two or three different things going on at the same time.

What is the significance of the practice of brahmacharya [celibacy] in this community?

Brahmacharya literally means the leading of the brahma life, and the brahma life is that which is lived on the basis of higher mental states, that is to say, the realms of *dhyana*, of very deep concentration and of happiness, contentment, and integration. In those states, all kinds of polarization and craving are transcended, most notably the craving for sex and sexual stimulation. So the practice of *brahmacharya* involves trying to live in a mental state within which one doesn't experience that sort of polarization. I would envisage that the life people were living would be a very happy one within which it wasn't a question of 'cutting sex off', but of just leaving it behind. And not just sex, but craving for distraction and sensuous stimulation. One would be living in a very beautiful environment, close to nature. I think it would be possible live that sort of life there, if one couldn't live it anywhere else.

You have recently quoted Sangharakshita as saying that the development of the vihara is probably indispensable to the survival of the Order and of the Movement. What do you understand by that?

I think it probably is indispensable to the survival of the Movement. Under other circumstances people are subject to pulls and distractions which make it very easy to slip back into a (for lack of a better word) worldly life. I think we have already seen that our communities, and particularly our rural communities, provide a new standard of practice which is an inspiration to the rest of the Movement. So I imagine that this community will be even more of an

example, and therefore counteract the effects of the distractions and pulls of the world. If there is not a more intensive environment where it's possible to see that the spiritual life can be lived happily and successfully, with energy and zest, people very easily lose heart and just succumb to the temptations of ordinary life.

How do you envisage the community being financed?

At the moment, I don't really know! We are at the stage of just floating the idea. I'm sure it will come off but I can't say I can really see how. I think it is fairly easy to raise money for capital expenditure, for buying land and developing property. I think it will probably be

harder to raise money for running costs, particularly for supporting people. They will have to live very simply so I don't think it is going to cost much to support somebody there. Some people will be able to support themselves, and I hope that some will be supported by the centre they've been connected with or by their community or co-operative. I hope that some people will just feel they want to support that way of life by giving money to it. And, really, this is what I'm asking for—advice, help,—even asking for money. At the moment we've got a dream. How we are going to make it come true I don't really know. We have to pool resources and try to create it. As long as we see the

importance of the vision, I think it will happen.

So what should someone do if they are interested either in being involved in the project, or in contributing to it in some way?

Very simply, they can just write to me, or to Dharmaghosha, at Padmaloka, outlining the nature of their interest. Later in the year we are hoping to hold a conference for those who are interested in the project, particularly from the point of view of living there, or of working very actively to move it along. Anybody who contacts us and lets us know that they are interested will be kept informed of developments.

The Guhyaloka valley



CELEBRATING OURSELVES

This year the festivals marking the anniversary of the founding of the FWBO and the WBO were again held at Manchester's Town Hall.

A great advantage of using this magnificent Victorian Gothic building, apart from its sheer size, is the flexibility offered by the number of halls and rooms it contains. Thus it was not only possible to accommodate more than four hundred people on FWBO Day with no difficulty at all, but to offer them a stimulating array of concurrent activities.

An opening dedication ceremony, Sangharakshita's talk on 'The Five Pillars of the FWBO' (now published in the latest issue of *Mitrata*), and a concluding puja, all took place in the Great Hall. Other rooms offered a running programme of meditation sessions, performances of both jazz and baroque music, videos of FWBO events and activities, a play, a crèche, and a buffet.

Although rehearsal time had been short, the performance of Kovida's play, *Sun Through Black Clouds*, probably surprised most of those lucky enough to get a ticket with the exceptional professionalism of its stagecraft. Complete with a powerfully atmospheric set, stunning masks, and specially written music, Simon Blomfield's production set a new and exacting standard for 'in-house' entertainment.

The play itself was a reworking of the Orestes story, and dealt with the themes of friendship, guilt, and masculinity true and false. Inspired by the forms of classical Greek tragedy and Japanese Noh theatre, the production successfully amplified the relentless rhythms of Kovida's blank verse text.

This very enjoyable weekend saw two more launches: a Clear Vision video of Dhardo Rimpoche's funeral, and a new edition of Sangharakshita's *The Three Jewels*.

LOOKING AT HOMOSEXUALITY

When someone experiences spiritual aspiration, why should they look to Buddhism rather than to Christianity? Clearly, many people are deeply dissatisfied with Christianity, although the reasons for this are often not entirely clear. But for some groups, the reasons are obvious. Men and women homosexuals, for instance, are confronted in the Christian tradition by a veneer of liberal attitudes veiling millennia of intransigent condemnation of what they feel to be a natural part of their character.

As with any sizeable Movement, the FWBO includes a number of gay men and lesbians among its numbers, and in the last few months Vajranatha, in Bristol, and Maitreyabandhu, in London, have set out to develop activities specifically geared to the gay community. Vajranatha has started two gay meditation groups for people who are new to Buddhism, and Maitreyabandhu recently led a weekend retreat for gay men involved with the London Buddhist Centre. Each event attracted around fifteen men

and each of the leaders feels that the Movement has a great deal to offer in this field.

From one point of view, the very idea of a 'gay retreat' or a 'gay meditation group' is a complete nonsense. Buddhist tradition has never disapproved of homosexuality (or of any form of non-exploitative sexual activity for that matter), but it does consider sexual activity *in general* to be something distinct from spiritual life and something to be transcended in the course of it. Surely one goes on retreat to get away from sexual stimuli?

Maitreyabandhu's response is that many people's sense of identity is closely bound up with their sexuality. Beneath the rhetoric of 'gay pride', gays often experience a strong sense of sexual guilt which inhibits them in many respects, not least spiritually. On the weekend he led study on texts by Freud and Jung which provide fresh, psychoanalytical reasons for being ashamed to be gay. These stirred up many of the anxieties people felt, but they were balanced by texts by

contemporary analysts who attach no such stigma to the subject.

Among the topics discussed by Vajranatha's groups were casual sex, rape and power, chastity, and gay identity. He found that Buddhist ethics could provide an illuminating insight into some of these issues even though the group included a Catholic, a Sikh, and a trainee Anglican vicar. Interestingly, he found that the romantic myth—that there is 'someone special' out there—to be more strongly alive among gay men than in mixed groups he has led. This perhaps reflects the importance for homosexuals of their sexuality in the process of self-definition; but it is precisely because gays have had to 'come out' in the face of conventional disapproval that they are often open to the possibility of further change, and so amenable to Buddhism. Both Vajranatha and Maitreyabandhu hope to develop their work, and Parami is planning to lead similar events for lesbians in Bristol and London.



'Sun Through Black Clouds'—setting new standards

SANGHARAKSHITA DIARY

On 6 and 7 April, Sangharakshita attended the FWBO Day and WBO Day celebrations in Manchester. On FWBO Day he gave a talk, 'The Five Pillars of the FWBO', attended a poetry reading and a performance of the play *Sun Through Black Clouds*. On WBO Day, he read a charming story he had written entitled 'The Cave' describing the meeting between a young monk and the Buddha.

At the end of April he and Paramartha flew from Heathrow to Dusseldorf to spend a week in Germany. While there, they attended a five-day men's event at Kuhude, which was attended by more than twenty Friends, mitras, and Order members, including five people from Holland and one from Belgium. In the course of the weekend Sangharakshita performed the mitra ceremony of Leo Zeef from Holland as well as leading the opening and concluding meditations and pujas. He also took three question-and-answer sessions in which he dealt with thirty to forty written questions. Afterwards, he and Paramartha were entertained

to dinner at the newly-formed women's community, to which Sangharakshita gave the name 'Sahayata'. They then spent two days in Essen as guests of the men's community there, and made a visit to Cologne where they admired paintings from the Late-Medieval Cologne School in the Wellraff Richartz Museum, and to Dusseldorf where they particularly admired the collection of nineteenth century German work at the Kunst Museum.

On 9 May Sangharakshita flew to Spain to spend a week at Guhyaloka, where he performed the private ordination ceremony for Oliver Katz and had a number of talks with members of the ordination team. Back in England, he has been involved in the final stages of the women's pre-ordination process and has met a number of women in this connection.

On his return from Spain, Sangharakshita resumed work on the second volume of his memoirs. The first part of this volume, which deals with his early years in Kalimpong, is now reaching completion and will be published in December.

SPREADING THROUGH LONDON

There are already three FWBO centres in Greater London—in Bethnal Green, Notting Hill, and Croydon. But this still leaves large parts of the city—and millions of people—uncatered for. More classes are therefore growing up across the city. The London Buddhist Centre has hired a large room

in Covent Garden which will serve as its central London 'annexe'. There are also substantial groups meeting in Kingston in south-west London, and in Crouch End in the north. Meanwhile activities have started in Bromley and there are occasional courses in Clapham, and Islington.

WOMEN'S RIGHT LIVELIHOOD VENTURE

During May, women associated with our Norwich centre opened a Windhorse Trading summer shop in Great Yarmouth to take advantage of the tourist season there. This is

part of a growing network of such shops, and a team of women is being formed in Cambridge to administer the operation.

NEWS FROM AUCKLAND

The Auckland Buddhist Centre, in New Zealand, is one of the oldest and best established FWBO centres outside the UK or India. A year ago it moved to new premises and is now growing apace. The open meditation class has been attracting up to forty people—record numbers. On occasion even the new premises have proved too small, and a studio across the road has had to be borrowed as an overflow facility.

Over the summer, Kamalashila went out to New Zealand from Vajraloka to lead meditation workshops, and Devamitra visited in his capacity as men's Mitra Convenor. Both of them were involved in the summer retreats and these in turn gave a substantial boost to the Centre as a whole. There is now a new Dharma class, and the Friday arts and cultural night has a full programme on the theme of 'Myth and the Cosmos'. In order to sustain this level of activities, Dharmadhara, the new chairman, and Guhyasiddhi, are now financially supported to work at the Centre, thus providing a more substantial core than it has previously enjoyed and a strong basis for future development.

NEW NEW ZEALAND ORDER MEMBERS

This has been a good summer (or, rather, winter) for New Zealand. As reported elsewhere, Jill Wittmer, from Auckland, was recently ordained and became Guhyaprabha. On 28 June fifty men made for Padmaloka to witness the ordination of Alan Miller, also from Auckland. Alan, largely responsible for the reshaping of Padmaloka's gardens, and more recently for the publication of a number of Subhuti's talks to mitras preparing for ordination, is now to be known as Sarvasiddhi. While Guhyaprabha flew back to New Zealand soon after her ordination, Sarvasiddhi intends to remain in England, where he has lived, off and on, for a number of years.

MOVE TO COLCHESTER

25

Having run classes in Colchester for several years, Harshaprabha has recently moved there from London, taking with him his architecture firm, Octagon, which works both within the Movement and commercially. He hopes to continue to develop FWBO activities in Colchester and eventually to establish a centre.



On a day retreat in Colchester



SCHUMACHER COLLEGE

ZEN BUDDHISM AND ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

ETHICS AND SPIRITUALITY EAST AND WEST

REB ANDERSON AT SCHUMACHER COLLEGE

13 October - 15 November 1991

This five week residential course-cum-retreat, led by the abbot of the San Francisco Zen Centre, asks: Can Zen meditation help Western cultures in their difficult transition to more responsible and sustainable ways of living?

Other upcoming courses:

Aug 25 - Sept 20 Theodore Roszak Earth, Soul & Imagination

Nov 17 - Dec 20 Manfred Max Neef Ecological Economics

These may be attended in whole or in part: ask for details.

1992 teachers include Fritjof Capra, David Bohm and Wendell Berry. Also weekend courses with these and others.

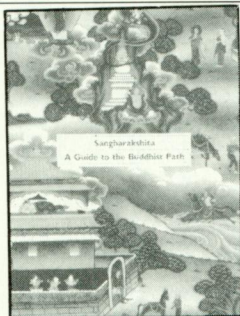
Write now for information to: The Administrator, Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EA.

Tel. (0803) 865934 Fax: (0803) 866899.

A GUIDE TO THE BUDDHIST PATH

In this highly readable anthology a leading Western Buddhist sorts out fact from myth, essence from cultural accident, to reveal the fundamental ideals and teachings of Buddhism. The result is a reliable map of the Buddhist path that anyone can follow.

Sangharakshita is an ideal companion on the path. He is intimately familiar with the various strands of the Buddhist tradition, and profoundly experienced in Buddhist practice.



256 pages, Paperback
Price £10.95
ISBN 0 904766 35 7

From bookshops or from
Windhorse Publications
136 Renfield Street
Glasgow G2 3AU

THREE NEW SANGHARAKSHITA TALKS Now on cassette

171: The Message of Dharo Rimpoché

172: The Five Pillars of the FWBO

308: The Cave: a story set in the time of the Buddha
written and read by Sangharakshita

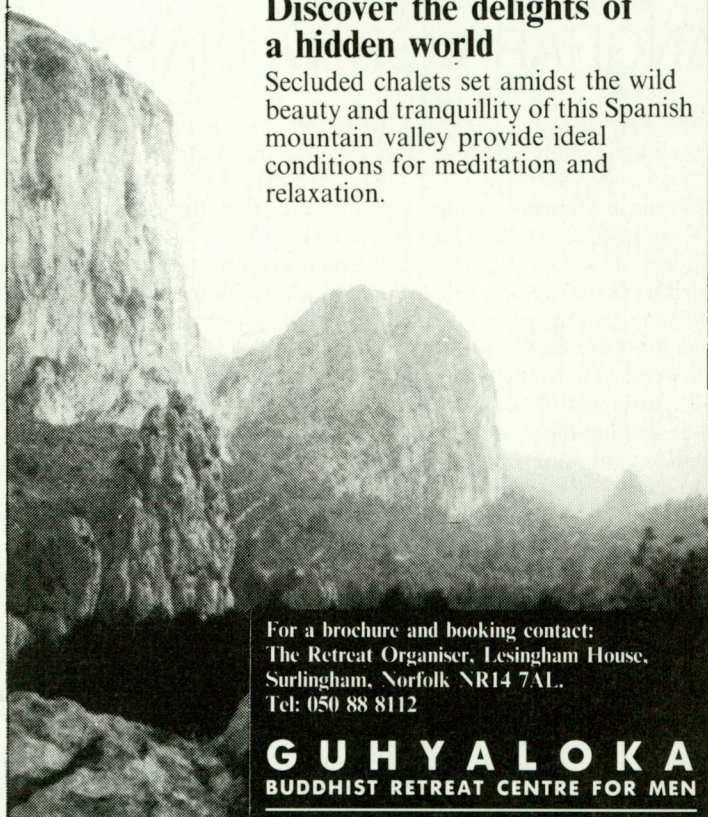
Price £4.95 each, incl. postage,
or send for free catalogue of tapes on Buddhism

Dharmachakra Tapes
PO Box 50
CAMBRIDGE
CB1 3BG

GOING ON SOLITARY RETREAT?

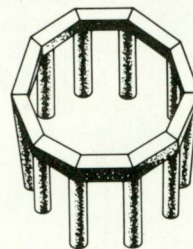
Discover the delights of
a hidden world

Secluded chalets set amidst the wild beauty and tranquillity of this Spanish mountain valley provide ideal conditions for meditation and relaxation.



For a brochure and booking contact:
The Retreat Organiser, Lesingham House,
Surlingham, Norfolk NR14 7AL.
Tel: 050 88 8112

GUHYALOKA
BUDDHIST RETREAT CENTRE FOR MEN



SILA ACCOUNTANCY SERVICES

45 SOUTH PARADE SUMMERTOWN OXFORD OX2 7JL TEL: 0865 311323

A Right Livelihood accountancy practice run by experienced F.W.B.O. accountants. Though only established in March 1990 we are expanding fast. If you have a problem or need advice on:

- BOOKKEEPING
- TAX
- VAT
- PAYROLLS
- DEEDS OF COVENANT
- INVESTMENTS
- MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS
- CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TAX SCHEMES

Call John Nielsen Hall or Shantiprabha on

0865 311323

VAJRALOKA 1991
BUDDHIST RETREAT CENTRE FOR MEN



CREATIVE VISUALISATION

Oct. 8-19

BRAHMAVIHARAS RETREAT

Oct. 19 - Nov. 1

MEDITATION AND INSIGHT

Nov. 5-16

MINDFULNESS RETREAT

Nov. 30 - Dec. 11

**MEN MEDITATION
TEACHERS COURSE**

Dec. 11-21

MITRA WINTER RETREAT

Dec. 21 - Jan. 4

For details see our brochure or contact: The Secretary,
Vajraloka, Blaenddol, Corwen, Clwyd LL21 0EN. Tel: 0490
81 406 (2pm-6pm Mon-Fri).

Padmaloka

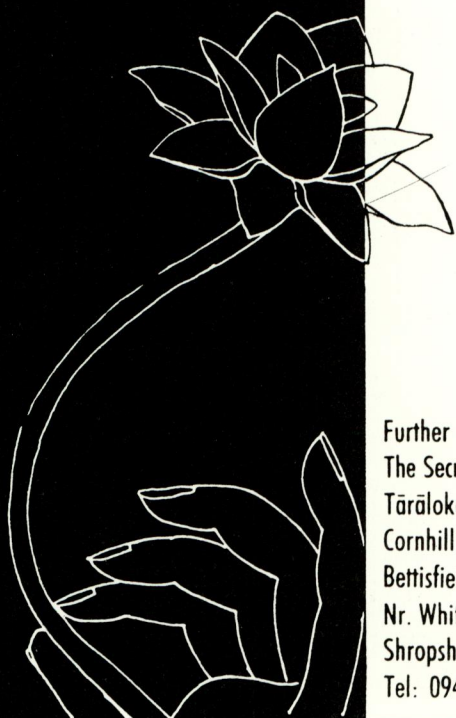
BUDDHIST RETREAT CENTRE FOR MEN



Surlingham · Norfolk · NR14 7AL ☎ (05088) 8112

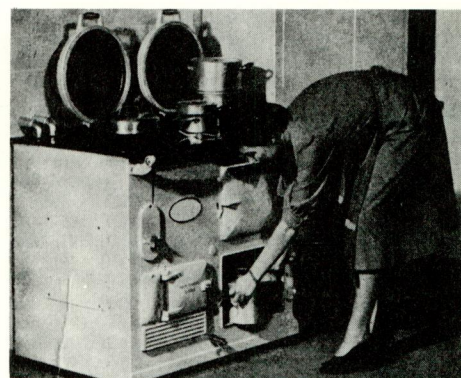
tārāloka

Buddhist Retreat Centre for Women



Further details from:
The Secretary,
Tārāloka,
Cornhill Farm,
Bettisfield,
Nr. Whitchurch,
Shropshire SY13 2LV.
Tel: 094875 646

There's room this Autumn for two
or three women to join the **Cherry
Orchard** team in London. Our
vegetarian restaurant supports 13
women to live, work and deepen
their spiritual
practice
together, and
gives dana to
the London
Buddhist
Centre.



If you're interested and
enthusiastic about exploring Right
Livelihood with us, then write, or
ring 081 980 6678 and ask for
Vajramala, Ratnadharini or Mary.

Where to find us

MAIN CENTRES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BUDDHIST ORDER

London Buddhist Centre , 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU. Tel: 081-981 1225
Birmingham Buddhist Centre , 135 Salisbury Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8LA. Tel: 021-449 5279
Brighton Buddhist Centre , 15 Park Crescent Place, Brighton, Sussex, BN2 3HF. Tel: 0273 698420
Bristol Buddhist Centre , 9 Cromwell Road, St Andrews, Bristol, BS6 5HD. Tel: 0272 249991
Cambridge Buddhist Centre , 19 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8EG. Tel: 0223 460252
Croydon Buddhist Centre , 96-98 High Street, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1ND. Tel: 081-688 8624
Glasgow Buddhist Centre , 329 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3HW. Tel: 041-333 0524
Lancashire Buddhist Centre , 301-303, Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancs, BB5 3HS. Tel: 0254 392605
Leeds Buddhist Centre , 148 Harehills Avenue, Leeds, LS8 4EU. Tel: 0532 405880
Manchester Buddhist Centre , 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LD. Tel: 061-860 4267
Norwich Buddhist Centre , 41a All Saints Green, Norwich, NR1 3LY. Tel: 0603 627034
West London Buddhist Centre , 7 Colville Houses, London W11 1JB. Tel: 071-727 9382
FWBO Germany , Postfach 110263, 4300 Essen 11, W. Germany. Tel: 0201 668299
Helsingin Buddhalainen Keskus , PL 288, SF-00121, Helsinki 12, Finland
FWBO Netherlands , P.O. Box 1559, 3500 BN Utrecht, Netherlands
Västerländska Buddhistordens Vänner , Södermannagatan 58, S-116 65 Stockholm, Sweden. Tel: 08 418849
TBMSG Ahmedabad , Triyana Vardhana Vihara, Vijayanagar Society, Kankaria Road, Ahmedabad 380002, India. Tel: 0272 50580
TBMSG Aurangabad , Bhim Nagar, Bhausingpura, Aurangabad 431001, India
Bhaja Retreat Centre , c/o Dhammachakra Pravartan Mahavihar, Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India
TBMSG Bombay , 25 Bhimprerna, Tapodhan Nagar, Bandra (E), Bombay 400051, India. Tel: 022 6441156
TBMSG Pimpri , Maitreya Vihar, Gautam Nagar, Pimpri, Poona 411018, India
TBMSG Poona , Dhammachakra Pravartan Mahavihar, Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India. Tel: 0212 58403
TBMSG Ulhasnagar , Block A, 410/819 Subhash Hill, Ulhasnagar, Thane, 421004, India
Bahujan Hitay , Dhammachakra Pravartan Mahavihar, Raja Harishchandra Road, Dapodi, Poona 411012, India. Tel: 0212 58403
TBMSG Wardha , Bhim Nagar, Wardha 442001, India. Tel: 07152 2178
FWBO Malaysia , c/o Dharmacharini Jayapushpa, 2 Jalan Tan Jit Seng, Hillside, Tanjong Bungah, 11200 Penang, Malaysia
TBMSS Sri Lanka , 10 Somananda Road, Nikepe, Dehiwala, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Auckland Buddhist Centre , P.O. Box 68-453, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel: 09 789320/892412
Wellington Buddhist Centre , P.O. Box 12-311, Wellington North, New Zealand. Tel: 04 787940
Melbourne Buddhist Centre , 34 Bishop Street, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, Australia
Sydney Buddhist Centre , 806 George Street, Sydney, Australia
Aryaloka Retreat Centre , Heartwood Circle, Newmarket, New Hampshire 03857, USA Tel: 603-659 5456
FWBO Seattle , 2410 E. Interlaken Blvd, Seattle, WA 98112, USA
Kathmandu Buddhist Centre (October-April) , PO Box 4429, Hotel Asia, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal
Padmaloka Retreat Centre , Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 05088 8112
Rivendell Retreat Centre , Chillies Lane, High Hurstwood, Nr Uckfield, Sussex, TN22 4AA. Tel: 01-688 8624
Taraloka Women's Retreat Centre , Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 2LV. Tel: 094875 646
Water Hall Retreat Centre , Great Ashfield, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 3HP. Tel: 0359 42130
Vajraloka Meditation Centre , Tyn-y-Ddol, Trerddol, Nr Corwen, Clwyd, LL21 0EN. Tel: 0490-81 406
Guhyaloka Retreat Centre (Spain) , c/o Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 050-88 8112

The Office of the Western Buddhist Order , Padmaloka, Lesingham House, Surlingham, Norwich, NR14 7AL. Tel: 05088 310
Karuna Trust , 186 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UE. Tel: 0865 728794
Dharmachakra Tapes , P.O. Box 50, Cambridge, CB1 3BG
Clear Vision (videos and prints) , 538 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 1LD. Tel: 061-881 0438
Windhorse Publications (editorial office) , 354 Crookesmoor Road, Sheffield, S10 1BH. Tel: 0742 684775
Windhorse Publications (orders and accounts office) , 136 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 3AU

Activities are also conducted in many other towns. Please contact your nearest centre for details.