



Newsphere

www.wangapeka.org

April 2007

KK Players Make Good



Photo of Kelvin Falconer and Tarchin by Dorina Jotti

Thus have I heard....

Not so long ago, a certain teacher of Buddhadharmā and a potter were heard playing shakuhachi in a small town shopping mall, in what might be deemed the beginnings of new unfoldment for local residents and dissidents.

Locals are intrigued as to the potential for such a venture. It could put KK on the map. Well, KK is already on the map, so to speak, known as the Mural Town of NZ. However, it could be that KK residents and visitors are about to get 'mu'

immersion in the shopping experience.

Certainly, a number of clients in a neighbouring Dental Clinic expressed their appreciative awareness. For them, sitting with sense doors wide open, experience became easeful and calm, opening to vast spaciousness, while the mysterious cadences raised question as to the wherefore and whyfore and howfore. AH...the hearing exactly as it is, extraction, emptiness, surely bringing relief from suffering. One can only compassionately surmise that for others, abstraction, clinging, like an ill-fitting tooth clamp, leads to continued suffering.

A week or so later the Memorial Hall graced the intrepid players, as did on other occasions tunnels, a car park, lift and foyer and it has been said there could be zillions of venues for the growing number of shakuhachi players around the world, many bearing flutes made by this KK potter. Such a venture brings to mind the tradition of the Fuke sect of monks who wandered and played shakuhachi around 14th Century Japan and who became known as Komuso – monks of (playing) emptiness.

Meanwhile, back in KK there is potential for those with passionate aspiration, but not expectation, to walk the path of the local haiku trail, bamboo flutes and hearts to the fore in joyous play, echoing in all the neighboring houses and Tushita heavens – a beginningless/endingless flow embracing all.

Excellent! Most excellent!

Wow! (mantra of the Wondrousyana)

The play continues...

All is blessing

Punyasri

For an account of the Shakuhachi retreat led by Tarchin with Kelvin Falconer, see pages 8-9

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Board Meetings

22nd April (followed in the afternoon by the visioning hui, see page 9)

1st July

AGM 12th August

Please contact a board member if you have issues you feel need to be discussed

Complaints Procedure

If you want to voice concerns about any aspect of activities at the centre please contact the caretaker or the secretary. Where appropriate the Board will then establish a sub-committee of people to consider the issue and take appropriate action.

Caretaker: Ramona Clark (03) 522-4221
 Secretary: Graham Sandlant (03) 528-9093

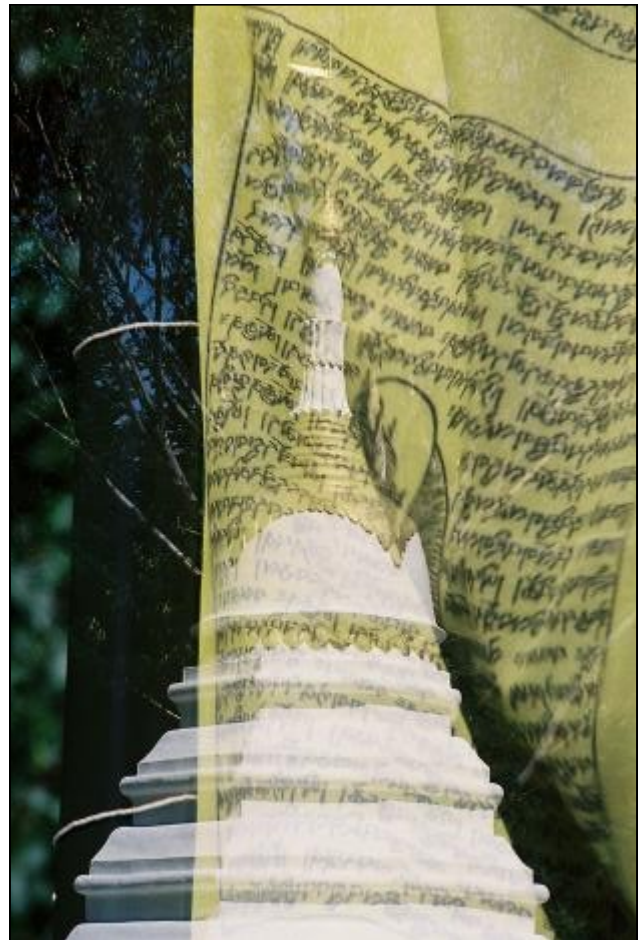


Photo: D. Vincent

Editorial

Being editor of *Newsphere* is a bit like perpetually doing my tax ... it hangs over me when I know it's due, and then when I start work on it I just love the immersion, the symmetry, the falling into place. And this time, I've been inundated with wonderful material which has made the task a total delight.

So, many thanks to all of you who have contributed: Ramona, Tash and Grant R, Grant D, Punyasri, Dorina, Shelley, Jamie, David, and as always Leopold Bloom who issue after issue unfailingly sends his book and music notes. Not only are they always on time, they're always an inspiration.

Final dates for contributions for the next couple of issues are:

15 June for the July issue

15 September for the October issue

by e-mail please to
newsphere@wangapeka.org

Caretaker's Report

At the end of November I registered to attend the annual Zen retreat at Wangapeka scheduled for the 10th of January. Little did I know that when January 10th arrived I would be living here as Office Caretaker. It all happened so quickly. As well as speed it has provided a wonderful opportunity. I think it is called serendipitous.



When I arrived, one of Mike's first comments to me was, 'You are going to find this job is like no other job that you have ever had'. He was right.

To move from the supportive team environment of the Otago Hospice to the Sangha at Wangapeka is in so many ways similar and in oh so many ways very different. There, while we were all individuals we worked within clearly defined policies; some things just had to be done by the book. Here too we are caring and respectful, but **everyone** is likely to have a different idea of the best way to get a job done from what to plant in the garden, what to buy from the supermarket and at what price, to that old perennial chestnut of what trees should or shouldn't be felled. As a newcomer I wanted to do the right thing in the right way but found it very confusing. And, there was such an array of things to attend to I would often find myself mildly or seriously frustrated at the end of the day with my seeming lack of progress.

I've relaxed. The expansion of the Sangha with the arrival of members of the School of Living Dharma including Tarchin and Mary, all of whom know the place and how it works, has been wonderful. The number of opinions has increased, but so too has the ease with which things get done and the acceptance of various means. I, and my idiosyncratic ways, am accepted and accommodated – just like everyone else and theirs. I truly feel a valued part of the Sangha.

Sitting at the almost daily 'works meeting' with Francis and Mike feels relaxed, supportive and good for a laugh. Francis is one month older than my son, and Mike, about seven years younger than my father would be, if he had Mike's resilience. They, and the greater

Sangha, feel like family.

The role of Office Caretaker is diverse. Thelma's support has been and continues to be invaluable. Now, after being here for three months, I'm beginning to get a handle on some of the things that need to be done, but always there is something new that arises. I like to think that I am moving from 'not knowing what I don't know' to 'knowing what I don't know', but everyday something comes up that reminds that while I may be moving in that direction, I have not yet arrived.

There is a realisation that while I am here at the moment, a year passes quickly and that by next autumn someone else is likely to be spending hours in this chair. There are constant reminders of caretakers-past, from Christine's friendly voice on the telephone message minder, in the trees that provide homes for the birds, the fruit trees that provide food, the buildings that give shelter to so many other things both physical and those less tangible, but equally important, that makes the Wangapeka the place that it is.

Being a gardener, I am especially struck by the quality of the soil and appreciate the numerous other people who have carried buckets of kitchen scraps down the hill to the compost bins and other who have turned it and carried the 'cooked' compost into the veggie plots. Last month when working in the garden with Chani Grieves, Sue Willey's daughter, I had a profound sense of continuity and energy of the Sangha.

Here, as elsewhere, autumn is in the air with dew in the mornings. The maple outside the office is just starting to colour. The stags across the valley are roaring, a recent heavy rain damped their ardour temporarily, but things have not yet been settled. The tui are back, slightly drunk on the berries. The logging trucks have started their run up and down the River Road. The bellbirds are calling to each other as they advertise for next year's partners. The trees and river sing and Jones' Ridge walks.

Sarva mangalam.

Ramona

Inauguration of the Namgyal Sanctuary

I WAS THRILLED to be part of the Namgyal Memorial Weekend which was held the first weekend of March at the Centre. I was part of the Christchurch contingent - Gregg, Kathleen, Maree, Glenn and Karen and their two daughters Ruby and Islay - who drove up on Friday arriving in



met in the whare and Tarchin invited us to speak sharing our memories of Rinpoche and the profound influence he has had on our lives. It was interesting to hear the many ways this has manifested either directly



through meeting him, or through receiving teachings from his students. In the evening the DVD on Rinpoche's life was fascinating and again the perfect opportunity for everyone to socialise.

For me it was an almost perfect weekend. The weather was gorgeous - clear blue skies, warm sun and not a breath of wind. This meant the mandatory swim in the Wangapeka river wouldn't be a quick shivering dip, but a delight. Diving in, off a big rock into the clear current, gasping and smiling while



floating downstream is nothing less than absolute bliss. We all did this several times over the weekend, staying in for as long as we could before it got too chilly and we had to get out.

Saturday was a chance for us to become involved in some projects as dana to the centre. I chose to help Keith with putting up the new flag poles by the stupa. A team of us worked in the afternoon under Keith's guidance to erect these and string up two sets of Tibetan flags.

In the afternoon we all

met in the whare and Tarchin invited us to speak sharing our memories of Rinpoche and the profound influence he has had on our lives. It was interesting to hear the many ways this has manifested either directly

through meeting him, or through receiving teachings from his students. In the evening the DVD on Rinpoche's life was fascinating and again the perfect opportunity for everyone to socialise.

Sunday was the day of the Namgyal empowerment, which was truly wonderful. Tarchin's wish to hold the Wongkur in 'the memorial cave' was realised with the dawning of another beautiful day. It was a magical experience, the ringing of Tarchin's bell mixing with bird calls, the incense and pine needles' smells intertwining. I felt blessed to be part of such a glorious weekend, with so many perfect aspects to it.

Thankyou to everyone who helped organise this very special occasion to formally open the Namgyal sanctuary.

Metta

*Shelley Keach
photos: David Vincent*



Namo tassa Bhagavato

The Diamond State of Realization

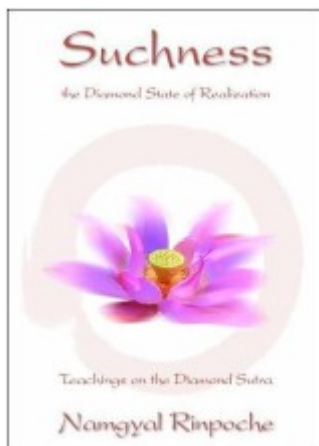
excerpt from *Suchness*, by Namgyal Rinpoche

Arahato Samma-Sambuddhassa

The focus of our study, the *Diamond Sutra*, is a small book of teaching within the *Maha-Prajnaparamita, the Greater Perfection of Wisdom* whose many volumes form the largest part of the Canon of Scriptures collected and preserved by the Mahayana School of Buddhism. Several of them, like the *Diamond Sutra*, were written in the form of dialogues between the Buddha and one or other of his main disciples on ultimate truth and enlightenment.

The Sanskrit word *sutra* (*sutta* in Pali) comes from the Vedic root *srota*, which means ‘to hear’ and also ‘to listen carefully.’ Although the *Diamond Sutra* is a small book, it is the very essence or core of the *Greater Perfection of Wisdom*, and thus extremely profound and subtle. While containing the Buddha’s more esoteric teachings (which presumably were written originally in Sanskrit), this sutra is not found in the *Pali Canon* per se. Yet there is a great similarity between it and the applied technique of the practice of *Satipatthana*, Foundations of Mindfulness – the practice of insight in the Southern Schools, and the practice of *Ch’an* in China and *Zen* in Japan. They involve the same kind of motifs.

This sutra is sometimes referred to as the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* as its theme or focus is the diamond state of realization that cuts through all defilements. Bear that in mind. To further orientate you and give you a feeling for this text, it is, in some ways, a great discourse on non-clinging awareness: letting go, letting go, letting go. Another way of putting it is not ‘you’ letting go – if it was ‘you’, it would just stick to your fingers. In another discourse on this subject, the Buddha told a story about Prince Sticky-Fingers and an ogre. A prince was walking through the woods one day when suddenly an ogre appeared before him. Have you ever had that



happen? You know, you are unconsciously wandering mentally and suddenly an ogre appears. No doubt your response was, ‘I didn’t know that demonic state was there!’

Now the prince was very imperious – like your ego – and said, ‘Go away!’ The ogre didn’t, so the prince decided to push it out of the way. Of course as soon as he tried to push the ogre away, his

hand got stuck to it. So he tried to push it away with his other hand. That hand also got stuck. The situation was getting a bit serious; the ogre just wouldn’t move out of the way. It’s like telling dogs not to do something. As soon as you tell them not to do something, immediately they do it. Have you ever noticed that life is like that? So the prince kicked the ogre (the ego) with one foot and it too got stuck. And then he kicked it with the other foot, and there he was, all stuck into the ogre. So he tried batting the ogre with his head. His head! He was being intellectual about his predicament! Probably read Freud or something or other. And there he was, all stuck up.

The ogre laughed, ‘Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!’ However, a little voice inside the prince said, ‘Oh no, you don’t.’ That’s because the mind is nowhere to be found. There is only non-clinging. The mind is transient (*anicca*) and insubstantial, not-self (*anatta*). There is nothing to be grasped, nothing to be clung to. Some of you become very enthusiastic about your practice and then you get stuck, like the young man who telephoned a Zen Rishi in New York and said, ‘I’m a prisoner, I’m a prisoner!’ The Rishi calmly replied, ‘Who enslaved you?’ There isn’t anyone really. You are not actually stuck. So this is a great discourse on cutting through all clinging and struggling.

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For more information about this book, available at the centre, see page 14

Reflections on being Caretaker

(In lieu of the caretaker's report which I didn't get done in time for the last issue!)

by Natasha Pratt-Rix

Initially I was motivated to take the office caretaker role because I knew the Centre needed someone and I was keen to help the place out. Having participated in the whole 2006 School of Living Dharma I am immensely grateful to all the many people who have come before me to create and look after this place and I felt like taking a turn. I also felt that this would be a great chance for me to continue the good work of the school and do lots of meditation and dharma studies...well it didn't turn out quite as I expected!

The first couple of months felt like the darkest, coldest depths of winter were going to drag on forever. It was a real struggle for me to adjust to being here after months of being part of such a vibrant, supportive and active dharma community, to now be experiencing a great sense of isolation and remoteness. Mike left for two months and for quite some time Grant and I were the only people on the property. It was quite bizarre seeing no other people for days on end and I loved shopping days in Nelson for the chance to socialise. I knew we were in a very privileged position to have an entire retreat centre at our personal disposal, but I was also realising that all the intensive dharma work undertaken so far needed to digest, percolate, settle and simmer and other such culinary metaphors that come to mind when recalling the rich nourishment of meditative explorations we did.

Once spring came and more people started coming through the Centre, I was more easeful about the role and came to really enjoy the lifestyle. One of the biggest contemplations of my time here has been, 'What does it really mean to be of service?' For truly being caretaker is putting yourself into service in an all-encompassing way. Upon re-reading the instructions for a Zen cook by thirteenth century Zen-master Dogen Zenji titled *How to Cook Your Life*, (one of our School of Living Dharma study texts), I saw more and more how every part of my day had the potential to be an act of mindful service. This was an opportunity for me to embody the role of 'Tenzo' (the traditional monastery cook, but more liberally viewed as one who is serving the community in any way, shape or form). Sometimes being Tenzo flows easefully and naturally, like working in the garden, my great joy and delight. When gardening,



I know I am doing good service for others, both by providing them with food, but also with a place of beauty and contemplative peace to integrate mindfulness practice in the midst of activity. I have taken great pleasure in sharing the garden with others as part of their time here on retreat.

At other times one of the biggest tests of having this attitude of service (being Tenzo) for the benefit of others was when people arrived for retreats and I didn't feel I had the capacity to meet and welcome them with an appreciation of their Buddha Nature. This is when I have needed to remember that being of service as caretaker is an offering. If I arouse the bodhisattva spirit in such a way that I am willing to meet all beings with kindness and interest, to meet all difficulties with patience and love, then this too is the work of the tenzo. 'By taking care of the function of the tenzo we can enable all the residents in the community to carry on their practice in the most stable way.'

Also it is easy to feel an outflow of 'putting my awakening mind to work,' as Dogen says, when busy with the endless domestic chores around the Centre, the very ordinary dharma of rubbish, toilets, washing and meals. I certainly have a new respect for this large, often unseen and undervalued part of the caretaker's role. It is my hope that more people coming through the Centre will recognise and support the immense effort involved in keeping the very existence of this place going. I feel very strongly that the caretakers must receive more financial support for undertaking this role. To be the caretaker requires many sacrifices and I don't think it should be a financial sacrifice also.

This Centre is a unique precious gem and I realise now how fragile it is and how much work is required to keep it going. I have enjoyed working behind the scenes with the immense preparation involved for the 2007 programme as well as all the other groups and individuals who use the Centre. Long may we have a steady stream of aspiring beings finding sanctuary and opportunity here. Overall I have found it a deeply rewarding and insightful experience, which I would do again and which I would also strongly recommend to others. Even if I didn't end up reading every book in the library like I thought I would!

More About Our Caretakers



Francis Matthews and Ramona Clark

YOU CAN HARDLY call them new anymore, as Francis and Ramona have now been at the centre for a few months, and it shows! Francis arrived at the beginning of December and his hours of hard physical work since then can be seen all over the property. He grew up in Golden Bay, living for a number of years in the Tui Community, where he helped in the gardens and cooking ... all useful stuff for Wangapeka. 'My whole life has been spent living amongst bush surroundings,' he says. He also has experience in land maintenance, land clearing and general outdoor work.

Before coming to Wangapeka, Francis had completed a Vipassana meditation retreat, which gave him a new perspective on his life and what he wants to do with it. He is deeply interested in permaculture and is enjoying learning to put energy into where it is needed to support the growth of the land and the centre. As he said, being at Wangapeka, 'just feels right. It feels in alignment with all aspects of my life.'

Ramona arrived in mid January, straight after the Diamond Sangha Sesshin, for which she had booked as a participant long before she imagined she'd be caretaker here. She has a very broad range of experience - great for the variety of tasks she lands up doing here. She's a registered nurse and had been working in Dunedin in the hospice there, though left full-time work a year ago which has given her more opportunity to deepen her spiritual practice. In

Dunedin she was a member of the Zen Group and over the last three years has increasingly participated in zazen.

She says her 'fingers are a pale shade of green,' and already we've discovered that if she's not in the office, she can often be found tending the veggies in the garden. On her rare days off she heads for the hills and rumour has it that as I write she's kayaking in the Abel Tasman.

Both Francis and Ramona are already making an enormous contribution to the atmosphere and smooth running of the centre, and it is really great to have them here.

A Wish List ...

Do you happen to have lying around and want to get rid of either a washing machine or a sewing machine? The centre ones are feeling their age and it's time to replace them if there's one looking for a good home. Both would need to be robust and reliable!

FOR SALE

COPY/SCAN/PRINTER

Epson Stylus CX6500

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Memory card slots for direct photo printing

plus user manual

and 8 extra ink cartridges

Suitable for home use

Price? Make us an offer

Shakuhachi – the Breath of Awakening

An exploration of form, sound and the nature of things



Kelvin in the bamboo grove



Choosing bamboo



Grant cutting



Dorina sanding

THE SHAKUHACHI (end blown flute) is both a folk and classical musical instrument and became the tool of the Fuke sect of Zen monks who used it for ‘blowing zen’, a form of meditation. It has been crafted from bamboo for centuries in Japan and more recently in the west – most recently in Katikati!

A grove of bamboo is a single plant though it contains hundreds of individual sticks. Each one finds its own place to anchor in the earth and reaches for the light, seemingly independent of its neighbours. Meanwhile under the earth all are connected - in fact each is part of the same single plant – rooted in the same earth and animated by the same air.

So it was that a small sangha of 16 students and two teachers arrived individually and connected for a week in Katikati, to explore the making and playing of the shakuhachi, and at a deeper level the self and the mystery of interbeing – the retreat **‘The Breath of Awakening – a meditative exploration of presence and music’**. Tarchin led the explorations around the concepts and experience inspired by the bamboo and the flute at Orgyen Hermitage; and Kelvin Falconer led us in crafting our own shakuhachi in his studio with bamboo from his grove at Rolling Cloud Pottery. The classic shakuhachi form is a seven node length of bamboo with a natural curve and taper, widening out towards the root end - and this may be used to symbolise the body and the seven chakras.

We began with the simpler 3-node straight flute. The gentle crafting of the mouthpiece, patient shaping of the bore, and careful placement of the holes were again symbolic of the development of the self towards a form which lives more beautifully. The daily rain didn’t seem to dampen spirits and within a few days the first tentative notes were coaxed from the new instruments. The shakuhachi is difficult to play at first but with practice we could blow longer and more pure notes, and begin to explore the five note scale. How magical, what alchemy - transforming breath into a sound which uplifts and inspires!

Later in the week we began making a second flute – this time the full seven node length ranging from half to one meter long. The crafting of these was more difficult with the natural curve of the bamboo but some lovely examples were produced under Kelvin’s expert guidance. An evening blowing session was held at Orgyen as we became more proficient, and on the final day most made the trip up to the Karangahake Gorge where we played together and enjoyed the enhanced acoustics in the 1km long disused rail tunnel.

So there were we – ‘apparently’ 18 individuals with



Tarchin

‘individual’ bamboo roots, joining together to fashion them into a form that with breath creates the sound that reconnects, and reveals the unity and interconnectedness that was there all along.

Thanks to Tarchin and Kelvin for leading such a rich workshop; to the sangha for sharing and supporting; and to Mary, Punyasri, Irene and Fiona and all those others whose unspoken efforts looking after the little things made things run so smoothly.



Punyasri

Text: Grant Dabb Photos: Dorina Jotti

*One tremulous note
vibrating in the void
is the universe*

John Pasley

Visioning Hui 22nd April

The Wangapeka School of Living Dharma is in full swing again this year and the Centre’s calendar is packed with intended courses right through into 2009; the Wangapeka is definitely humming. It is wonderful to have the Centre supporting the unfolding of Wisdom, Compassion and Awareness for the benefit of all beings, and long may it do so. In order for this to happen there is a need to look at how an ongoing programme of retreats and courses might be facilitated.

The Board of Trustees and the current residents would therefore like to invite all friends of Wangapeka to a visioning hui on Sunday 22 April **to begin at 1.30pm**. You are welcome to join us for a potluck lunch beforehand, or to come on Saturday night if you are coming from a long way.

As the Wangapeka School of Living Dharma has developed, a great deal of effort has gone into the communal running of the Centre. One outcome of this has been clarifying the amount and type of work required for supporting retreats, for example:

- ◇ Writing menus, shopping lists and cooking
- ◇ Cleaning buildings and preparing accommodation
- ◇ Registering and transporting participants
- ◇ Assisting the Teachers
- ◇ Welcoming and orientating participants

and ‘showing them the ropes’

- ◇ ...and much more!

The hui will be an opportunity for you to really support Wangapeka and get involved by having a say in the ongoing functioning of the Centre. We do hope you will join us. Before then you might like to contemplate the following:

- ◇ Could we set up a roster system of core people (those who have a working knowledge of the Centre and Teachings) to come for the beginning of retreats to be a ‘third caretaker’ or ‘assistant’?
- ◇ Do we need a permanent third caretaker?
- ◇ Could we set up a resident dharma community? How?
- ◇ What infrastructure is needed to support a thriving Centre?
- ◇ What fundraising is needed, project specific and long term?

Please come, bring your ideas and be part of facilitating how the Wangapeka will run. All input is valued.

We look forward to seeing you then!

Board of Trustees and the Resident Sangha.

Tash and Grant's Wedding



We were so blessed on our wedding day, 27 January. Held at Ohope Beach on a perfect blue-sky day, surrounded by many loving family and friends, our ceremony was a beautiful weaving of our Buddha-Dharma faith and a more traditional kiwi wedding. To our great joy and gratitude Tarchin was co-celebrant along with Natasha's Dad, Doug. We spent a lot of time writing the whole ceremony ourselves, with much help from Tarchin and Doug, and thought we would share a couple of pieces in Newsphere along with some photos. Out heartfelt thanks go to our dear Dharma friend Jamie Howell for the excellent photos. We truly couldn't have asked for a more wonderful day.

Cherokee Wedding Prayer (adapted)

As Grant and Natasha pledge their hearts and lives together,
We honour the divine mystery that is this wondrous universe
arising within us and around us.

We honour mother-earth which sustains and provides.
Pray bless their marriage with abundance;
May it grow stronger through the seasons.

We honour fire which illumines and quickens.
Pray make their union warm.
May their hearts glow with loving-kindness.

We honour air which weaves us all together.
Pray help them sail though life,
safe and calm, not blown about by the eight worldly winds.

We honour water which flows and quenches.
Pray cleanse and guide their relationship.
May they become a wellspring of love.

We honour space which is ungraspable mystery.
Pray help them know spacious openness in the midst of all their life's experience.

Blessed by these elements of the universe,
We pray that Grant and Natasha may live in peace, harmony, and true happiness
as they forever grow young together



Good. Do More

Watercolour Painting with Robert Sinclair

‘Good. Do more,’ became the mantra of the week during Robert Sinclair’s watercolour painting course *The Colour of Mind: Seeing with your Heart*. We laughed, we meditated, we blew bubbles, we did tai-chi, and above all we painted. We were 21 altogether, varying in painting experience from none at all, like me, to professional artists.

We started with sumi-e, traditional Chinese or Japanese brushwork – intense black ink on white rice paper, playing for the first day to



see how the brushes work, what degree of wetness gave what density of blackness, how to move the brush so you got inbuilt light and shadow, how to reduce the image in our head to a single stroke on the paper, and how to build it again. With the simplest of brush strokes mountains, mist and pine trees manifested all over the room.

And then drawing. We learned to look less at the object and more at the negative space it created, so we were looking intently at the spaces between the naked ladies, the pink belladonnas that were just coming into bud outside the main hall. The complete opposite of the simpler gestures of sumi-e, we learned to look in detail, measure, and use a fine pencil.

Next was mixing colour, in itself a meditation, which taught us how to mix a multitude of different greens (or purples, yellows, reds and blues). For the rest of the week we experimented with what interested us most, whether it was copying Korin or



O’Keefe, or painting real and imagined landscapes. Robert combined all this with demonstrations of his own techniques honed over forty years of teaching what he loves most. Often he was still sharing his expertise with some of us till nine or ten at night when most good retreatants normally would have long gone to bed.

On the last day we each picked three pieces of work, one from the beginning of the course, one from the middle and one from the end, to show our fellow painters. For me it was inspiring to see the work that everyone produced, to see the process each had gone through, and to know that I too had grown.

Thank you again to Robert for his amazing generosity, for giving us so much of himself and his time. He truly is dharma-in-action.

Bridget Musters



Bloom of Books & Music



Suchness - The Diamond State of Realization, Teachings on the Diamond Sutra from Namgyal Rinpoche, based on a nine-day study meditation retreat that Rinpoche led in April 2002. Considered to be the most esoteric teachings of the Buddha, it's a marvel to receive this 'suchness' in a lucid, contemporary style that cuts through all our image making with a wealth of instructions on loving kindness, metta, letting go, koans and more than a glimpse of the mystical life. With a full appendix and discourses, this teaching is the ultimate vanishing! O what a blessing! *Bodhi Publishing 2006 (available at Wangapeka Retreat Centre).*

What Makes You Not A Buddhist, the first book from Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, director of the films *The Cup* and *Travellers & Magicians*. A work of wisdom that taps into the great teaching of The Buddha, especially the 'Four Seals' that tell us about impermanence, emotions, inherent existence, and that nirvana is beyond concepts. Contemporary, eclectic teaching, a passionate mystery that may tip your boat and get the hairs standing up on your neck whilst it pulls up the meditation mat from under your feet. White water rafting might have been so much easier! *Shambhala 2007.*

Bring Me The Rhinoceros & Other Zen Koans To Bring You Joy, by Tasmanian teacher John Tarrant, a delightful jigsaw of impossible questions (koans) that may offer you an unusual path to happiness. No self improvement here, instead more an unmaking. This lovely book is based on Zen

koans that takes us out of nowhere, into a secret kindness working in the dark and forgetting who you are and making use of nothing. A ballet dance at a rock concert, a solo cello plays on the Himalayan snow mountains. How could this be? The Diamond Sutra says, 'Out of nowhere, the mind comes forth.'

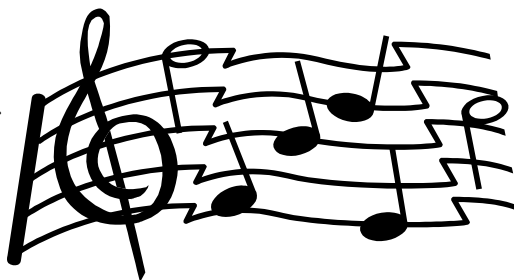
Published by Harmony Books 2004.

La Juderia from the Ladino singer Yasmin Levy who on this record has combined the two cultures of Ladino (Judeo-Epanol) and Flamenco while mixing in Middle Eastern influences. This is a 500-year musical journey, the Moorish & Arab worlds combine with Yasmin's mesmerizing voice that will take you to heaven and back. Yasmin Levy appeared at WOMAD 07 in Taranaki.

Ananda – Bliss, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, playing the zither-like santoor (which originated in Persia) in a spontaneous sublime performance that takes you into the heart of Kashmir and the shrine of Shree Anandmayi Ma, an Indian saint who Sharma pays homage too. The music is deeply mystical and pervades the air like holy perfume. (Navras).

*One day Yanguan called to his assistant,
'Bring me the Rhinoceros fan.'
The assistant said, 'It is broken.'
Yanguan said, 'In that case, bring me the
Rhinoceros.'*

Leopold Bloom



Wangapeka Retreats 2008

with Tarchin Hearn

TARCHIN WILL BE leading three retreats in early 2008. Each retreat will be three weeks in length and there will be a one-week gap between them for people who are doing more than one retreat to deepen their explorations. All together these periods of study and meditation with Tarchin will present a distillation of the essence of the Wangapeka School of Living Dharma, the three-year programme that concludes this June.

February 22nd - March 14th **A Passion for Enquiry, a Vast Spacious Heart**

The essential path of awakening could be said to take place in a laboratory and a hospital. In the lab we investigate the world of our experience with passion, clarity and discerning question. In the hospital, the healing space of profound hospitality and care-filled friendliness, we nurture and integrate and rest in the creative vastness of what is. Every good lab has at least a first-aid room; every good hospital has a lab. These two places complement each other, working hand in hand. So too the path of awakening blends passionate exploration and manifold levels of healing. Ultimately, lab and hospital are two facets of one unbroken continuum. This is the workplace of all Bodhisattvas.

Throughout the retreat, we will investigate the world within us and around us, using tools of breathing, movement and mindfulness. The second week will introduce an innovative exploration of empathy and the mystery of deep interconnectedness. The third week will blend the work of the first two weeks and move towards a way of being in the world that is spacious, open, and profoundly authentic. *This retreat will be suitable for people who are fairly new to meditation AND for people who have practised for some time.*

Observation and Wonderment - the Way of the Mystic Scientist **March 21st - April 11th**

For the last twenty-five years, Tarchin has had a passion for presenting Buddhadharma as what he calls, 'the way of the mystic scientist'. This innovative retreat will blend meditation, and a

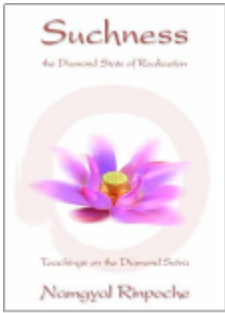


study of the core view of the great Avatamsaka Sutra (sometimes thought of as the Buddhist teaching of totality) with microscopes, telescopes, inspiring DVDs and creative artwork, to reveal a path of awakening that is extraordinarily pertinent to everyone in this 21st Century. Cultivating a sharpness of observation and penetrating question, and merging this with an engulfing experience of wonderment and profound

reverence for all life, this is the path of the mystic scientist and the path of a thoroughly alive human being. *This retreat will be suitable for people who are fairly new to meditation AND for people who have practised for some time.*

The Dance of Unshakable Union - Vajrayogini and the Essence of Mahamudra **April 18th - May 11th**

Vajrayogini is a meditation at the heart of Tibetan Buddhism. A red dancing figure, she symbolizes the dynamic union of great compassion and spacious clear seeing. In this deep, silent retreat Tarchin will gently nudge and inspire participants to enquire into a way of living that is both utterly serene, and yet passionately engaged. Vajra means unshakable. Yogini, in Tibetan, is *naljorma* which means 'one who processes or embodies the authentic natural state'. This unshakable knowing of the authentic natural state is the heart of essence Mahamudra. Acclimatizing to being this state in the midst of whatever is happening is the real practice of meditation. *This retreat is more suitable for people who have either participated in the two preceding retreats or who have some previous meditation experience, especially in Tibetan arising yoga practice or meditations exploring the nature of mind.*



Suchness: the Diamond State of Realization
Teachings on the Diamond Sutra
by **Namgyal Rinpoche**

“In each of the sections of the Diamond Sutra some type of view is being worked on: what you are involved with and how you are approaching things. You can see that one of the main wrong views working behind all other views is the subtlety of an ego-view: that there is someone, some ego-identity getting an enlightenment, and also, by the way, that the Buddha is an identity. That is not to say that the Buddha isn't, but the Buddha neither is nor is not. You have to reconcile both realms of truth: relativity - which is just a measurement - with absolute truth, total view, samma-ditthi. The sutra has you working towards that.”

Suchness, the Diamond State of Realization is Namgyal Rinpoche's commentary on *The Diamond Sutra*, one of the most famous sutras from the tradition of Mahayana Buddhism (Great Vehicle). Throughout the talks Rinpoche develops the ideas contained in the sutra and gives practical exercises for confronting views and for developing loving kindness. *Suchness* also contains the entire text of the translation of *The Diamond Sutra* used by Rinpoche, with permission obtained from the publisher. There are two appendices which give more detailed instructions for the various meditations suggested and enumeration of various concepts referred to in the book.

Copies of *Suchness* are available from the Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre at NZ\$32 plus postage.

Also Available from Bodhi Publishing (www.bodhipublishing.org): *Suchness* Book with six audio CD set of the original discourses from April 2002.

See Leopold Bloom for a review on page 12, and an excerpt from the book on page 5

Teachers' Schedules

Tarchin Hearn

Until 24th June:

Wangapeka School of Living Dharma

July 23rd-August 31st:

Trek to Mt Kailas, Tibet

2008: see page 13 for Tarchin's retreats at Wangapeka

Leander Kane

Liberation through the Body

See also www.wangapeka.org/program/leandersched.html

Leander's North Island teaching schedule for April has been postponed till later in the year. Please contact Punyasri (ph. 07-552-0270) for an update.

May 12-20: Wangapeka

The first week of the Mahamudra Retreat, as part of the Wangapeka School of Living Dharma

Other retreats at Wangapeka this year are scheduled for **July 6th-15th** and **October 12th-18th**. Please book your place through the centre.

Robert Sinclair

April 28-29: Auckland

contact Shelley France, Corban Estate arts

Centre ph. (09) 838-4455

e-mail www.ceac.org.nz

Bonni Ross

We are delighted that Bonni Ross will be returning to lead a three week retreat from 16th November to 9th December this year. Please note that she will not be travelling to other parts of the country this time. More details later.

We are gathering **donations** now to go towards **Bonni's airfare**. If you're able to make a donation, please send it to the centre, marked clearly **Bonni Ross Travel Fund**

Wangapeka Diary 2007

January 27 - June 24: The Wangapeka School of Living Dharma This is the third year of the three-year programme. The 'sangha explorations' are for the longer term residents of the programme. The titled courses and retreats are packets that stand somewhat on their own and people can participate in these without necessarily doing the other parts of the programme.

- Sunday 22nd April** **Visioning hui** - see page 9
All welcome; please phone Ramona if you're planning to come, so we can organise the catering.
- April 16th - May 7th** Sangha explorations – with Tarchin Hearn
- May 8th - 11th** Term Break
- May 12th - June 22nd** **Mahamudra Retreat**; the first week **May 12 - 20 Liberation through the Body** – with Leander Kane, the remaining time with Tarchin Hearn
- June 22nd - 24th** Wangapeka School of Living Dharma **Graduation Celebrations** – all welcome
- July 6th - 15th** **Liberation through the Body** with Leander Kane
- October 12th - 18th** **Liberation through the Body** with Leander Kane
- Nov 16th - Dec 9th** **Bonni Ross**
- Dec 27th - Jan 5th** **Garden of Mindfulness**, annual family retreat

2008

- January 12th - 19th** **Diamond Sangha Sesshin** with Mary Jaksch
- Jan 25th - Feb 17th** **Liberation through the Body** with Leander Kane
- 22nd Feb - 11th May** **Tarchin Hearn** - see page 13

Also scheduled for next year, without any definite dates yet are: late June to early July and late November, Liberation through the Body with **Leander Kane**; mid July to mid October, **Cecilie Kwiat**; November, **Catherine Rathbun**. For more information, keep an eye on the Wangapeka website (www.wangapeka.org) or contact the centre. Sonia Moriceau plans to return in February 2009, and Robert Sinclair the following month.

Wangapeka Education Trust Aims and Objectives

The Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre is located 80 kms southwest of Nelson in the foothills of the Southern Alps, overlooking the Wangapeka River. Tranquil and ruggedly beautiful, it is a wonderful place for healing and meditative unfoldment. The centre is owned and operated by the Wangapeka Educational Trust, a registered New Zealand charity.

The Trust is dedicated to:

- supporting all beings in awakening to Wisdom and Compassion through the cultivation of non-clinging awareness
- fostering open-hearted inquiry into the profound interconnectedness of all manifestations of life
- encouraging healing of body, energy and mind both for individuals and for the community at large.

With roots in the great traditions of Buddha Dharma (the teachings of awakening), the Trust aspires to:

- be free from any sectarianism
- encourage the development of many appropriate expressions of these teachings of healing and awakening, in ways that are meaningful to beings from all walks and persuasions of life.

Facilities

The facilities comprise a main building with large dining hall, well-equipped kitchen and ablution facilities, a teaching/meditation hall, octagonal healing room, sleeping accommodation for 28 in two and four-bed units, as well as four retreat cabins. Tent sites are also available. The retreat cabins can be booked for individual retreats and the main facilities are for hire.

Prices

Accommodation

Members (to qualify, you need to have been a member for one year): \$15 per night base rate

Non-members: \$21 per night

Prices are subject to change. A subsidy may be available for those experiencing financial hardship. This will be \$16 per night. Special rates for families.

Camping

Members: \$10 per night

Non-members: \$12 per night

Food

You may bring your own food or use the food available for an additional cost of \$15 per day.

The caretakers will answer inquiries, make bookings and orientate visitors, who are most welcome. Please phone before coming.

Membership

An annual subscription or donations can be paid to the Trust by cheque, by automatic payments, or direct credited to our account: Westpac Nelson 030703-0156597-03. If you choose this option, please put a reference so we know who the money is from and what it's for.

Friends of Wangapeka (Newsphere only): \$25/yr

Full Membership (Newsphere, plus discounted accommodation after one year): \$60/yr

Family Membership (Newsphere, plus discounted accommodation after one year): \$75/yr

Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre, RD2, Wakefield, Nelson, New Zealand
ph: (03) 522-4221 fax: (03) 522-4980 e-mail: retreatcentre@wangapeka.org

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If undelivered, please return to:

The Wangapeka Educational Trust

RD2 Wakefield

Nelson, New Zealand