



Newsphere

The Quarterly Journal of the Wangapeka Study & Retreat Centre

June 2010

EDITORIAL

by Mira Riddiford

In the book *How to Cook Your Life, from the Zen Kitchen to Enlightenment* there is an instruction where it says to treat the vegetables and other food you are handling with the same care you would if they were your eyes. Bringing that instruction into all facets of life, I am typing on this keyboard very mindfully, as I know my eyes wouldn't like to be touched with anything but gentleness. *No stabbing at the keys!* What happens when things are treated with kindness and respect? I'm not on auto-pilot and there is more awareness of what is present. Being on auto-pilot can feel so dull, 'the same old', there is no adventure in that. Having more awareness feels pleasurable, allowing bliss to arise. There is grace when previously there was none (it was hidden), being peaceful gave it the chance to appear. Things are not being desperately, or panic-strickenly grasped at and there is a feeling of wholeness of experience. Thankfully, I am not leaving half of myself behind in a race of busyness or in lock down just trying to get through a work day. So this is sacredness, not just in the temple but in daily life.

The wisdom of interacting gently with other is a banquet of nourishment. A great dance. Even doing the dishes can feel joyful when there is no feeling of separation. I remember Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche barking across the room once in class 'Take Refuge in WHAT IS PRESENT - what else is there?' Taking refuge does indeed feel like coming home. ❖

LETTER TO LOCAL SANGHA

All of us who have visited Wangapeka have reason to feel immensely grateful. It's a unique facility in New Zealand – and it's right on your doorstep! Have you thought of making use of the centre for your own self-retreat, and at the same time contributing to its ongoing well being? You could come for a few days of work exchange (outside of organised retreat periods), which would mean giving three hours per day of your time and whatever talents you have to offer. That allows plenty of time for you to benefit from an environment which supports contemplation.

The work exchange programme asks that you pay only for your food, currently \$13 per day. There are also times when we need cooks and course managers for the longer retreats. Come and take time out from your busy life. ❖

Cover shot by Elaine Chant

HOUSE FOR RENT

Christchurch NZ House for Rent: I am going overseas and renting out my 2/3 bedroom, furnished house, from the end June/July, for up to a year. It is not a huge house but in newly renovated condition, with a lovely garden, fruit trees, homey and comfortable with all modern conveniences, flat screen tv, etc., on a very quiet street, close to town, shopping centre, beach. My agent has not yet assessed the rental, but it will be below average to suitable tenants. I would love to find like-minded, tidy, reliable tenants (then can leave out my books, cds, etc.). Please ring Faye on 03-389-4932. ❖

MEMBERSHIP

Here's a suggestion – if people paid just \$10 per month automatic payment, not only would their subscription be kept up to date without them having to think about it, but they would also be making a small

but regular donation to the Wangapeka.

When you go online or to the bank to do this you will need the following information: The bank is Westpac. The account name is : Wangapeka Educational Trust. The account 03 0703 0156597 03. Under the box labelled 'Particulars': please put your name. Under the box labelled 'Reference' please put the word 'Membership'. You could also specify where your donation is to benefit: Sangha Support or the Scholarship Fund for example. ❖

AUCKLAND MEDITATION

Each Monday and Wednesday there are now weekly meditation sittings held by Wangapeka's satellite group in Auckland. On the Monday nights there is a White Manjushri puja where as a group we go through the Sadhana. On the Wednesday nights, there are meditation sittings on the Breath and Metta/Loving Kindness. People are welcome to come to both nights. Contact Mira: on georginamira@yahoo.co.nz or 021 548 781 for more details. ❖

The Wangapeka is now on Twitter!
www.twitter.com/WangapekaDharma

IMPERMANENCE & ECO-BURIALS

Reflections from the Land caretaker

by Phil Dyer

As I write this I look out at a transformed lawn covered with every shade of brown and yellow. The maple tree outside the kitchen is a blaze of red. Autumn is a very beautiful season. It is a season when nature reminds us about impermanence and learning to let go. **Macrina Wiederkehr**, in *Seasons of Your Heart*, includes this reflection on an autumn tree:

Slowly

she celebrated the sacrament of letting go

first she surrendered her green

then the orange, yellow, and red

finally she let go of her brown

Shedding her last leaf

she watched its journey to the ground. She stood in silence

wearing the color of emptiness, her branches wondering:

How do you give shade with so much gone?

And then,

she stood empty and silent, stripped bare.

Leaning against the winter sky

she began her vigil of trust.

Life as a Caretaker at Wangapeka is very much living with impermanence. The tracks and fire breaks are trimmed... and they need trimming again. When a retreat is planned, it seems a long way off, then suddenly it's starting this weekend! All the rooms need a clean, outside toilets require servicing, supplies are checked, ordered and bought. All is busy, busy. The Centre is suddenly full of people. Then the retreat is over. The people have gone. The laundry is folded and put away. The carpark, empty. All that remains is an echo of the energy and life of the retreat, and the buildings are once more silent, waiting.

Recently, I had the help of a woman from Austria offering work exchange. Not only did we subdue the enthusiastic hedge by the vegetable garden, we were able to open up the middle of the loop track that was blocked when the pines in that area were felled.



It was hard, hot work. A local farmer did the big chain sawing, but the undergrowth needed slashing back to re-establish the track, and the ground levelled to shift and stack the heavy rounds of wood. The task was easier shared and it gave ample opportunity for me to discover something about Austria. There was also time to think about what we were doing.

The trees that had occupied that area of land, growing through the seasons, drawing untold litres of water and nutrients as they reach up into the sky. Thirty years of growing only to be felled in minutes.

The land, once carpeted with pine needles was now verdant with black berry and bracken eager to bury the fallen trees with their green mantel. The soil already seeking to reclaim the minerals stored in the decaying wood.

We too are part of this impermanence. Retreats and Caretakers arrive and leave. Someone sweats over cutting a new track into the hillside, and years later you stumble across it, now crumbled and overgrown. On a slightly grander scale (perhaps) our lives are part of this cycle:

All worldly things are brief, like lightening in the sky;
This Life you must know as the tiny splash of a raindrop;
A thing of beauty that disappears even as it comes into being.

Therefore set your goal,

Make use of every day and night to achieve it.

-Tsong Khapa

It was common practice in Christian Monasteries to have a burial ground in which an empty dug grave lay ready. It was used as a place for contemplation on impermanence. We, too, are familiar with the contemplation and meditation on death and impermanence.

All compounded things are impermanent.

Everything that comes into being is certain to pass away...

-Daily Puja

Marana affects us all. At Wangapeka we have the Forest of Memories track with its small gathering of ashes; reminders of those who have given to this place or have in varying ways have made a connection with this place. More recently the Board have been asked to consider developing an eco-burial site at the Wangapeka. A place that would be available in the first instance to members of our sangha who would like to be buried, instead just having the option of their ashes placed, at the Wangapeka.

There are a number of eco-burial sites now in New Zealand. Eco-burials are considered the best option for the environment because they leave behind a much smaller carbon footprint. So everything about an eco-burial cemetery is planned to be as 'natural' as possible. Nothing is used which would interfere with the environment. The plots are dug only into the active soil layer to help the natural break down of the body, the deceased are not embalmed and are buried in coffins of untreated sustainable wood. The plots are filled with aerobic, organically active soil, over planted with a tree native to the area, and the whole cemetery is gradually re-

stored to native bush. All of the body nutrients and matter are gradually absorbed by the surrounding soil and plants. It is intended that the cemetery becomes a living memorial to those buried there, and a home for native flora and fauna. The Wangapeka Board has only just begun exploring such a possibility and at this early stage would be interested in your response to this idea.

BRIEF NOTES FROM THE CENTRE

Lama Mark Webber's 6 week retreat is almost finished. It was great! The first two weeks we were full and with 5 people in tents. We also appreciated the generosity of their Dana to the Centre. They were able to clear the fire-break below Sky Dancer, trim flax bushes, dig out blackberry plants, tend the tracks, help on the drive along with many other tasks. We have a brief gap then in mid May we begin another period of retreats that will take us through to August.

We have also made contact with a person who will help us claim carbon credits for our forest, and will help us explore the possibility of claiming further credits on slowly regenerating beech trees that hopefully one day will form a natural beech forest. The old tractor was advertised on Trademe and sold and Mike will shortly take it for its last trip down the drive. Then as the cooler weather returns so do the mice and rats all looking for warm places to winter, which keeps the caretaker busy!

Sarva Mangalam! All is Blessing! ❖



AWAKENING DREAM

by Bonni Ross

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

-- William Shakespeare: THE TEMPEST, Act 4, Scene 1

It's likely anyone educated in the English-speaking world has heard or read (or been forced to memorize) the words quoted above. Shakespeare (like many other Western poets, philosophers and psychotherapists) had intelligent things to say about the dreamlike quality of existence, yet those insights haven't made much difference in how most of us experience reality.

A dream: 'It was a beautiful spring day. I approached a large wooden gate with open slats which allowed me a glimpse of a beautiful garden within. The latch-pull was an eroded cross-section of sea-shell. As I pushed the gate forward, it squeaked, heightening my awareness. I paused in front of a low water bowl where the path divided and gazed at the reflections on the water, the bits of floating storm debris, and the flame-coloured fish dashing about in the depth.'

'Ah,' you think, 'very interesting dream! Profound symbolism indicating entry into new, deepening levels of realization! Union of fire and water elements . . .' or this: Bonni struggles through the gate, carrying four big bags of groceries from the car, wrestling with the latch-pull. 'Gotta



ask Matthew to oil that hinge,' she reminds herself, 'and ask Sara to clean up the water bowl. At least the raccoons haven't eaten all the fish, yet.'

The significance of dream events is no different from waking life events; it all depends on the view. We can (and do) project meaning into everything we experience, based on past experience and our hopes and fears. What makes one reality 'real' and another 'illusion'? Where does the meaning -- transcendent or mundane -- reside? Some individuals perceive sermons in stones, prophecy in cloud formations and the voice of Dharma speaking in everything. In some cultures they are respected as seers; in others, swept aside as delusional.

In the light of this, what can we make of our own experience? How awake are we really when we believe ourselves

to be awake? Are we free to respond with wisdom and compassion, or driven by unconscious impulses that reinforce narcissism?

Some of us have rich inner lives that express in dream; many study and analyse these, perhaps seeking a deeper, more profound story than the one played out from day to day. Others lie down every night, close their eyes and go unconscious. Dreams arise, and in them karmic patterns interact and reinforce themselves, because there is no conscious awareness to provide an opportunity to choose transformation.

Looked at with clarity, it is impossible to discern a difference between the quality of our so-called waking life and sleeping dreams. Our bodies respond to danger the same way, our emotions ignite, passions arouse, form images which give rise to story out of which assembles our sense of self . . . until we awaken and the illusory nature of the experience is revealed.

We are so fortunate to be living at the crossroads where western mind science and eastern methodology for purification and development of consciousness are meeting. The combination of these two frameworks for direct experience and understanding make for increased confidence and the open-ended questioning that gives rise to speedy realisation.

Continuum awareness in waking life gives us choice, and hence the power to shape our experience. Without it, wandering blindly, we are subject to transient moments of happiness which brighten the on-going flow of seeking pleasure, praise, wealth and ego-recognition and avoiding pain, blame, loss and critique. Seeds from past unwholesome actions explode like hidden land-mines.

Awareness allows us the grace of wholesome response and transformation. Neuroscience affirms that neural processes (and the endocrine functions that interact with them) change as a result of meditative work; our brains develop in surprising ways that are only now being investigated scientifically. The apparent happiness of a temporarily-satisfied ego is replaced through meditation with a durable state of wellbeing. Such a person is naturally and fully engaged with the healing and transformation of all and is relatively unaffected by the rises and falls of life's changing circumstances.

For all but well-trained (or naturally talented) practitioners, most sleep-state dreams lack continuum awareness or lucidity. We are 'put through' experiences arising, in part, from latent karmic seeds that lack supportive circumstances in our present life to germinate and flower. This can be frightening and de-stabilizing;

but it also provides an unequalled opportunity to change depth patterning . . . called in the Dream Yoga texts 'cutting the tree at its root.' Bringing the same quality of continuum awareness into the dream state gives us choice there too; we can reinforce the imprints of ethics, focus and clear-seeing and transform the darker impulses that emerge very directly and efficiently.

Training for enlightenment 24/7 speeds up the process! Why put up with hours of completely unconscious activity every day? How logical and compassionate is that? Our minds have many latent abilities that are free to manifest when past seeds of karma have been cleared. We are then able to communicate directly and support the growth and unfoldment of other beings more effectively, on every level.

BONNI ROSS has taught the path of liberation and peace since 1978 and has practiced both Western Mysteries and the Zen, Theravadin and Vajrayana traditions of Buddhadharma for more than 40 years. Her teachings explore both the philosophical and theoretic foundations of the teachings of awakening, as well as providing practical and pleasurable methods for increasing awareness, kindness and wisdom in daily life. Bonni teaches eclectically, with passion, humour and attention to the needs of each person: she guides individuals through all stages of meditative practice and leads retreats for depth unfoldment at centres around the world. For more about Bonni please visit: www.re-treathouse.bc.ca. ❖



Elaine Chant



SURFING AND DHARMA

by Tarchin Hearn

People today seem to be tragically addicted to seeking future goals and results. We idolise planning and striving. It applies to virtually every realm of human endeavour. Results driven education, healing, eco-activism, industrial/military applications, business and so forth. Wise investment now in order to harvest a big gain later on. This way of living is so ingrained in our culture that as you read these words, some of you may think, 'Yes, so what's the big deal?' We are immersed in media messages telling us that now isn't good enough but tomorrow could be, if we just buy this and consume that. Sensible people worry about the future, put money into retirement funds, secure their old age, plan for tomorrow. Collectively we have invested in these dreams to such a degree that we admire those who have big plans, who talk up the future, who passionately worry about future outcomes. Amazingly, it doesn't even seem to matter if the whole thing ends up being nothing but hot air. Sadly this applies just as much, and sometimes even more, to religion and dharma and paths of healing and awakening. We are striving for health, or enlightenment, or God, or realisation of Buddha-nature. We are striving to be aware, to dwell in the 'present moment', as if the present moment had become a marketable commodity. We are so focused on the future, on imagined scenarios of attainment, or the fear of non-attainment, that we are constantly tripping over what is immediately under our own two feet. As we fall, we bruise and abuse and damage ourselves and others around us.

Sitting in the early morning light and contemplating these affairs, it occurred to me that here in Australia, surfing might be a beautiful hint at a different way of being. When surfing, what is important is not what is in front of us but what is welling up under us. We ride on a continual cresting wave of fluid change. Our skill has nothing to do with dreams of beach heavens and post-surfing parties and romps in the moon lit sand. Surfing

skill has everything to do with exquisite sensitivity to water and wind, to muscle and felt body sense. We can't control the wave. We learn to ride with what is. We do have the capacity to intentionally make adjustments in tune with the shifting of the world of this very moment. We are participants but not controllers. We are initiators but simultaneously we are part of a shaping beyond our control.

Resting in an ocean of living process. The waves, rolling across the surface, have been stirred by the collective winds of all the activities of all the myriad beings of this world. This is the ground of becoming, our ocean of becoming. As bodhisattva surfers, our senses are alert, refined and fully focused on each ephemeral nuance of now. Our bodies, these magnificent temples of co-operating cellular intelligence, are continually responding to the morphing of experience within and around us. They are shifting and changing, in ways that enable a miraculous integrated functioning of cells and organs and bodily systems. A homeo-dynamic process of healthy embodiment.

The wave we are riding is a tumbling of water molecules, uncountable moments of experience all rolling as one – the shape of our life. Molecules of inspiration; teachers and mentors, books and philosophies; encouragements to flower in wisdom and compassion. Molecules of talent and ability, a billion year flowing repository of ancestors and social unfolding. Lives interpenetrating lives, structurally coupled, collectively transforming. Currents of knowing, flowing with and through each other, tumbling madly with rivers and mountains and creatures and sky. And we rest in and on this measureless wave of becoming, savouring its uniqueness and constant freshness. Actually, we are the wave. Never departing from the surfing nowness. Flying in the spray. Pirouetting in the vastness. Thoroughly engaged. Pliably solid in this place of creative change. A la la hoh! You'd think that all surfing Australians must be enlightened! ❖

COMPASSION

by Derek Rasmussen

Why did the Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche start his Discourses with ‘Compassion, Awareness, Wisdom’? Why didn’t he say ‘Love, Awareness, Wisdom’? Or ‘Wisdom, Awareness, Compassion’? Most of the time when he began a class, he would say those three words, C-A-W (the call of the raven) in that sequence—why? Was he a creature of unthinking habit? Do you think it never occurred to him to mix it up? Do you think it never occurred to him that a different formulation might be better?

Since the Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche never did things out of blind habit, I suspect that he put some thought into this formulation and sequence. I know that he also tried out different sequences from time to time; but the sequence he returned to and used the most was this one: compassion, awareness, wisdom. So: Why not put wisdom first? I think because when we start the path we don’t necessarily have a lot of wisdom or awareness... But we can practice compassion. (Ok: I can hear some of you thinking this rebuttal: ‘but with wisdom your compassion would be much more effective.’ Tru-nuff. But if we suspend compassion until total wisdom dawns, we’re in for a spot o’ trouble. Plus: isn’t one of the main ways that our wisdom grows is by learning from our compassionate attempts to help?)

Compassion is the ‘heavy lifter’ in the teaching. Let me show you what I mean; I can do it with one word: ‘Help!’ Imagine that you are walking down a country road and you hear a voice in the field off to your right, it shouts, ‘Help!’ What happens to you? What do you do? What happens to your physiology? Adrenaline kicks in, you turn your head, you seek out the source of the voice, the evaluative mental function kicks in: where are they, what went wrong, what do they need, how can I help? Fast, fast, fast, all these questions zoom through the mind. And. You. Act. Action.

The root of Karuna, etymologically is kara, ‘to do’ or ‘to make’, in Sanskrit. It does not have the association with weeping and wailing and sadness that the

English word ‘compassion’ has. In its Sanskrit origins, compassion is about doing something. Think about it. You hear a cry for help: you don’t go into reflection, you don’t weep and wail, you don’t ‘be with’ (com-passion) or merely sympathize—you do something. Adrenaline kicks in—why? So that you can meditate? So that you can sympathize? No, so that your body, your physical form can do something to alleviate that person’s pain or suffering. So that you can get on with it. The first time that Cecilie Kwiat taught meditation to activists in Peterborough, Canada, she told us ‘you gotta be in good shape to be an activist; you have to be connected to your body, physically fit—because compassion is rooted in the body.’ Ya gotta be able to do stuff.

Compassion is the crowbar of the teaching. It rockets you into action. Compare it with the other Brahma Viharas. Imagine you are back on that country road walking and you hear laughter and you feel mudita, or if you see a friend and feel friendliness (metta)... What happens to you. How do you react? what do you do? how do you feel? These are beautiful feelings all—but none have that catalytic spring into action of compassion. (Perhaps this is why the ‘news’ focuses so much on ‘bad’ news and suffering, these things have the capacity to grab our attention.) Compassion is the ‘heavy-lifter’ in Dharma, the bulldozer. It gets things moving.

Want to talk about precious human birth? How many other species respond to a cry for help of one of their own, if it isn’t their direct offspring? Can you name one? Any? Monkeys? Birds? Elephants? Yes, there are a few, but it’s not many. Humanity is the only species that repeatedly moves to help other non-blood related members of their own kind. What about beyond our own species? How many species respond with help to a cry for help from another species? Again: very few. (Dolphins?) Humans are the only beings that repeatedly move to help suffering members of another species—animals, plants—many other species.

I think that’s your precious human birth right there. It’s better to be born in human form. (OK, OK, I know: it bugs some of us to think this way, but it’s

true). Humans can empathize more, be curious more, help more, and, eventually, we can be fully awake and wise. When someone shouts out 'Who knows how to help?' You can answer 'I do.' And what is this true deep wedding vow, the vow that weds you to all humanity, animality, plantity—totality? The Bodhisattva Vow. Why's it better to be born as a human? Because you can help. 'For the sake of all sentient beings.' Because you can act compassionately—you are spurred to do—it is built in.

Compassion, Awareness, Wisdom.

It was no accident that we heard these words from Rinpoche, so often, in this order. ❖



Derek Rassmussen, right, at a protest

NOTICES

CARETAKERS NEEDED

Ever thought of service? Phil is about to leave as Land Caretaker and Diana leaves as Office Caretaker in August. The Caretakers' roles present an opportunity to be part of the Centre through the changing seasons and retreats. Our Caretakers keep the place functioning. They are vital to the Wangapeka's well being. For more information see our website <http://www.wangapeka.org> the Wangapeka Retreat and Study Centre at retreatcentre@wangapeka.org ❖

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, August 22nd 2010, 10am
Wangapeka Retreat & Study Centre

The Centre has had another busy year and next year's calendar is filling up fast. It is wonderful to have the place fully used. Come to the AGM and hear how the place has been doing. Consider contributing to the continued good functioning of the Wangapeka by standing for election as a Board member. We are especially in need of people with good financial nous. Please contact Jane Hobday at jane.hobday@paradise.net.nz for information about how you

can help. We have Senior Officer, Neil Eder from the Rural Fire Service as a speaker to discuss Rural Fire Safety. Since we are surrounded by forest and a long way from Tapawera this is very relevant to us. Please bring a contribution for a shared lunch. ❖

ANNUAL SANGHA GATHERING & WORKING BEE

Bonni Ross will speak on the topic of
Awakening in Community

Come and greet old Sangha friends, soak up the ambience of the Wangapeka, contribute to the well being of the Centre and hear Bonni speak on a topic that is valuable wherever we find ourselves. Free accommodation. Food \$13/day. ❖

POTENTIAL COOKS WANTED

Our list of potential cooks needs updating. Cooks get free food and accommodation and the opportunity to participate in the course. Please consider contacting the Office Caretaker retreatcentre@wangapeka.org and having your name added to this list. ❖

BLOOM OF BOOKS & MUSIC

by Leopold Bloom

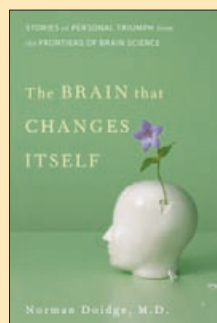
Taking the Leap, Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears, by American Buddhist nun **Pema Chödrön**, author of numerous classics, including ***When Things Fall Apart*** and ***The Wisdom of No Escape***.

Like the fool in the Tarot poised on the precipice, Pema encourages us to get unstuck from our 'shenpa' (attachment, but a more alternative translation might be 'hooked' - what it feels like to be stuck). In 10 brilliant pithy chapters the teachings point to how we might become present to the immediacy of our experience, by pausing, approaching our lives as an experiment, recognising insecurity in a changing impermanent world and not acting out or refraining. A wonderful text of compassionate abiding that joyfully announces that we can feed the right wolf in our heart. *Published by Shambhala Publications 09.*

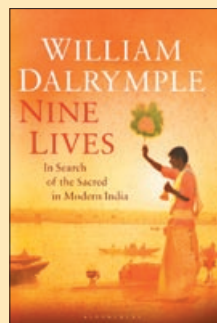


The Brain That Changes Itself, Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science, by **Norman Doidge**.

Personal stories from the fascinating heart of the neuroplasticity revolution. Recommended by **Lama Mark Webber** at his recent teachings at the Nelson Buddhist Centre, the case studies include blind people learning to see, stroke patients recovering, aging brains rejuvenated and children with cerebral palsy learning to move more gracefully. *Published by Viking 08/09.*



Nine Lives, In Search of the Sacred in Modern India, by renowned travel writer **William Dalrymple**, a wonder of erudite scholarship, his deft ear listens to the singer of Epics, a 4,000 line courtly poem which takes five full nights to perform, a Jain nun who tests her power of detachment as she watches her sick best friend ritually starve to death (Sallekhana). We also encounter a Tantric Skull feeder, a Buddhist monk who renounced his vows to fight the Chinese invasion of Tibet and The Daughters of Yellamma – unforgettable, mesmerising, steeped in the religious tradition of the sacred in India. *Published by Bloomsbury 09.*



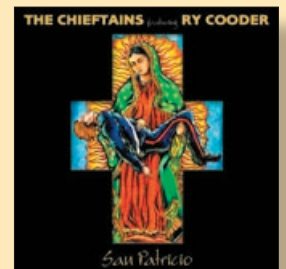
Zebu Nation, **Razia Said's** engaging ecological songs about her native Madagascar highlight the huge illegal deforestation of the countries Rosewood from its primary forests. And yet with such pain, the music is not hard but soft and gentle, a blessing in Malagasy, English French. Noble truths about the suffering in her country: 'This is nature's lament. The trees and animals are crying out to be heard. It's time to listen'. Irresistible rhythms and timeless beauty. *On Cumbancha Discovery 2010.*



Leave Your Sleep, a marvellous record from singer-songwriter **Natalie Merchant**, where the lyrics are taken from old poems, nursery rhymes and lullabies of **Edward Lear**, **Mervyn Peake**, **Ogden Nash**, **Nathalia Crane** and more. As Natalie says it 'represents a long conversation I've had with my daughter during the first six years of the her life' and what a delight with its parade of witches, fearless girls, giants, sailors, gypsies, floating churches, dancing bears, circus ponies, a Chinese Princess and a janitor's boy – exquisite rightful speech indeed! *On Nonsuch 2010.*



San Patricio, from the **Chieftains** featuring **Ry Cooder**, sublime Celtic mariachis, a secret story of Irish Conscriptors who deserted from the American army to fight with Santa Anna Mexicans in the 1840's border war that resulted in the ultimate land grab, one that is largely airbrushed out of the official founding narrative of the US. **Lila Downs**, **Linda Ronstadt**, the 90 year old Ranchero star **Chavela Varyas** feature among many, this is four noble Irish/Mexican truths in one. *Concord 2010.*



'The doctor said to Isabel
Swallow this, it will make you well
She took those pills from the pill concocter,
And Isabel calmly cured the doctor'
Ogden Nash ❖

RETREAT WITH TARCHIN HEARN

Nature of Mind, Mind of Nature Experimental
Insight Meditation: a merging of Buddhist
meditation practice with Art and Science

Wangapeka Living Dharma Program
June 4 - August 1, 2010

This living dharma program will merge focussed inner contemplation with theoretical and experimental explorations of the deep ecology of body, speech and mind; self and other; inner and outer. Investigations will be carried out both individually and together as a group. Blending Buddhist contemplative practice with science and art, this will be a mainly silent retreat, augmented with body awareness work, scientific studies, drawing and possibly painting, and various group explorations.

Participants will need to have some maturity in their meditation practice. Specifically, they should already have basic experience in mindfulness practice and silent retreat, and know how to recognize and care for difficult emotional states coming up within themselves, should they arise. This path of intimate enquiry requires a heartfelt reverence for all life, a passion for deepening one's understanding of self and others, and a strong inclination to be of service.

For information about the Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre, this retreat, retreat costs, and how to register, contact www.wangapeka.org

TARCHIN'S TEACHING SCHEDULE:

June 4 – Jul 16, 2010

WANGAPEKA STUDY AND RETREAT CENTRE NZ

– Winter Retreat

Tarchin will be resident at the Centre until August 1 and will also offer a weekend of teaching at Wangapeka after July 16 if there is interest. Individuals are welcome to use the retreat facilities during those two weeks.



August 7 & 8, 2010

WHANGANUI, Josephite Retreat Centre, 14 Hillside Tce
For further information: ssjoseph@xtra.co.nz

Sep 13 – 20, 2010

MORIN HEIGHTS, MONTREAL, CANADA
contact Derek, derekras@yahoo.ca

Sep 21 – Oct 3, 2010

OTTAWA, CANADA
contact Trudy, tgold@magma.ca

Oct 5 – 7, 2010

PETERBOROUGH, CANADA
contact Rab, rab@astrocyclics.com

Oct 8 – Nov 2, 2010

DHARMA CENTRE OF CANADA, KINMOUNT
Nature of Mind, Mind of Nature, starts Oct 12.
A 3 week residential retreat. A merging of experimental insight meditation, deep ecological experience, and personal empowerment. www.dharmacentre.org
contact Marion: AdminOffice@dharmacentre.org

Nov 3 – 8, 2010

TORONTO & ZEPHYR, CANADA
contact (Zephyr) Rob or Karen, sukha@xplornet.com
(Toronto) Lisa, lisamichellecowen@rogers.com

For more information about Tarchin's schedule please visit:
www.greendharmatreasury.org/teaching-retreat/public-schedule/❖

RETREAT WITH BONNI ROSS

Once again we are so privileged to host Bonni Ross for a retreat at Wangapeka this spring. Her retreat runs for four weeks, starting on Friday evening, 24th September, (that's the beginning of the school holidays) and finishing with the Labour Weekend hui, when she will be offering a public teaching.

BONNI ROSS has taught the path of liberation and peace since 1978 and was introduced to Buddhadharmā by Alan Watts and Suzuki Roshi in 1964, Bonni met her principal Teacher, Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche in the mid-70's and says the best advice she ever received, from His Holiness the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa (head of the Karma Kargyu school of Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism) was to 'be guided by Namgyal Rinpoche in all things.' If you'd like to read more about Bonni and her teachings, have a look at the Sunshine Coast Retreat House website, www.retreathouse.bc.ca.

AWAKENING DREAM

'When the Tathagatha . . . was not yet wholly awakened, but a being awakening, there came five great dreams.'

-- Anguttara Nikaya

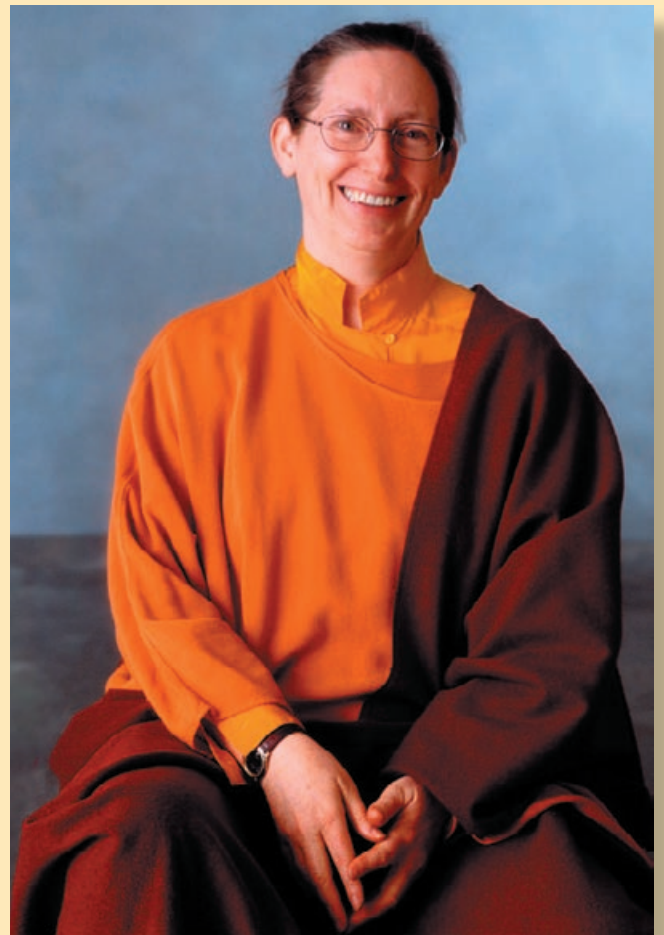
' . . . there is nothing more real than dream.'

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Exploring the symbolic language of dream requires a paradigm shift that opens us to a fresh view of our waking experience. Significant dreams feature in the lives of all great mystics, providing teaching, prophecy, encouragement, insight and integration.

*Supported by recent discoveries in brain science,
unfolding through creative activities,
deepening question arising from meditative investigation,
calming and grounding through movement,
enriched by sharing with one another in silence and sound --
we will dream ourselves awake . . .
or awaken in our dream.*

This (mostly) silent retreat is for well-grounded meditators in reasonable physical and emotional health who are motivated by the depth imperative to awaken for the benefit of all



beings. As usual, if you are unable to come for the whole time, you're welcome to start at the beginning and stay as long as you can.

Costs: to be confirmed.

At current prices, these are likely to be as follows:

Member: \$48/day = \$1,488 for 31 days

Non-member: \$54/day = \$1,674 for 31 days

This includes a fee of \$4/day for the cook and a contribution of \$5/day towards Bonni's airfare.

Auckland Teaching

Friday 29th Oct – Monday 1st November, BellaRahka Centre. For details contact Eileen Burton (09) 849-5501 eileenb@hrc.co.nz or Janet Eades (09) 846-8853 janete1@ihug.co.nz

Tasmania Teaching

Hobart: November 10/11 - 16

Dorje Ling retreat November 19 - 28

For details, contact chani_grieve@yahoo.co.uk (that's an underscore between chani and grieve)

Donations for Bonni Ross' Travel

We are gathering donations now to go towards Bonni's airfare. If you're able to make a donation, please make out your cheque to Bonni Travel Fund and send it to Wangapeka, or pay it directly into the special bank account: Bonni Travel Fund, ASB Bank 123178 - 0033639 - 00. Another possibility is to set up an automatic regular payment, however small - it all helps! ❖

RETREAT WITH LAMA MARK WEBBER

DEATH, BIRTH, & GREAT BLISS



A meditation & biology retreat on the transience of all - March 5 to April 1, 2011.

A four week retreat at the Wangapeka Educational Trust & Retreat Center, New Zealand, organized by the Queens-town Dharma House. Lama Mark will be teaching a three-week Vipassana retreat that starts with one-week of nature studies and body awareness.

Week One Opening up the Enquiring Mind

To prime the mind of enquiry, joy and investigation, at a global scale, we will start with an introduction to the natural history of birth, life and death, combined with sessions of body awareness and energy yoga to settle the mind. We will spend the majority of each day exploring life forms with microscopes and keen field observation, mixed with informal seminars on the biology of reproduction, death, life and ecology. Learning the retreat skills of the gentle mode of enquiry, interest, study and observation will be especially emphasized through the field, body awareness and lab sessions and how these are applied in the following retreat. Please see the quote below from **Thomas Eisner's** book, *For the Love of Insects*.

Weeks Two to Four Meditation on Transience

With the support of energy yoga and loving-kindness, I will direct participants minds to the insight meditations on the transient nature of all things: birth, continuity and cessation. This involves

repeatedly observing with a still, clear mind the nature of sensation, feelings, mental states, self and the experience of all phenomena. Vipassana meditations, including the meditation on death will be given from the Theravadin and Vajrayana traditions as well as from some modern biological themes. By deeply contemplating the transient nature of all, we come to experience of the cessation of clinging--bliss-emptiness--a great freedom. The profundity of this type of meditation and its bliss-emptiness nature are summed up by this ancient Pali verse:

Anicca vata sankhara
- uppada-vaya-dhammino
Uppajjitva nirujjhanti
- tesam vupasamo sukho
Transient are all component things,
their nature is to arise and cease,
life comes into being, then dissolves,
their cessation is bliss.'

- Lama Mark

* Priority for accommodation will be given to those who wish to attend the entire four-week retreat. For more information about the retreat, please contact: qtn dharmahouse@yahoo.com. For information about Lama Mark please visit markwebber.org

A quote from Thomas Eisner's book *For the Love of Insects*

'How is it, I am often asked, that I make discoveries? I always feel a bit awkward about answering the question, because I

do not have a particular method. The truth is that I spend a fair amount of time looking around. I already knew as a boy that if I wanted to see things happen- if I wanted to win the revelatory lottery of nature- I had to buy a lot of tickets. So it was in my youth that I formed the habit of taking exploratory walks, whenever possible and as often as possible, for the sole purpose of 'eaves-dropping' on nature. Naturalists thrive of such walks, driven by curiosity and the hope of witnessing chance events. Taken at face value, such events may not amount to much. But they may 'connect' to what you already know, to previous observations stored away in your memory, and thus take on added meaning. There has to be a constant readiness to make such connections. Every tidbit of new information, no matter how trivial, has the potential of amounting to more than a speck of colour. Properly assigned to the pointillist canvas that constitutes your inner view of the natural world, the new speck adds dimension to the vision.

... I have been extremely lucky in having nature reveal itself on occasion through chance events in my presence. I can remember as if it were yesterday witnessing for the first time *Utetheisa* being cut from a spider web, or *Chrysopa* dressing itself as an aphid, or *Ammophila* carrying a 'flower,' and I yearn for future occasions when I may again be granted unexpected glimpses into the workings of nature. One of the great joys of returning to your natural haunts time and again, is that you have the opportunity of grasping the broader image. Observations tend then to become cumulative, to be evocative and revelatory in ways that are not possible until you begin to feel at home in the area. For the naturalist, in fact, feeling at home means having achieved a biological appreciation of a region.' (p. 395) ❖

LEANDER KANE'S TEACHING SCHEDULE



The Wonderful Mystery Called Body

HEALING and TRANSFORMING through MINDFULNESS.
Leander is an innovative and inspiring teacher of *Healing of the Whole Self*.

June-August - Breaking News!

Leander will teach a block of Wednesday nights at Kotare Ave, Westmere. Contact: Janet Eades, (09) 846 8853, janete1@ihug.co.nz

July 3rd and 4th - Breaking News!

St Columba, 40 Vermont St, Ponsonby Auckland. 9am-12noon. Please contact: Janet Eades

August

Hobart, Tasmania. Dates and details to be advised.
Please contact chani_grieve@yahoo.co.uk

October 23 - 24

Wellington. Please contact Ruth ph. 04 8018896.
email pinkruth@xtra.co.nz

November 8 - 20 (approx)

Melbourne. Please contact kshain@aapt.net.au

2011

January 28 - February 20

Wangapeka Retreat Centre. More details to come. Please contact the Wangapeka ph: 03 522-4221.
email retreatcentre@wangapeka.org

Individual Sessions:

Leander is now based in Whangaparaoa, Auckland and welcomes enquiries about her individual and teaching sessions. For further information phone 09 428 7670
email: leanderkane@clear.net.nz ❖

WANGAPEKA PROGRAMME

10 May 2010

For more detail please consult *www.wangapeka.org/program/*

2010

June 4 - July 16

Mind of Nature, Nature of Mind
Experimental Insight Meditation: a merging of Buddhist meditation practice with Art and Science with **TARCHIN HEARN**. Contact retreatcentre@wangapeka.org.

Tarchin will be resident at the Centre until August 1 and will also offer a weekend of teaching at Wangapeka after July 16 if there is interest. Individuals are welcome to use the retreat facilities during those two weeks.

August 22

Wangapeka Educational Trust AGM
All welcome to come for the weekend or just for the day. Contact retreatcentre@wangapeka.org.

September 24 – Oct 22

Retreat with **BONNI ROSS**. A four week meditation retreat on AWAKENING DREAM. Contact retreatcentre@wangapeka.org.

October 22 - 25

Annual Labour Weekend Sangha Working Bee & Hui: *All welcome*. **BONNI ROSS** will be giving teachings.

2011

January 28 - February 20

Retreat with **LEANDER KANE**. Contact: retreatcentre@wangapeka.org.

March 5 - April 2

Death, Birth, and Great Bliss: A Meditation Retreat on the Transience of All with **LAMA MARK WEBBER**. A four week Vipassana retreat. Contact: qtndharmahouse@yahoo.com

Apr 22 - 29

DIAMOND ZEN SESSHIN. Information available from www.zendo.org.nz/pages/retreats.html ❖



Daniel Robinson

REGIONAL CONTACTS

Auckland: EILEEN BURTON
(09) 849 5501
eileenb@hrc.co.nz

JANET EADES
(09) 846 8853
janete1@ihug.co.nz

Tauranga: ANNE VAN LEEUWEN
(07) 552 0711
anne@littleweed.co.nz

GRANT & NATASHA RIX
021 1079 577
tash.grant@slingshot.co.nz

Hawke's Bay: KATHY MENZIES/ MIKAL NIELSEN
(06) 875 0621
info@soundseasy.co.nz

Wellington: RUTH PINK
(04)801 8896
pinkruth@xtra.co.nz

Golden Bay: ROB WESTERMAN
(03) 525 8155

West Coast: MANDY REID
(03) 789 6508
rpbmreid@ihug.co.nz

JENNY HELLYER
(03) 789 6931
jennyhellyer@xtra.co.nz

Christchurch: ALMA RAE
(03) 388 0045
raehawes@caverock.net.nz

AL WILKIE
(03) 332 9682
alanw@clear.net.nz

Otago: QUEENSTOWN DHARMA CENTRE
(03) 441 8008
qtdharmahouse@yahoo.com
www.dharmahouse.org.nz

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS 2009 - 2010:

Jane Hobday - coordinator
Kathy Connor
Dominique de Borrekens
Mark Schader
Ramona Clark - secretary

BOARD MEETINGS 2010

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| May 23rd | Nelson |
| June 20th | Nelson |
| July 4th | Wangapeka |
| Aug 22nd | AGM Wangapeka |
| Sept 12th | Nelson |
| Nov 7th | to be determined |
| Dec 5th | Nelson |

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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

Wangapeka Caretaker: (03) 522-4221
retreatcentre@wangapeka.org

Co-ordinator: Jane Hobday
(03) 528-9093
jane.hobday@paradise.net.nz

THE WANGAPEKA EDUCATIONAL TRUST

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre is located 80 km 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.

UNITS AND RETREAT HUTS

Members (*to qualify for this reduced rate, you need to have been a member for one year*): \$39 per night (including food). Non-members: \$45 per night (including food)

CAMPING

Members: \$34 per night (including food). Non-members: \$36 per night (including food)

Prices are subject to change. A subsidy may be available for those experiencing financial hardship. Special rates for families. The Centre is also available for hire to groups with similar aims. 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 notify us and 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 7096, Nelson, New Zealand
ph: (03) 522-4221 email: retreatcentre@wangapeka.org website: www.wangapeka.org

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If undelivered, please return to:
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Nelson, New Zealand