



REPORTS

RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS SESSHIN



The Stupa at the top of the Jacks Track ascent. Photo: Lee Nutter

The Rivers and Mountains sesshin was held over the Queen's Birthday long weekend. Originally scheduled for five days, our time was once again cut short by the heavy rain that fell on the Monday, though since most of the people attending planned to leave on the Monday afternoon anyway this was not a great problem. As was the case with last year's Mountains and Rivers sesshin, each day we sat the early morning and evening blocks more or less as we do in a conventional sesshin, but during the day walked in silence in the country around Kodoji. This also gave us an opportunity to test the new safety protocols that had been developed by Will Moon for the SZC Board, whose care and attention to our safety was deeply appreciated by all. There were three walks. The walk down 'our' road towards the main road and back on Saturday afternoon was a magical experience that allowed us to settle into the country and our bodies to gently adjust to doing mindful walking. On the Sunday we drove about 10 kilometers up the Upper Macdonald Road to Thompson's creek, a tributary to the Macdonald River that runs in from the north. At the head of this valley stands the culturally significant mountain, Yondi. We walked up the valley and back, eating our packed lunches at a small crossing. After lunch, Maggie, following the ancient tradition of forest teaching, gave teisho in a bush clearing, while the drizzle came and went. On Monday we did our most ambitious walk, up Jack's Gully, the track head of which is near St Albans, and along the ridge to Manjusri Rock, where last November a group of us had installed a small shrine to Guanyin/Kannon. We found Guanyin sitting safely in her niche under the towering rocks. After calling out to her to announce our presence and offering incense, we chanted the Emmei Jikku Kannon Gyo. By this time the rain was falling lightly but constantly. As we did last year, we once again sat under umbrellas to eat our lunch. We arrived back to the track head at about 3.30 where we had an impromptu sharing before the majority of the group headed homewards. Following a phone call from Brendon to inform us of the heavy rain falling in Sydney, and a dramatic increase in the heaviness of the rain at Kodoji, those of us who had returned to Kodoji decided to quickly pack up and drive home through the darkness and the fog.

Extending our dojo out into the mountains was a wonderful way to get to know the country in which we sit and which many of us have come to love. Dogen's Mountains and Rivers (or more strictly 'Mountains and Waters') Sutra, which we read each day, resonated with our mountains and our waters in wonderful and mysterious ways.

Allan

SAMU AT ANNANDALE 17 June

Quoting Meister Eckhart, D. T. Suzuki wrote: 'What a person takes in by contemplation, he pours out in love' and added, 'Zen would say, pours out in work, meaning that work is the concrete actualisation of love.' Thus, after zazen and Dharma talk, our city zendo received much loving attention from the sangha: windows were cleaned, patches on the zendo walls re-painted, cushions cleaned and mended, the hojo 'verandah' roof repositioned and improvements made to the kitchen. The garden was spruced up, the zendo cleaned, cushions sunned, curtains re-attached to their rail and work done on the Library. Mid-samu, everybody enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch. Deep gassho to all who concretely actualise love. *Gillian Coote*

COMING EVENTS

WEEKEND SAMU at KODOJI 24-26 August

To prepare for sesshin and another opportunity for concrete actualisation.
Enquiries: Tony Coote. 9817 3466

SPRING SESSHIN 21-28 September led by Gillian Coote

Spring and Sesshin at Kodoji!

'At sesshin we are free to be true to our hearts. We are free to transcend the background chatter of our busy minds and to see into the fact of our own true nature'. A tremendous opportunity to Wake Up. Applications should be in by 7 September for Early Bird payments, and no applications will be accepted after 14 September. Forms can be downloaded from the website or picked up at Annandale. All questions to sesshin co-ordinator Sally Hopkins; hopkins_sally76@dodo.com.au

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

- A warm welcome is extended to new/old member Chris Bowman and new members Michael Tierney, and Adrian Clement. Also Kath Abbott, who is from NZ and presently residing in the hojo. We all walk together!
- **BEGINNING of FINANCIAL YEAR:** this means that everyone's **MEMBERSHIP FEES** are due. Whether you pay direct or indirect, could you please put in a form for the Treasurer at Annandale so Meghan can keep track of the finances? We ask that all members be fully paid up by September.
- The Board has been considering wheelchair access, buying a new lawn mower for Kodoji, and SZC Insurance. Also the possibility of Father Ama Samy's group meeting at Annandale once a month.
- Will Moon is warmly thanked for all his work in creating *Bush Walking Guidelines* for Mountains and Rivers type sesshin.
- There is an Orientation Committee working with the Teachers to find more effective ways of introducing New Comers to this practice.
- **TRANSFORMATIONS in the Library:** There have been many donations of books for the library- Allan Marett has donated his book "For the Sake of a Song-Wongga Songmen and their repertoire", Sarah Walls and Cathie Tananka have donated books from their library, new member Adrian Clement has offered three books, and Gail Burrell-Davis has donated a special children's book that she and Shivani found. Many thanks to all! There are plans to get new bookcases, which would make it easier to see what is actually there. A work day is planned to do the moving and re-organising. The date will be announced on the yahoo list, and people would be very welcome to come and help, enjoy each other's company, and learn a bit more about the many good books there.
- **PLEASE NOTE** - the AGM will be held on October 21. Usually there is sitting, followed

by the AGM starting at 10am. All members are encouraged to come and take part.

REGULAR DATES

Dokusan *Mondays:* Subhana: August: 13, 20 September: 17
(24 September is sesshin and the following Monday is 1 October, public holiday)
Allan Marett: 30 July, 27 August, 10 September.

Wednesdays: Gillian Coote: August: 8, 15, 22, 29 September: 12, 19

Full Moon Ceremony: “I take up the way of not killing”, Monday 6 August, Wednesday 8 August.

Precept Recitation and Dharma Café: Monday 3 September, Wednesday 5 September. Newcomers especially welcome.

Zazen kai 8.30-12.00: 19 August, Subhana ; 16 September, Maggie.

Board Meetings: Thursdays 9 August, 13 September. Sit starts at 6.00pm meeting starts at 6.30pm. All members welcome. Full minutes of every board meeting are posted on the Yahoo SZC list for members to read.

Women’s Group: Friday 8 August at Diana’s and 14 September at Mari’s.

Orientations: Monday evenings 6pm, Maggie Gluek, magpiewarble@yahoo.com
Wednesday evenings 6.30pm, Janet Selby 0421 369 707, janetselby@bigpond.com

NOTICE BOARD

Gift recipient status for SZC Building Fund: The Australian Tax Office has confirmed that we are a DGR, or Deductible Gift Recipient for a fund (in our case the Sydney Zen Centre Building Fund). This restores the status of gifts to the building fund as tax deductible for the donor. If you would like to make a donation to the building fund, simply flag it as such and we will issue a receipt against which you can claim a tax deduction from your income.

Books for sale: *The Roaring Stream. A New Zen Reader*, ed. Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker is on sale at Annandale, along with Robert Aitken's books: *Taking the Path of Zen*, *Mind of Clover*, *The Dragon that Never Sleeps*, *Encouraging Words*, *The Morning Star*, *Vegetable Roots Discourse*, *Zen Master Raven* and *The Gateless Barrier*.

Use of Kodoji: Kodoji is available for use by members of the SZC and guests (if accompanied by a member). It can also be hired by other groups if approved by the Board. Fees are \$15 per night for members and \$25 for non-members. There is a \$100 booking fee for non-member groups. Booking of Kodoji is essential and it is also essential to receive instructions about use of the facility before going there.

Try giving the family a wonderful weekend, or yourself a few days of private retreat?
Enquiries to Brendan Stewart, phone 9879 7290, email stewarts34@bigpond.com

Blue Mountains Zen: The Blue Mountains Zen Group meets on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, from 3-5 p.m., at Paul Maloney’s home. The address is 19 Russell Road, Leura. Phone 4784 2136. The meeting is occasionally held at another venue, so it is best to check some days before, should one think of joining us for a sit.

Canberra Zen Group: Meets at Wat Dhammatharo on Wednesday evenings. Please contact Gary for more details: mobile 0429 635 412; email gcaitcheon@gmail.com

Laughing Kookaburra Meditation Group (Woy Woy): The LKS Zen Group is moving to a new home. The group is now based at the Woy Woy Environment Centre, 267 Blackwall Rd, Woy Woy. It is a wonderful small old church and should be a supportive place of practice. (*I very well may be sitting by myself, however I look forward to holding the space. If you're ever in the area or know anybody who is, come along for a sit - Stuart*)

It's time to sit and do nothing, foster inner calm, compassion, and discover our true nature.

Come and join the Laughing Kookaburra Sangha Zen Group.

Questions? Contact Stuart at ssolzberg@gmail.com, or 0424 623 800.

Meditation in Wollongong: Silent Meditation – Zazen – Sitting and walking meditation, held every Wednesday evening 7 – 8.30pm, at 'Alchemy' building, 196 Mt Keira Road, Mt Keira, Phone 4244 0208. Please arrive a little before 7pm. Gold coin donation for venue.

For more Information please phone Pip on 0414 496 414

CONTACT INFORMATION

SZC (02) 9660 2993 www.szc.org.au

Members of the Board: Brendon Stewart, Meghan Hay, Gail Burrell-Davis, Lee Nutter, Gordon Waters, Sue Bidwell, Harry Tamvakeris, Will Moon, and Kim Bagot.

Teachers: Subhana Barzaghi, Gillian Coote, Paul Maloney

Apprentice Teachers: Maggie Gluek, Allan Marrett

Newsletter editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com



Pictures from Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Top left: Silvia and Andrea sit zazen in the forest.

Top right: Maggie and Allan sit zazen in the forest.

Above: Our fearless leader and fellow pilgrim.

Left: Kuan Yin resides in her cave under Manjusri Rock

Photos: Lee Nutter

SZC Calendar August-September 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 July	30 Zazen 7-9pm	31	1 August Zazen 7-9pm	2	3	4
5	6 Full Moon N0t Killing	7	8 Full Moon Not Killing	9 Board Meeting 6.30pm	10 Women's Group Diana	11
12	13 Zazen 7-9pm	14	15 Zazen 7-9pm	16	17	18
19 Zazenkai 8.30-12.00 Talk Dokusan Subhana	20 Zazen 7-9pm	21	22 Zazen 7-9pm	23	24 Samu at Gorrick's —————→	25
26 Samu at Gorrick's —————→	27 Zazen 7-9pm	28	29 Zazen 7-9pm	30	31	1 September
2	3 Dharma Café 7-9pm	4	5 Dharma Café 7-9pm	6	7 Early Bird Sesshin Applications close	8
9	10 Zazen 7-9pm	11	12 Zazen 7-9pm	13 Board Meeting 6.30pm	14 Sesshin Apps close Womens Group Mari's	15
16 Zazenkai 8.30-12.00 Talk dokusan Maggie	17 Zazen 7-9pm	18	19 Zazen 7-9pm	20	21 Spring Sesshin starts —————→	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 End Sesshin —————→	29