



Encouraging Words from the Teacher

Maggie Gluek

An oft told story in these parts—and recently told at the autumn sesshin-- is that concerning Hsueh-feng, snowed in with his dharma brother and mentor Yen-tou at a place called Turtle Mountain.

While Yen-t'ou snoozed, Hsueh-feng spent most of the time doing zazen. "What are you doing sitting like a mad thing?" asked Yen-t'ou. Hsueh-feng responded, pointing to his chest, "I am not yet at ease here." "So tell me about your experiences and I'll examine them for you."

Hsueh-feng went on to narrate his marvelous experience with Teacher X and then an awakening with Teacher Y and then the sublime action of Teacher Z which had great effect. At this Yen-t'ou shouted and scolded his friend, "Don't you know that what enters from the gate (ie, that which has a beginning and an end) cannot be the treasure of the house? If you want to propagate the Great Teaching, it must flow point by point from within your own breast to cover heaven and earth. Only then will it be the action of someone with spiritual power." At that instant Hsueh-feng suddenly had realisation and cried loudly, "Today, for the first time, Turtle Mountain has become enlightened!"

Whether you know or know that you don't know, you need to be established right there, right here, confident in what is utterly your own truth. Standing your ground. This is better than all the brilliant teachings books or some teacher might give you.

Of course it's natural to want to know that one is on the right track in practice, in orientation--this was Yen-t'ou's service to Hsueh-feng. The person in the hojo may help fine-tune your steps (Go left two steps, now go back three, now right five). And in fact a coming together can itself dissolve the barrier. Maybe when you've given up, stopped trying. Viz again the old friends at Turtle Mt. Then the veil falls--no student, no teacher, just living dharma.

But there's a certain danger in Zen and especially, I think, with koan practice, where it can be apprehended as a gold star system. The school metaphors--curriculum and students--reinforce this valuing of external assessment, the perception of external assessment. If the teacher likes me and likes what I do, I must be a good student. Identification with the good student who gets top marks. The subtle search for the right answer that will be approved. I might add this is coming from someone who was sadly driven in competitive academic contexts. Someone who fainted in a Latin exam

when the teacher accidentally put the Cicero vocabulary instead of the Virgil vocabulary in the exam. The faint alerted the teacher to her mistake. The desperate distress. Who would I be if I did not get A's in the Latin exam I had studied so hard for??

That's another thing--the competition. How come so and so is getting ahead and I'm not? This kind of thinking feeds the fantasy realm around practice and enlightenment. Do we think we are going somewhere? I bow to Dogen:

Conveying oneself toward all things to carry out practice-enlightenment is delusion.

All things coming and carrying out practice-enlightenment through the self is realization.

True insight is not something you hold yourself, not a thing, but the place where all beings are enlarged, where your gain is mine, your liberation is mine.

I bow likewise to an old friend of Zen students, Layman Pang. A 8th/9th c. individual who followed the Buddhist Path as a lay person. He charted an unusual course. He studied and then set out with his friend to take the very difficult Mandarin exams. Scholars passing these exams were selected as elite government officials. And then he did not take the exams after all. His friend joined the sangha of Buddhist monks. This direction too Pang eschewed. Though a student, indeed master of the Way, he chose to stay outside its conventional context. Though he was married with two kids, all four lived unconventionally, all four being students of the Dharma. The Layman did not need to "fit in" anywhere, did not need approval, did not care about the world's opinion. He possessed everything he needed!

Pang's custom was to travel and check out and learn from great teachers of the day who deeply respected him. He went to Chiang-hsi to study with Ma-tsu and asked him, "What about someone who has no connection with the ten thousand dharmas?"

Ma-tsu said, "I will tell you after you have drunk down the waters of the West River in one gulp." The Layman understood the deep meaning implied, and composed a verse:

*Coming to this place from all directions
They all study non-doing.
But right here where Buddhas are selected
The examination is passed with an empty mind.*

He appreciates the challenge! Forget the Mandarins! The most important test of your life is always right here, right now--only here can you study non-doing and open your eyes. No amount of scholarly enterprise or travelling can take you to where you already are! Where you already embody your meaning. With an empty mind, the examination is passed. As students of Zen, walking and sitting, eating and sleeping, going about are lives, we are challenged at every moment. What mind is this?

Maggie Gluek

Reports

Buddha's Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony 9 April



Gilly Coote led us again in our usual delightful Buddha's Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony at Annandale. The baby was 9 months old Saoirse (Freedom, in Celtic) daughter of Shauna Murray and her partner Mani, sister to Marisol now 10, who was named many years ago. Her grandmother Joy was present along with Shauna's very good friend Jo. Also along came Lia on her birthday (and already over a week overdue with her own little son, to be called Ga-

briel) with her partner Saverio. Nick Dennington was there with his two very active children, Heath and Fleur. Much love and delight, words of welcome, craft-presents made by the children with guidance from Shauna, little children's songs and lullabies, remembrance of past little babies now grown, who were named here with input from Tony Coote, Kerry Stewart, Glenys Jackson and Sally Hopkins. The Baby Buddha statue created by Brendon and a group of sangha kids for the naming of Jesse, 25 years ago, now has a patina of green. After the Ceremony we shared a marvelous pot-luck lunch in the garden, surrounded by bushes and trees and smiling faces. A wonderful welcoming for little Saoirse into our community.

Sally+ Gilly

The Way of Peace - Autumn Sesshin at Kodoji 14-20 April

The Easter Sesshin was lead by Subhana Barzaghi and Maggie Gluek. 22 people attended with 17 full time participants. Sadly 3 Bodhisattva's were ill at the last minute and couldn't attend. We were blessed with the most glorious autumn sunshine and none of the April rain that has come in recent years. Subhana mentioned in her concluding remarks that this sesshin had particularly encompassed joy and playfulness and this was in part brought about by the attendance of the wonderful family of Simon Aylott, his wife Jenny Devlin (who were married by Subhana some years back) and their two young children Amy and Liora. Paul Maloney had encouraged the family saying it would be an act of generosity to others for them to attend and I wholeheartedly agree that this was true. The children's creative play in and around the paddock added much to the spirit of the week and they also attended part of some sittings and the services.

Subhana and Maggie both offered frequent dokusan and Jeff Ward was a wonderful Tanto. Peter Bursky led the chanting and offered gentle yoga, perfect to help the aches of sitting. Cooks, choppers and servers developed their kitchen ballet practice serving up delicious food to all. Subhana introduced 'Open Practice' in the afternoons where participants could set their own schedule, sitting in the dojo, sitting in nature or walking or attending dokusan. The weather certainly encouraged us all to enjoy the beauty of Kododji and the stars were stunning each night.

Crickets and stars
Silent dark and precious valley
Joy abounds

Jill Steverson



far left: Amy and Liora beginning a creative project.

left: London Nelms, our wonderful Head Server from Canberra

Photos: Jill Steverson

Walk to Cave 6 May with Will Moon

Saturday (6 May) dawned warm and sunny with a soft mist over the trees. Kerry, Brendon and Jill had arrived Friday night and a little later that night Joy and Richard Smith came. After an early sit and leisurely breakfast, Alex arrived with his mate Chad and about the same time Will, Sue and Lily turned up. And so we were all gathered and about 9.30 set off walking behind Will and Lily. Beyond the Balmain teachers properties the track has become overgrown and dense and we had to push our way through looking for an easy place to cross the creek and then make our way up the sandstone walls and over to the ridge. It took us over an hour and a half to reach the ridge and then we set off through the dry eucalyptus forest which was also thick with new growth. It seems no one has been up and along this way for some time.

Lily kept us entertained as she ran up and down our walking line, chatting both to herself and anyone else who'd listen to her stories about bird songs and which tree had the biggest leaves. Will navigated with a gentle confidence and after three and a bit hours he said, "lets go down this way", and off over the edge of the ridge we walked, down to second line of overhanging caves amongst which is "the cave". Nothing seemed to have changed, maybe the charcoal and ochre drawing were a bit more faded but they are still there: strong and strange and alive to our imagination.

We sat and lay down and looked closely and quietly spoke to each other and then almost silently Alex began to play his shakuhachi, he told me the piece is called 'offering'.

After this we walked back to Kodoji and before long everyone was in bed.

Brendon Stewart

Samu at Kodoji 27-28 May

There was Samu in preparation for Winter Sesshin and also re-scheduling of the cancelled February Samu, led by Tony Coote. Report will appear in next Newsletter as it's too late for this one.

Coming Events

Winter Sesshin at Kodoji 10-17 June led by Paul Maloney and Jeff Ward

You are invited to join Paul Maloney and Jeff Ward at Kodoji on Gorricks Run for the annual winter sesshin of the Sydney Zen Centre. If you like the idea of profound silence and clear night skies, you will not be disappointed. So, set aside your daily concerns for the eight days between Saturday 10 to Saturday 17 June.

“There just isn’t any kind of night’s sleep in the world to compare with the night’s sleep you get in the desert winter night, providing your good and warm in a duck-down bag. The silence is so intense that you can hear your blood roar in your ears but louder than that by far is the mysterious roar which I always identify with the roaring of the diamond of wisdom, the mysterious roar of silence itself, which is a great Shhhh reminding you of something you’ve seemed to have forgotten in the stress of your days since birth. I wished I could explain it to those I loved, but there weren’t any words to describe the nothingness and purity of it.”

From *Dharma Bums*, by Jack Kerouac



Application forms are available on the SZC website and in hard copy at the Annandale zendo.

Costs: SZC members \$500, Non-members \$520

Enquiries: Diana Levy, diana.r.levy@gmail.com, Mobile: 0432 619 305, or (02) 4751 3935

Samu at Annandale 18 June

Led by Tony Coote. All welcome! zazen from 8.30-9.30 followed by a Dharma talk. After morning tea there will be cleaning, repairing, painting, gardening, sewing, library work. We will share a potluck lunch together and have a really good time. It is always surprising fun.

Intensive Practice Week 10-14 July Two Day Zazenkai 15-16 July with Allan Marett

In July, Allan Marett will lead an Intensive Practice Week and Two-day Zazenkai at the Sydney Zen Centre in Annandale and at his Guanyin Sangha Zendo in Ashfield.

Both full-time and part-time participation will be available. Part-timers must sign up for specific periods or blocks of zazen. Full-time participation will include the zazenkai. This retreat provides a wonderful opportunity to increase the intensity of your practice while still accommodating the demands of your everyday life.

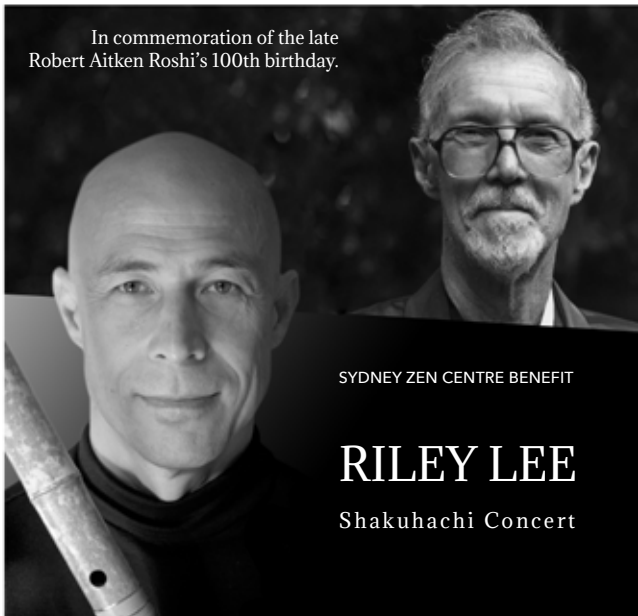
The schedule will be as follows:

- Early morning zazen (6.30 am—8.00 am), Monday to Friday (10 July—14 July). Guanyin Sangha Zendo, Ashfield.
- Evening zazen (7.00 pm—9.00pm), Monday to Thursday (10 July—13 July). Sydney Zen Centre, Annandale. Monday and Wednesday evenings will be led by Subhana and Gillian as usual.
- Two-day Zazenkai (9.00 am—5.00 pm), Saturday and Sunday, 15—16 July at Annandale zendo. While this Zazenkai forms an integral part of the Practice Period it will also be open (subject to places being available) to people who cannot participate in the Intensive Practice Period.

Enquiries should be directed to Peter Bursky at: mowerman26@hotmail.com

Notices

Riley Lee Concert Saturday 29 July



SATURDAY 29 July 2017

First sitting 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

OLD DARLINGTON SCHOOL

Maze Crescent
University of Sydney
Darlington, NSW 2008

Tickets available at www.eventbrite.com.au

Search for Riley Lee Shakuhachi Concert.

Tickets \$54

See the information about second sitting on the event website.

Looking to rent a room

I am a lively female Zen practitioner in my 60s moving to Sydney from Coffs Harbour in June. I am looking to rent a room in a house preferably with other Zen folk: ideally a Sydney location accessible to the Zen Centre and the sea. I eat veggies, chicken and meat, don't smoke and love to live quietly and harmoniously. Please ring Sarah on 0426274604 . Thankyou, Sarah.

Haiku Ginko - Writing Zen

5-week course at the WEA, Sydney, starting 28 August

A haiku (a Japanese form of short poem) captures a moment in nature. It is a doorway to zen practise - it is a way to write what you know. A ginko is a walk in nature. Tutor is Diana Levy, see dianajumpsintohaiku.blogspot.com or Facebook: Diana Levy - poet

Asylum Seekers Centre message - Waste Not Want Not

- Laptops, Mobiles and Tablets: Whether applying for jobs, looking for somewhere to live or communicating with loved ones, our clients greatly value having access to the internet. Our IT team would love donations of laptops, mobile phones and tablets, as well as laptop cases. The team will completely wipe them of all information before giving them to clients. (At the moment, desktop computers are not required as we do not have sufficient storage space). Email: sysadmin@asylumseekerscentre.org.au or call 9078 1900 with any offers - and please feel free to pass this request on to anyone you know!
- Headphones: Not the 'in ear type' but the ones that cover the ear, please.
- Nappies: The sizes for toddlers (10-15kg or 16kg+). We get given plenty of spare newborn sized nappies, but no one seems to have excess of the bigger ones to donate!
- Cooking Oil: There's a drought in Foodbank
- Shampoo and Shower Gel: Big sizes please - clients only get 1 a month
- Plastic Bags/Carry bags: Foodbank uses them by the hundred. Clean of course please.
- Take Away Food Containers: Always in high demand for storing left-overs.
- Used Household Batteries: Aldi has teamed up with Planet Ark to offer a free recycling service.
- Bicycles: Please do not bring them into the Centre as we don't have the space! Instead please take them to The Bike Shed, St Stephen's Church, 189 Church St, Newtown, Sats 11am - 2pm (more) or to The Bicycle Garden, Sydney Park Cycling Centre, 410-416 Sydney Park Rd, Alexandria, Workshops Thursday 6 -

9pm (more). The Bike Shed and The Bicycle Garden both pass on recycled bikes to our clients.

- Sewing Machines: In good working order, please
- Shopping Trolleys: Not supermarket trolleys - the personal ones!

Donations to Asylum Seekers Centre, Newtown can be put in the special box upstairs in the library at Annandale. Enquiries: Lesley, email lesley.treleaven@gmail.com or 0410 621756

Leadership Call

Dojo leadership is not only a fantastic way to actualise caring for the sangha and merging one's practice with the vast field we all share, it's also a great way to guarantee you'll turn up.

For those interested, please contact the following leaders who can guide you in the form of the roles.

Ino: Peter Bursky mowerman26@hotmail.com

Jiki: Sue Bidwell sue.bidwell17@gmail.com

Jisha: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

Books for Sale

Robert Aitken books for sale at Annandale include *The Ground We Share*, *The Practice of Perfection*, *Zen Master Raven*, *The Morning Star*, *Original Dwelling Place*. And don't forget the book of poems by SZC members Sally Hopkins and Glenys Jackson, *The Morning Star*.

News from the Board

Welcome Steve

The middle room has been taken up by long term Blue Mountains sitter Steve Crump, as a place to rest and engage with the sangha during his working week.

Website Launch

We have lift off! Our new website will be launched at the end of May. It looks beautiful, the content has been updated and rejigged and it's really easy to use. Congratulations and deep bow of gratitude to Georgina and Ameli for putting so much time, energy and expertise into this project. Click on and see how it's changed. We may have some areas that still need fine tuning, but we'll be adjusting as we go.

Fundraising Concert

Don't forget to buy your tickets for the Riley Lee Shakuhachi Benefit Concert from 3 – 5pm on Saturday 29th July. There will also be 3 members talking about their encounters with Aitken Roshi, to commemorate his 100th birthday.

Donations

The Board has decided to replace the pot belly stove in the cottage with a heater like the one in the dojo. We are also going to buy a defibrillator in case any of our members or guests at Kodoji, or Annandale have a heart based emergency.

Both of these items are quite costly, so we are asking our members for a small donation to help. Please only consider doing this if you have spare cash. If you pay directly into SZC bank account please put your last name and 'Donation' in the Reference section.

Notice Board

Dokusan

Mondays

Paul: May 29

Subhana: June 5, 26 July 3, 31

Wednesdays

Gillian: May 31, June 7, 21, 28 July 5, 19, 26

Full Moon Ceremony

Monday 19 June Wednesday June 14

Not Indulging in Anger

Dharma Café

July 10 + 12

Zazenkai

No zazenkai in June - Samu at Annandale 18 June

8.30-4 in place of zazenkai.

July 15-16 Two day zazenkai as part of the

Intensive Practice led by Allan Marett.

Orientations for Newcomers 7-9pm

June 15 and July 6

Beginners Night: June 22

See website for more details www.szc.org.au

Board Meeting

June 13 and July 4

6pm for a 6.30 start. All SZC members very welcome.

Womens Group Open to all Women Members

June 9 Helen R's (Winter sesshin starts next day)

July 7 Gilly's (following week is Intensive.)

Regular Notices

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 \$20 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. Please note that the local Fire Brigade has advised restrictions during summer.

Try giving the family a wonderful weekend, or yourself a few days of private retreat.

Enquiries to Brendon Stewart, phone 9879 7290

email stewarts34@bigpond.com

Blue Mountains Zen

The Blue Mountains Zen Group meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, 2 - 4.30pm in Lawson. Our teacher is Paul Maloney, 9045 3897

or contact Jane at janeandino@yahoo.com.au

Canberra Zen Group

Meets on Wednesday evenings.

Please contact Gary for more details: 0429 635 412
email gcaitcheon@gmail.com

North Shore Zen Group

Meets on Thursday nights 7-9pm at the *Quaker Meeting House*, 59 Boundary Road, Wahroonga. Please bring your own zafu/stool and zabuton.

Contribution \$5 - \$10 towards hiring the venue.

Please contact Maggie Gluek for more details:

magpiwarble@yahoo.com.

Ashfield Morning Zazen

SZC members interested in morning zazen and dokusan are invited to join a small group that sits regularly on Wednesday mornings from 6.30am - 8.00am.

Please contact Allan Marett allan.marett@gmail.com
0409712767 or Peter Bursky

mowerman26@hotmail.com 0405 042 236

Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com; Helen Sanderson (secretary); Jason Koh (treasurer); Sue Bidwell; Alex Budlevskis; Georgina Reid; Ameli Tanchitsa; Brendon Stewart.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

SZC: info@szc.com.au, www.szc.org.au

SZC Calendar June - July 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 28 Kodoji Winter Samu	29 ZAZEN 7-9pm	30	31 ZAZEN 7-9pm	June 1 end of <i>DEEP- ENING your PRACTICE</i> 7-9pm	2	3
4	5 ZAZEN 7-9pm	6	7 ZAZEN 7-9pm	8	9 Womens Group Helen R's	10 Winter Sesshin starts
11	12 NO ZAZEN public holiday	13 Board Meeting 6pm for 6.30	14 Full Moon Ceremony <i>Not Indulging in Anger 7-9pm</i>	15 Orientation 7-9pm	16	17 Winter Sesshin Ends
18 <i>No zazenkai Samu at Annandale</i>	19 Full Moon Ceremony <i>Not Indulging in Anger 7-9pm</i>	20	21 ZAZEN 7-9pm	22 Beginners Night 7-9pm	23	24
25	26 ZAZEN 7-9pm	27	28 ZAZEN 7-9pm	29	30	July 1
2	3 ZAZEN 7-9pm	4 Board Meeting 6pm for 6.30	5 ZAZEN 7-9pm	6 Orientations 7-9pm	7	8
9	10 Ceremony for start of Intensive Week 7-9pm	11	12 DHARMA CAFÉ 7-9pm	13	14	15 Zazenkai Intensive Week 9am-5pm
16 Zazenkai Intensive Week 9am-5pm	17 ZAZEN 7-9pm	18	19 ZAZEN 7-9pm	20	21	22
23	24 ZAZEN 7-9pm	25	26 ZAZEN 7-9pm	27	28	29 CONCERT with RILEY LEE