



## Encouraging Words

by Maggie Gluck

*All the harmful karma ever created by me since of old  
On account of my beginningless greed, hatred and ignorance  
Born of my body, speech and thought  
I now acknowledge openly and fully*

In the Purification gatha which opens our sutra service the “I” is salient and crucial. Let’s get it straight right away, in the first person, this matter of putting oneself on the line. Whether referring to the vast and unknowable causes and conditions I have co-participated in “since of old” or to the harmful, even terrible, consequences of my thoughts, words and actions in this particular life, I must own my part. Only when I have fully and openly acknowledged it, can I begin to take responsibility for the suffering I have created.

The profound truth of acknowledgment and responsibility was brought home to me yesterday when I visited a friend and Buddhist practitioner who is incarcerated in a California prison. His daily intention is to find ways to protect others from harm. One form this takes is in supporting young offenders who have entered the prison system, hoping to guide them away from three poisons. He offers the awful errors of his past as an example of the wrong path. Moreover, his daily awareness is directed to living, and loving, openly and fully. I recall Thich Nhat Hahn saying that only by attending to the “present moment” can one truly redeem the past.

This latter is the dimension of prajna, cutting through karmic consciousness. What’s that? Women’s verse in Case 12 of the Wu-Men Kuan points to a relative historical understanding of the self:

*Students of the Way do not know truth;  
they only know their consciousness up to now;  
this is the source of endless birth and death;  
the fool calls it the original self.*

Is your past and how you understand it the sum total of who you are? It’s a limited story and self-reinforcing, a looping narrative that dead-ends. Hereby suffering is created and maintained. Hereby one fears failure and death. Our practice is so salutary! When you can catch yourself thinking “this is who I am,” catch yourself caught in the loop, you can step out and be free. Realise that you are already free! Realise that karmic consciousness is Buddha Nature too.

What are the dimensions of taking full responsibility for the welfare of all beings? Who is this “I”?

Who? In Danville, north of San Francisco, Great Horned Owls call in the night.

Hoo. Hoo. Hoo.



# Reports

## Transmission Sesshin led by Allan Marett, Annandale 20-25 July

The Transmission Sesshin, led by Allan Marett, began on Friday evening 20th July and concluded on Wednesday morning 25th July. Allan's title for the sesshin was "Cultivating the Empty Field", an expression used by Zen Master Hongzhi, compiler of The Book of Serenity, to describe the work of cultivating a mature practice. Allan's teishos during sesshin developed this theme.

This sesshin, like the annual Rohatsu sesshin in December, was held at Annandale and was non-residential. With the flexibility of the three blocks of morning, afternoon and evening, participants could sign up for the periods that fitted in with their other commitments of work, family, etc. We also had visitors from other zen groups sitting with us, and a remote sitter in Tasmania who joined us in practice each day.

From the very first evening, the atmosphere in the dojo was deeply calm and focused, perhaps because of the sense of progression to the Transmission ceremony on Sunday 29th July. Many people commented that they valued the opportunity to maintain their zazen whether at work, at home or at Annandale, and to be in the flow of all the coming and going.

On the Monday evening 23rd July a dharma enquiry was held, open to all the sangha and facilitated by Subhana Barzaghi Roshi. Many commented that they were touched by the warmth of the more informal setting at Annandale, by the sincere questions of participants, and by Allan's open response to all.

At this point in a report on a sesshin, there is usually an account of an exciting wildlife encounter, a fire, a disaster narrowly averted, or all of the above. Happily our sesshin was a no-sesshin. We just sat and sat.

## Kodoji Samu 8-9 September

Kodoji's very own Vivid light teamsters: Jill, Kerry, Gilly, Julie, Georgina, Carl, Ameli, Tony and Brendon get the glow going in the dunnies.

During our recent samu over 8th than 9th September we were able to install solar lights in the two toilets and above the wash basin. Our samu also made great progress pushing back the blackberries along the road and removing a great number of Moth Vine plants. Yvonne Hales came up to Gorricks on Sunday and helped Gilly, Jill, Georgina, Julie and Kerry with this crucial bush care work.

Ameli fixed the solar panels to the roof of the shower block and Tony neatly wired up the first toilet. There is still some work to do to finish this project off which involves extending the light leads so that they can reach across to the second toilet. This should all be done at the spring sesshin - a minor samu task!

Another delightful task was to present to Tony, from all in our Sangha a memorial plaque, acknowledging him with gratitude for the fantastic design and the countless hours of work that he has put into making Kodoji such a wonderful SZC retreat.

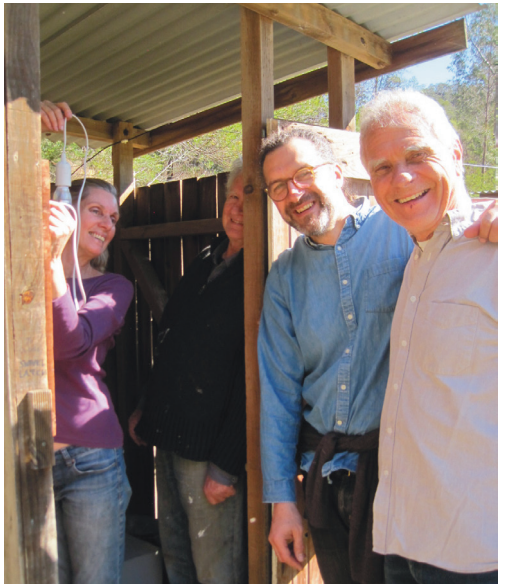
We shared together a gentle evening zazen and an early morning sit.

As per usual the evening dinner and Sunday lunch were delicious and joyous.

*Tony and Gilly*







# Coming Events

## Annual General Meeting

Sunday 14 October, 10:30am

The meeting is a great opportunity to find out how we've been going over the last year and help plan for the future. It starts at 10.30am and there will be a pot luck lunch to share afterwards.

As usual, there will be a lot of jobs that we need volunteers to fill. As a precursor, here is a list to consider:

*Ethics committee; Gorricks Bookings; Fire Officer for Gorricks; Samu coordinator; Kodoji inventory coordinator; Roster for Dojo leadership; Leadership training coordinator; Zazenkai coordinator; Website coordinator; Social media coordinator; Sesshin & Event Flyers; Sesshin Coordinators – Autumn, Winter, Spring, Rohatsu; Sesshin Food Coordinators – Autumn, Winter, Spring, Rohatsu; Information collation for Newsletter; Newsletter editor; MMC coordinator; MMC postage & digital coordinator; Library coordinator; Roster for Dojo cleaning coordinator; Dojo flowers & biscuit buyer.*

## Memorial Ceremony

Sunday 11 November, 11am

A MEMORIAL CEREMONY will be held at Annandale on Sunday 11th November, to honour family and friends, led by Gillian Coote, and followed by a potluck lunch. Zazen from 9 - 10.30, ceremony at 11 am. People are encouraged to bring photos of those they wish to honour, flowers, and food to share afterwards. This is always an intimate time of remembering those we love.

## News from the Board

### AGM Oct 14

Don't forget to come along to the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 14th October. It's a great opportunity to find out how we've been going over the last year and help plan for the future. Also, a reminder to pay your membership fee .... or you can't vote! The meeting starts at 10.30am and there will be a pot luck lunch to share afterwards. There will be lots of wonderful ways to share your skills by taking up one of the many jobs that need to be done to keep the sangha running smoothly. We need your input, so if you can't make it, please fill out a proxy form (at Annandale now) for someone else to speak for you. And it's important to have as many people as possible so we have a quorum.

### Kyosaku

The Board and the teachers have decided to insert a small paragraph of explanation, on the application form and in the sesshin cautions, about the use of the kyosaku at some sesshins. Also, our historic kyosaku that graced the altar over decades is still missing. Please let a Board member or teacher know if you have seen it. Another beautiful one, made of South Pacific timber by Tony Coote, has replaced it for the time being.

## Notices

### Orientations for Newcomers

**Next Orientations: Thursday October 18, November 15 from 7-9pm**

The extended format for offering orientations to newcomers, or indeed as a refresher, has been successful and effective. There are limited places and if you are unable to attend without notice, it might deprive others of a chance to attend. Therefore we require people to confirm their participation a few days before the orientation.

Any questions, email [info@szc.com.au](mailto:info@szc.com.au). See website for more details.



## 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 books and CDs by SZC members Sally Hopkins and Glenys Jackson, *Star and Mountain; Zen Leopard* by Brendon Stewart; *Swimming in Sound* by Caroline Josephs.

## Asylum Seekers Centre Donations

The need for basic survival services by those who receive no government help, cannot work and are waiting indefinitely for visa decisions is increasing dramatically, and each week there are 750 clients.

The Centre relies only on donations of:

**Staples:** rice, canned tomatoes, beans, lentils

**Personal hygiene:** shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, shaving cream, toothpaste.

**Devices:** Mobile phones, laptops and iPads can help keep in touch with separated families.

All data is wiped by an IT specialist.

Unfortunately the Centre can no longer take anything electrical (with a plug).

The SZC women's group continues to make a donation each month which is really appreciated.

If you're not sure, please contact Lesley (0410621756) before leaving anything upstairs at the SZC, Annandale.



# 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](mailto:stewarts34@bigpond.com)

## Blue Mountains Zen

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

or contact Jane at [janeandino@yahoo.com.au](mailto:janeandino@yahoo.com.au)

## Canberra Zen Group

Meets on Wednesday evenings.

Please contact Gary for more details: [gcaitcheon@gmail.com](mailto:gcaitcheon@gmail.com) 0429 635 412

## 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: [magpiewarble@yahoo.com](mailto:magpiewarble@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](mailto:allan.marett@gmail.com) 0409 712 767

or Peter Bursky [mowerman26@hotmail.com](mailto:mowerman26@hotmail.com) 0405 042 236



## Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) [stewartkerry4@gmail.com](mailto:stewartkerry4@gmail.com); Stephen Crump (secretary); Jason Koh (treasurer); Jillian Ball; Alex Budlevskis; Helen Sanderson; Brendon Stewart.

**Newsletter Editor:** Janet Selby [janetselby@bigpond.com](mailto:janetselby@bigpond.com)

**SZC:** [info@szc.com.au](mailto:info@szc.com.au), [www.szc.org.au](http://www.szc.org.au)

## October 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Allan	2	3 ZAZEN 7-9pm	4	5	6 Spring Sesshin ends
7	8 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	9	10 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	11	12	13
14 AGM 10:30am	15 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	16	17 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	18 Orientation Sue	19	20 Dharma Study Annandale 1-4pm
21	22 Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Subhana	23	24 Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Gillian	25	26	27
28	29 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	30	31 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian			



## November 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	4	5 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	Nov 1	2	3
4	5 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	6	7 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	8	9	10 Dharma Study Annandale
11 Memorial Ceremony, Gillian	12 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	13 Board Meeting 6pm for 6.30	14 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	15 Orientation, Janet	16	17
18 Zazenkai Jill S, talk, Gillian dokusan	19 Full Moon Ceremony, <i>Not prais- ing yourself while abusi- ing others</i> (Subhana)	20	21 Full Moon Ceremony, <i>Not prais- ing yourself while abusi- ing others</i> (Gillian)	22 Beginners night	23	24
25	26 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	27	28 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	29	30	

