



## Encouraging Words

by Jane Andino

There's a saying in English "Practice makes perfect", but in our Zen practice we actually drop ideas of perfection and non-perfection. We practice just to practice, without any gaining idea. I make this point because it's so easy to get caught up in the emotion of "that was a good sitting" (pat on the back) and "why can't I concentrate?!! My head is going round and round in circles" (extreme frustration).

In our advertising culture we are constantly urged to aim for the perfect house, the perfect job, the perfect relationship, and that can spill over into wanting the perfect zazen. But perfect zazen is just simply sitting, seeing all those raging thoughts and judgements as a passing parade; just seeing what is here.

In Verses on the Faith Mind (Hsin Hsin Ming) it says:

*'The Way is perfect like vast space where nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess.'*

*'Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject that we do not see the true nature of things.'*

This perfection of the Way is not the Hollywood movie way, but the perfection of the crooked line, the fading colour of the rose petal, the noisy aeroplanes roaring through our Annandale meditation. It's the path of seeing through the labels and habits of mind, choosing to be here on the cushion or here in the middle of your busy schedule, whether it's with the uncomfortable, the anxious, the serene or the joyous.

Gaudi said that in the natural world there are no straight lines, and you can see that expressed in his marvellous organic architecture which finds perfection in avoiding the perfectly straight line.

Similarly, when the bird sings it doesn't say to itself: "my top notes are horrible today!" It just sings, whatever comes out.

So please don't give yourself a hard time when your actual practice doesn't live up to your expectations. Just keep going.

AND YET.....there is also aspiration. These are the ten Paramitas or Perfections which Gilly mentioned in her recent Encouraging Words about Dana or Relinquishment, the first of the paramitas.

Let's take a look at the fourth paramita, Virya or Zeal, which nowadays seems such an old-fashioned word. It is a combination of stick-at-it persistence, sincere enquiry, and a trust in each complete moment, which will naturally flow into generous action for others. Virya will help you, rather like an encouraging Personal Trainer. It helps you to choose to act so that the Buddha Way can be embodied fully.

I'll finish with this quote from Verses on the Faith Mind:

*'To live in this realisation is to be without anxiety about non-perfection.'*

*To live in this faith is the road to non-duality, because the non-dual is one with the trusting mind'.*

Jane Andino



# Reports

## Autumn Sesshin 2018: Keeping Company in the Dharma

Dedicated practitioners bring sesshin into being, into the strange and wonderful reworking of time, into unexpected (of course) insights. A swell of folks at the beginning of the week, then an exodus after the long weekend, but new arrivals too. Releasing and enfolding.

Heavenly manifestations—the April full moon rising reliably, gloriously, over the horizon the first few days, for our viewing pleasure; the stars at Kodoji, always ready to take one’s breath away; a few days of hot—some like it, some complain—and then unarguably perfect temperatures. Who and what does not shine?

Animals, other than human, heard or sighted include a wedge-tailed eagle, a barking owl, sugar gliders, an antechinus; black cockatoos on a low branch and a satin bower bird flyover grace an outside kinhin; sitting on the verandah one morning all of us have front row seats to the most amazing concert, with an OTT lyrebird as the star turn.

Round and round the stone Buddha we go one night, absorbed by the dark, while his flat surfaces are covered with tiny candles, like a giant tiered birthday cake or a strange Mesopotamian tower. Getting lost in a spiral circumambulation.



Meals excel in deliciousness. Does food ever taste better than at sesshin? The kitchen is a powerhouse of chopping and cooking, never dull under the supervision of “Iron Tenzo” Diana. Surely the hungry ghosts are satisfied.

And...there is a day of silence, no talking. (The only words I hear, involuntarily uttered, are “Thank you.”) And an afternoon of unstructured practice. And Paul gives a teisho, reminding us just why we are here. And Allan’s song, at the close of evening, goes straight to the heart. And Sally makes sure we can cross the creek to the other shore. And death is never far away.

*Maggie Gluek*

## Buddha’s Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony 8 April

Glenys’ mandala is unpacked and we bring in silence our offerings from the cornucopia of Mother Nature...to add to Our ceremony honours our founding teacher, and the mystery and wonder of new life. Glenys created a special flower arrangement for the day, and the Baby Buddha statue from the garden was placed on a low table, and bathed. From far-away Scotland, baby Rumi was welcomed into our sangha. His parents, Diego and Sabrina, who once lived at Annandale, shared how they came to choose this name for their son, and we enjoyed one of Rumi’s poems. The photos they sent had been placed on our altar for the ceremony, photos of which were much appreciated. Diego and Sabrina wrote: ‘The picture on the altar is wonderful. You and the SZC make our experience with Rumi and Rumi’s life so special. We are very proud of it and deeply touched.’ So are we all.



*Gillian Coote*

## Soto Visitors



On Sunday morning May 13, three Reverends from the Sotoshu Shumuchō came to visit the Sydney Zen Centre and were welcomed by Jane Andino of the SZC. They were Rev. Kenzen Yamamoto (Director of Education and Dissemination Division, Japan), Rev. Risai Furutani (Manager, Sotoshu Shumuchō) and Rev. Taiga Ito (Soto Zen Buddhism International Centre, San Francisco). Following a ceremony at their temple Jikisho-an in Melbourne, the three visitors came to Sydney to find out more about the SZC, and to create a bond of friendship and a dharma relationship with us. They paid their respects by offering incense at the altar in our Zendo and chanting the Maka Hannya Haramita Shin Gyo.

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## Coming Events

### Annandale Samu

**Sunday June 17**

SAMU at Annandale on Sunday June 17, all welcome. Zazen from 8.30 - 9.30 followed by Dharma talk by Gillian Coote, roshi. After a cuppa, we will prune climbing ficus, weed garden; clean and mend zafus and zabutons, sweep dojo, mend rice-paper blinds; look at sorting out stuff in the garage, and paint second coat to internal bathroom door plus any other jobs that present themselves. Please bring some vegetarian food to share for lunch.

Tony Coote, co-ordinator: [tony@tonycootearchitect.com](mailto:tony@tonycootearchitect.com)

## Cultivating the Empty Field

**Transmission Sesshin for Allan Marett, 20 - 25 July 2018**

*Cultivating the Empty Field* was an expression used by Zen Master Hongzhi to describe the work that we do, not just in coming to Awakening, but also in cultivating a mature practice. Our focus will be *The Book of Serenity*, Hongzhi's collection of koans with accompanying verses. Together we will cultivate the ancient ground in preparation for the dharma transmission of Allan Marett on Sunday 29 July.

Our five-day sesshin will begin on the evening Friday 20 July and will conclude around lunchtime on Wednesday 25 July. It will be held at the SZC at Annandale and will be non-residential. Participants can choose to attend full-time, or elect to attend for specific blocks (morning, afternoon, evening) on specific days. This flexible structure is designed to accommodate the demands of people's busy lives. Allan would like all participants to attend on Friday evening for the opening of sesshin, unless explicitly excused. He also asks that you maintain your commitment by coming to each block that you have signed up for.

The schedule will include zazen, walking meditation, dokusan, teisho and dharma enquiry. As this is a non-residential sesshin, participants will be responsible for their own accommodation. Participants will also be responsible for their own lunches. Suppers will be provided on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings.

Enquiries and RSVP to Jane Andino: [janeandino@yahoo.com.au](mailto:janeandino@yahoo.com.au). Please use the application form available from this link: <http://szc.org.au/classes/transmission-sesshin-ceremony/>



# Sydney Zen Centre

## Transmission Ceremony for Allan Marett



Ariwara Temple bell tolls in the dawn.  
An ancient temple, loud with pines  
Where the wind sighs. Frail as a plantain leaf,  
The dream breaks into awakening  
The dream breaks into day.

*Final lines from the Noh play Izutsu, Zeami Motokiyo (c. 1363 – c. 1443)  
Translated by Royall Tyler*

**1.30 pm, Sunday 29 July 2018**

**The Buddhist Library**

**90 – 92 Church Street**

**Camperdown, Sydney NSW**

The Sydney Zen Centre invites you to attend a Transmission Ceremony for Allan Marett. Allan will receive Dharma Transmission as an independent Zen teacher within the Diamond Sangha from Subhana Barzaghi Roshi, a guiding teacher of the Sydney Zen Centre.

The ceremony will be immediately followed by afternoon tea.

Visitors from interstate or overseas will need to make their own arrangements for accommodation.

Enquiries and RSVP: Stephen Crump  
[stephencrump@pfsnet.com.au](mailto:stephencrump@pfsnet.com.au) or phone 0437 923 928

Please RSVP by 16 July  
Stephen Crump  
[stephencrump@pfsnet.com.au](mailto:stephencrump@pfsnet.com.au)

Phone 0437 923 928



Sydney Zen Centre  
[info@szc.org.au](mailto:info@szc.org.au)

# News from the Board

## GRATITUDE

Our deep thanks go to David Moore, a friend of Paul Maloney, who has gifted 2 amazingly beautiful rubbings of Korean temple bells to SZC. Paul brought them to Autumn sesshin and they took up residence on either side the altar, like they were made especially for that place!

In the future they will be taken to Kodoji for sesshins, so they can once again blossom there.

Also, thanks to Michael Breen, who donated a set of very good quality knives for Kodoji. So choppers now will have their work eased by the sharpness of the blades...and also have to be careful with their fingers!

## CANCELLATION OF WINTER SESSHIN

The Winter sesshin in June has been cancelled. Paul Maloney, roshi who was leading the sesshin, accidentally fell off a ladder and is slowly recovering from his injuries. The Board, on behalf of sangha members, sent him some flowers and our wishes for a speedy recovery.

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## Notices

### Orientations for Newcomers

#### Next Orientations: Thursday June 21, July 12 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](mailto:mowerman26@hotmail.com)

**Jiki:** Sue Bidwell [sue.bidwell17@gmail.com](mailto:sue.bidwell17@gmail.com)

**Jisha:** Janet Selby [janetselby@bigpond.com](mailto: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); Steven 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)

## June 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	5	6 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	7	8 Womens Group Kerry's	9
10	11 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Maggie	12 Board Meeting 6pm for 6.30	13 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	14	15	16
17 Annandale Samu 8.30-12 Talk Gillian	18 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	19	20 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	21 Orientation Kerry	22	23
24	25 Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Subhana	26	27 Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Gillian	28	29	30



## July 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	3	4 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	5	6	7
8	9 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Subhana	10 Board Meeting 6pm for 6.30	11 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	12 Orientation Brendon	13 Womens at Sarah's	14
15	16 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Allan	17	18 ZAZEN 7-9pm with Gillian	19 Beginners Night	20 Transmission Sesshin Allan	21 Transmission Sesshin Allan
22 Transmission Sesshin Allan	23 Transmission Sesshin Allan	24 Transmission Sesshin Allan	25 Transmission Sesshin Ends Full Moon Ceremony, <i>Not giving or taking drugs</i>	26	27	28
29 Dharma Transmission Ceremony Allan	30 Full Moon Ceremony, <i>Not giving or taking drugs</i> (Subhana)	31				

