



ENCOURAGING WORDS

Jane Andino

No Fear

“With no hindrance in the mind; no hindrance and therefore no fear; far beyond delusive thinking, right here is Nirvana.”

Heart Sutra.

Recently we had International Women’s Day on March 8, and the Women’s March 4 Justice Rally on March 15. I came across this relevant excerpt from ‘The Hidden Lamp’ by Florence Caplow and Susan Moon. It’s from Dipa Ma, a Theravadan teacher from Bangladesh and India who greatly influenced the Vipassana movement in the U.S.

“Dipa Ma was on an airplane with a woman student. It was very turbulent, and the woman screamed. Dipa Ma was sitting across the aisle and took her hand and held it. Then she whispered, “The daughters of the Buddha are fearless.”

Amita Schmidt’s Reflection: “The first time I heard this story I thought ‘Wait a minute, the Buddha never had a daughter.’ Dipa Ma, however, is pointing to a truth here that is deeper than historical facts. First of all she is teaching her student that as Buddhist practitioners each one of us belongs to the Buddha’s family. No one is left out, not by gender, nor by time or history. We all belong to the lineage and the awakening of the Buddha, right here, right now.”

Also commenting on the fearless attitude of a daughter of the Buddha she writes: “Waking up is not a part-time job for the faint-hearted. It is the intention to meet every moment continually without flinching.”

Recently there have been many women in Australia, especially young women, speaking out fearlessly. They know that, as one of the slogans at the rally said, we must “Shatter the silence, Stop the violence.” As human beings we seem to have the habit of hanging on to habits, and habitual ways of viewing the world. If everyone does it, puts up with it, it must ok. Right?

Yet again, triggered by all the stories emerging, we are being brought to listen to the daily reality for many women, and hopefully to step over the threshold of our comfortable safety.

How can we apply our Buddhist practice here? Our practice teaches us to respect each person, to see in ourselves and each person the True Person of No Rank, as Lin-ji calls it. Maybe really listening, really being open to each person’s situation, examining our own habits of mind, is what is required.

How can our practice help us in the face of discriminating views? If we have openness, fearlessness, and a willingness not to give up, if we have a resolve to keep taking the one next step, then it is inevitable that anything is possible in creating a just and humane community.

Grace Tame, Young Australian of the Year, is so admirable in the way she speaks fearlessly, and yet she also takes it to the next level. She said “When we share, we heal.” Sharing the pain is the way to step forward together. Sharing it with all beings, women and men, this is the legacy of the daughters of Buddha.

In the Red Pine translation of the Heart Sutra, he translates hindrance as ‘walls of the mind’. I like this, the discovering that those walls or barriers are illusory, and yet so difficult to demolish. But we keep on with each step, so that we find that ‘Far beyond delusive thinking, right here is Nirvana.’

Jane Andino

Upcoming Events

Buddha's Birthday and Baby Naming Ceremony April 11 at Annandale

Our ceremony begins at 11 am and finishes around noon and is a family-friendly event when we welcome Lily's little girl Luna and Jill Steverson's grandson Arki, into our sangha. Bring flowers to offer the Baby Buddha and our two bodhisattva babes and your welcoming songs, poems and stories.

Thanks to Janet Selby for co-ordinating our event. - Gillian Coote

Winter Sesshin June 11-16 Online via Zoom

The Winter sesshin will be led by apprentice teacher Jane Andino and Maggie Gluek Roshi. It will be held online via Zoom from Friday June 11 to Wednesday June 16 (including Queen's Birthday June 14). There are four blocks of zazen per day: Early morning, Late morning, Afternoon and Evening. Participants can sign up for any blocks, but are urged to take advantage of the long weekend and sign up for the full Saturday, Sunday and Monday sittings.

Attending the opening of sesshin on the Friday evening is mandatory unless there are exceptional reasons not to. The schedule will include zazen, walking meditation, sutra recitation, dokusan and a teisho every evening. A non-residential sesshin is an excellent opportunity to bring the practice into daily life and by signing up for whole days you will support your fellow meditators while strengthening your own practice. More information and application forms will be on the website closer to the application date.

If you have any queries, please email Pablo Scodellaro pablo.scode@gmail.com

Reports

Women's Retreat at Kodoji 5-7 March

Eleven women attended this year's retreat. It was perfect autumn weather with sunshine and cooler evenings. A simple schedule for the weekend was planned with more rest and zazen this year and Julie and Jill met up with our bush regenerator Jacob, see bushcare report. We walked along the creek to appreciate the diversity of the new vegetation and up behind the waterfall and visited the memorial pole for David Englebrecht aka Ko Sei, Harbour Star - 'In every corner of the harbour the light shines'. We also joined for wonderful sharing, singing, feasting, and bushcare including vanquishing the dreaded moth vine.

We had a friendly visit from the indomitable Rosie Scott (vice president of the MacDonald Valley Association) on her white steed Ali Baba plus her friend on a less polite frisky chestnut mount plus their thirsty and hot black labrador Max. Also a brief visit from a trail bike rev-head who roared up our drive and swiftly did a U-turn. Lyrebirds, king parrots, magpies, mopokes, frogmouths and sugar gliders were all with us over the weekend. It was a joyful weekend for the sangha.

Jill Steverson

Bushcare Report

It is now at the very end of the grants we received for blackberry and the regeneration of the creek area. Jacob Philpot, the bush regenerator we engaged, has worked hard and effectively over the last 18 months controlling the blackberry along the drive and knocking it back in the orchard area behind the creek, plus encouraging regeneration of the creek zone. He has removed any windblown weeds and seeded the delicate creek area damaged by flood and bulldozer with native grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) taken from the paddock.

The resilience of the area is very good and now it is robust with an amazing diversity of endemic native plants, including early colonisers from the shale cliff tops. There are a variety of baby eucalyptus coming through, including

narrow leaved stringy bark, forest red gum, grey gum and Deans or mountain blue gum. These will eventually give good canopy. The remaining blackberry will need follow up in November this year when the growing season starts, so a bushcare weekend will be planned.

The paddock perimeter will also need follow up as it is challenged by nightshade, fleabane and bidens that have come through strongly in the areas where the fire protection zones were made by the RFS. The notorious moth vine also needs regular follow up. Overall the property has good resilience and wonderful botanic diversity.



Women's Retreat, Kodoji.
Cheerily posing on the steps; casually chatting on the verandah; looking for koalas; teamwork in the kitchen.



Below: Bushcare
Stretching for mothvine eradication;
Jill Steverson and bush regenerator Jacob Philpot



News from the Board

NEW SCHEDULE

Zazen - Gilly will be Zooming on the first Wednesday of the month (except Wed 7th April) and will be at Annandale for the other 3 Wednesdays. Subhana will continue Zooming and coming to Annandale on alternate Mondays. The Board is very supportive of Zoom as it allows connection with those members who can't come to the zendo and have established strong ties with the online community.

The Board is also offering zazen at the zendo every Monday and Wednesday from 7 to 9pm. When Subhana and Gilly aren't there you may find Maggie, Paul or one of the apprentice teachers sharing their teachings. If no teacher is available we will have a space for sitting with senior students as leaders.

In April and early May, Subhana Barzaghi and Mari Rhydwen are conducting an Eco-Dharma training course in the Thursday night time slot, via Zoom. It is a fascinating and informative course with contributions from experts in the field of Climate Change. Details are on our website.

Zazenkais have returned to Annandale - please check the website for details.

Buddha's birthday and baby naming ceremony at Annandale on 11th April. Gilly will be conducting this celebration and delightful sharing of life and love, so the bring your family along. <http://szc.org.au/classes/buddhas-birthday-baby-naming-ceremony/>

There are restrictions on number of people allowed into the zendo so it's essential to register and book in with info@szc.org.au. Please don't turn up unless you get a return confirmation for your booking.

As always, the upcoming events scheduled in April and May are dependent upon the Covid situation not escalating and advice from the NSW Health Department.

Check 'What's On' or our website for up to date details: szc.org.au/upcoming-events

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome Rachel and Jo to the sangha! We look forward to sharing this wonderful practice with you.

KODOJI

Care for our country retreat is essential, and a good way to do that is for members to go there. So, if you have a few days free and would like a little holiday in the bush, please contact Brendon stewarts34@bigpond.com

A deep bow of gratitude to Jill Steverson, Julie Robinson and Gilly Coote for their endless dedication to weeding and caring for the land. And Jacob Philpott for all his fabulous regeneration of the degraded land.

GOOGLE MAPS

We are improving Sydney Zen Centre's online presence, and we need your help!

These days, many people discover the Centre via Google Maps and Facebook, and until recently our content was fairly limited. Up-to-date reviews and photos of the Sydney Zen Centre help demonstrate that we are an active and welcoming community, and allow us to continue attracting new members.

Everyone can help, regardless of whether you're a long-time member or fairly new. Just write a few words about the Centre, or about what Zen practice means for you. Or just post some photos.

Joe Gaebel would welcome your comments or questions, and will be happy to provide technical assistance if you need it: joe.gaebel@hotmail.com





Regular Notices

Transition back to Annandale Zendo / Continuation of on-line meditation

Please see the regular SZC email reminders for Zoom links, or email info@szc.org.au for details.

We have re-opened the Annandale zendo to regular Monday and Wednesday meditation evenings, with the program now including sutras, and the opportunity for private interviews with a teacher.

We are also continuing a Zoom program, so on some Mondays and Wednesdays there will be two different meetings, with the option to attend either at Annandale or online.

If you wish to attend the Annandale zendo, you must pre-register via info@szc.org.au, and you must comply with our COVID-19 conditions of entry which can be found on www.szc.org.au/classes/zazen. This includes bringing a mask to wear during sutra chanting.

The Board is also committed to maintaining an on-line meditation program, with Thursdays being the regular weekly evening. We will continue Zoom meetings on Thursdays after the Eco Dharma course is finished.

Mondays

Alternating online and Annandale

7.00 pm with Subhana Barzaghi.

Tuesdays Mini morning meditation

6.55–7.00am Join/welcome

7.00–7.25am Meditation

7.25–7.30am Great Vows

Wednesdays

Online first Wednesday of the month

Annandale on others

7.00pm, with Gilly Coote

Thursdays online

7.00–7.30 Meditation/walking

7.30–8.00 Meditation/walking

8.00–8.30 Discussion/Great Vows

The Blue Mountains Zen Group

We will be meeting via Zoom on Sunday afternoons.

All are welcome to join us for zazen with either a talk or Dharma Café.

Please email Jane at janeandino@yahoo.com.au for more details.

Phone dokusan for members

Subhana is offering dokusan to SZC members on Thursday evenings.

Gilly is also offering dokusan to members by appointment.

Members of the Board



Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com; Stephen Crump (secretary); Jason Koh (treasurer); Helen Sanderson; Zoe Thurner, Julie Robinson, Pablo Scodellaro; Joe Gaebel.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

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

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Eco Dharma Course	2	3
4	5	6	7 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Jane Annandale 7-9pm Will	8	9	10
11 BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY Annandale 11am	12 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Subhana Annandale 7-9pm Peter	13 Board meeting 6:30pm	14 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	15 Eco Dharma Course	16	17
18 Annandale ZAZENKAI 10am Gilly	19 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana	20 Orientation	21 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	22 Eco Dharma Course	23	24
25	26 ZAZEN Zoom Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Subhana Annandale 7-9pm Senior students	27	28 ZAZEN Annandale Dharma Cafe 7-9pm Gillian	29 Eco Dharma Course	30	



Women visiting David's Pole, Kodoji.

May 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Autumn SESSHIN Kodoji
2 Autumn SESSHIN	3 Autumn SESSHIN	4 Autumn SESSHIN	5 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Gillian Annandale 7-9pm Will Autumn SESSHIN	6 Autumn SESSHIN	7 Autumn SESSHIN	8 Autumn SESSHIN
9	10 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Subhana Annandale 7-9pm Senior students	11 Board Meeting 6.30pm	12 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	13 Eco Dharma Course	14	15
16 Annandale ZAZENKAI 10am Teisho Jane	17 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Maggie	18 Orientation	19 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	20 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm	21	22
23	24 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Subhana Annandale 7-9pm Peter Full Moon Ceremony <i>Not misusing sex</i>	25	26 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian Full Moon Ceremony <i>Not misusing sex</i>	27 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm	28	29
30	31 Annandale ZAZEN 7-9pm Maggie					