

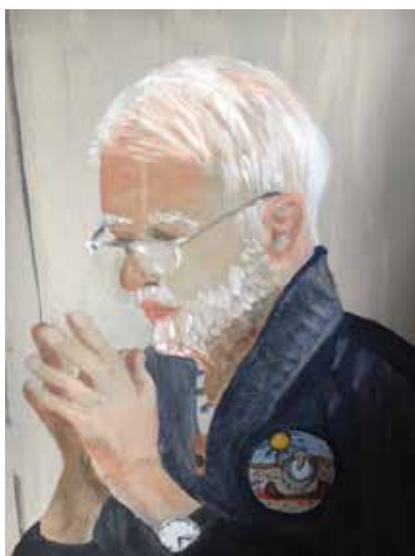


ENCOURAGING WORDS

Gillian Coote



These words are dedicated to Tony, who fully lived his wild and precious life with generosity and love, until June 20 this year. The disease Tony had, MND, is known as the One Thousand Day Disease, but we didn't know this when he was diagnosed. We knew the disease was a muscle thief, and grieved when his hands seized up, when he needed special cutlery and a B-pap machine to enable him to breathe in bed.



Tony encountered the Dharma in the form of Robert Aitken roshi back in 1980, immediately signing up for sesshin. He came home with shining eyes and great joy. When Gary Snyder visited Sydney and the fledgling SZC, and mentioned building a zendo in Northern California, Tony signed up and off we went to the Sierra Nevada wilderness to become part of the team. The Ring of Bone Zendo has its 40th anniversary on October 2.

When it was SZC's turn to design and build a zendo, Tony was architect, master builder and samu co-ordinator at Gorricks Run for over twenty-five years, one weekend a month. His Dharma name is Den Katsu - activity like lightning - ironic because when he was fifteen, and camping down the South Coast with school friends, there was a ferocious storm and a ball of lightning rolled into their tent. He'd just let go of the centre pole to get another sausage - the

headline at the time was "Boy Saved by Sausage" - while one of his friends became unconscious, and had to be breathed back to life and another briefly lost his sight. There was the smell of burning flesh and Tony bore a scar from this misadventure on his arm. Of those four boys in the tent with Tony, three died young. And, although we don't have maranasati, or mindfulness of death, as a practice in our tradition, nevertheless, at the close of each sesshin day, our Jisha reminds us:

Life and death is a grave matter,
 all things pass quickly away.
 Each of us must be completely alert,
 Never neglectful, never indulgent.

We don't need to wait for a terminal diagnosis. We can begin right here, right now, wherever we are, embracing mindfulness of death, letting go of our avoidance of mortality and waking up to this moment.

I am deeply grateful to our sangha for your love and support.



(photo) Tony at opening of RoBZ 1982

Upcoming Events

Rohatsu 2022: The Buddha Sees the Morning Star

How do you honour the Buddha's realisation? How about with a period of intensive practice in the supportive presence of sangha? Rohatsu Sesshin is coming up! Our annual Annandale-based sesshin, to be led by Maggie Gluek, will run from the evening of Friday December 2 through midday Wednesday December 7. The flavour of this city sesshin is one of seamless coming and going. While participants are encouraged to sit as much as possible, the structure allows for fitting sesshin time in around work and family commitments. The schedule will run from 9:30 am to 9 pm, including mid-morning, afternoon and evening blocks. Rohatsu at Annandale is non-residential. Lunch can be brought or purchased in Annandale, supper will be provided.

Application forms and more details will soon be available on the SZC website.

Memorial Ceremony, Sunday November 13

On this occasion every year we commemorate those who have died—family, friends, sangha members, beloved beings generally, ancestors, victims of war. Where does it end?

We'll start at 10 am with two periods of zazen and the ceremony proper beginning at 11. This will include sutras and a sharing circle for remembering particular individuals. You may bring a photo of the person you are honouring (or a pertinent object) to place the altar. Then to finish, a potluck lunch! Don't forget some food to share.

Women's Retreat - Saturday 29-Sunday 30 October

This retreat is open to all women sitters who have meditation experience and is a wonderful opportunity to be together over a weekend with birds and trees and weather at our bush zendo, Kodoji. Some people drive up to the land on the Friday afternoon (28th), others arrive on Saturday.

The cost is \$20 a night for SZC members and \$25 a night for non-members. You can sleep on the verandah, or take a tent if you wish. There are a few beds upstairs in the cottage. We take food to share for the weekend and sleeping bags. We sit together, share together, walk and usually sing. A timetable is drawn up when we get there and jobs like meal-making are allotted. Remember it can be cool at night so bring appropriate clothing.

Enquiries: Kerry Stewart stewartkerry4@gmail.com

Reports

Walking weekend - Sounds of Nature



Seven keen hikers led by Will camped out in the Kings Tableland for a weekend of seated and walking contemplation surrounded by the vast and ancient wilderness of the Blue Mountains. We stayed in an overhang beneath the top of a hill, previously used by Aborigines. We also became intimately acquainted with the deep and enduring Aboriginal connection to the land by passing through some stunning sites filled with rock art. In spite (and perhaps because) of being only the faintest and most secret of intimations and traces of human passage, the proximity and detail of such evidence left a deep impression in everyone's heart.

Will offered dokusan under the stars, by the light of a fire to nourish the soul, while Diana offered dinner under a hill, by the light of fire and LED torch to nourish the body.

Sounds of nature was the theme, but of course the experience ran the full sensory gamut, each filling the heart with awe and deepening our appreciation of our precious heritage.



Kodoji Samu

The great Kodoji paddock is just about to open up with spring flowers and grasses. All was ready for this spring samu. And we came all twenty of us, including two buddha natured dogs: Tilly and Joey.

The countryside all the way from Wisemans up onto our land is tremendously changed, the last flood has left us with a very different valley.

Where to start: the bush care team of Jill S, Gilly, and Julie together with Barry and Nick set off to review the creek and nearby bush reporting back that all the work done prior to the floods seems to have left us with a healthy habitat, blackberry is still with us, but moth vine and fleabane were not so prevalent. Gilly spent some time pushing back bracken fern from behind the wash house to expose blackberry bushes and Jill S organised Robert to cut back with his chainsaw some blackwattle saplings. Robert also attended to a fallen tree in the car park area turning it nicely into fire wood.

Lots of us swept and cleaned windows especially Jill Ball who devised a simple and effective way to clean the louver windows in the cottage.

Barry seemed to be washing up a lot, and he's an expert with the lawn mower. Nick painted one verandah side with beautiful 'Stephany grey'. James took this painting caper up and after some clever carpentry repairs to the outside picnic table proceeded to paint it grey also.



Oh, Robert also helped make the toilet straight and fitted a corrugated tin retaining piece on the back of the toilet wall. Will and his family: Sue and Lilly went down to the creek and picked up a barrow load of sand and spread that in the hole up against the tin retaining frame.

Greg Carty attended to everything electrical, the lights in the toilets and over the wash basin, and reassured us that our solar battery bank is still okay.

Plenty of grass was cut and trimmed and Diana cleared away around all the steps, the 3 stone buddha, the stone cairn and the drive way.

Will, supervised by Lilly cleared a path to the waterfall - which was tinkling away and set some stone up making a simple set of stairs down to the creek.

Julie swept every cob web away from windows, doors, ceilings stairways, kitchen benches and in the pantry and she cleaned the toilets sweeping away spiders as well as their cobwebs.

Greg Try set about cleaning out all the lengths of wood that have, over the years accumulated under the verandahs of the dojo and the cottage and we made decisions as to what we'd keep and the rest, quite a bundle, was taken into the paddock and a bonfire was built. After dinner we sat outside watching the flames and marvelling at the beauty of a very full moon.

Kerry washed and cleaned mould off almost everything in the cottage.

Brendon refitted the floor to the battery cupboard which had deteriorated over the years.

A wonderful surprise visit came near the end of samu when Kym and Cathy Lukeman arrived, lots of memories there.

It was wonderful to fill the buildings with laughter and chatter once again, cook up delicious meals, talk and remember, especially Tony, and the ease with which he led samu and guided us in building this beautiful complex of buildings.



News from the Board

Memories

The Board members have been clearing out and sorting our files at Annandale. What has been revealed is a store of wonderful memories and important artefacts. Amongst the files we found some beautiful architectural drawings of Kodoji by Tony Coote, so we decided to share one of them with the whole sangha. Thank you Brendon, for having the drawing framed so beautifully. Now it takes pride of place in the entrance of our Annandale zendo.

Benefit Concert – Saturday 8th October – 7.30pm

Please be sure to come along to our Fundraising Concert to support our Centre and marvel at the talents of our many musician members. Tickets are available on Eventbrite: szc.org.au/classes/fundraising-concert/

Annandale

You might have noticed the fresh new paint job in the dojo. Many thanks to Nick for his time and skill.

We are lucky to have Ben as one of our new residents at Annandale. When you come to the zendo please make sure you say hello and welcome him to our community.

Welcome back to the zendo

Please come along to experience sitting and chanting together once again at Annandale. Our teachers are offering dokusan in the hojo on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and on Zoom at other times. Please email info@szc.org.au if you would like to book into online dokusan with one of our teachers. Check on the website for the latest schedule: szc.org.au

New old members

Kym and Cathy, welcome back to the sangha! Older members are looking forward to sitting with you again and newer members will enjoy hearing your stories of the early days of the sangha, and getting to know you.

Membership

Your membership is well and truly due so please check that you've paid. The fees have gone up slightly in accordance with the CPI so please make sure you've amended periodic bank deposits if that's the way you do it.

szc.org.au/membership/

Regular Notices

Return 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.

Please go to the website for the latest information about the schedule: szc.org.au/classes/zazen

Mondays

Annandale - Subhana and other teachers on alternate weeks

Zoom - Senior students

Tuesdays

Mini morning meditation

6.55–7.00am Join/welcome

7.00–7.25am Meditation

7.25–7.30am Great Vows

Wednesdays

Annandale - Gillian and Will Moon on alternate weeks

Thursdays online

7.00–8:00pm Meditation/walking

8.00–8.30pm 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.

Dokusan for members

Annandale - Dokusan is offered to members by our teachers on some Mondays and every Wednesday

Phone - Dokusan is offered by Subhana on Thursdays and Gilly 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

October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Spring sesshin ends
2	3 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Paul Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	4 Orientation	5 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	6 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Peter	7	8 SZC Benefit Concert
9	10 ZAZEN Annandale <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Killing</i> 7-9pm Maggie Zoom 7-8.30pm Subhana	11 Board Meeting 6:30pm	12 ZAZEN Annandale <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Killing</i> 7-9pm Gilly	13 ZAZEN Zoom <i>FMC</i> <i>Not Killing</i> 7-9pm Jane	14	15
16 AGM	17 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	18	19 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	20 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Peter	21	22
23	24 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Maggie Zoom 7-8.30pm Subhana	25	26 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly	27 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Jane	28	29 Women's Retreat
30 Women's Retreat	31 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students					

November 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Orientation	2 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	3 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm Peter	4	5
6	7 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Maggie Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	8 Board meeting 6:30pm	9 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	10 Dharma Cafe Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane	11	12
13 Memorial Ceremony	14 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	15	16 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will	17 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter	18	19
20 Zazenkai Peter	21 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Paul Zoom 7-8.30pm Subhana	22	23 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gillian	24 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8.30pm Jane	25	26
27	28 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana Zoom 7-8.30pm senior students	29 Orientation	30 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Will			