



Encouraging Words

Jane Andino

Voices

With the referendum on The Voice to Parliament set for October 14, the discussions about it have naturally been taking centre stage. I would like to present some Buddhist perspectives from my readings about this, aspects of harmony and transformation.

In the Uluru Statement from the Heart, it says “We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.”

And, at the end of the Statement about the First Nations Voice, it says “We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.”

I find this so generous and such an opportunity for all Australians when, in spite of all the sufferings, hardship and violence past and present, indigenous peoples are inviting us to join with them, to make a new beginning of understanding and treasuring their cultural and spiritual practices, and acknowledgement of their ancient sovereignty. It’s an invitation to share as equal Australians, to share equally in health, living conditions, life expectancy and life outcomes.

We visitors from the past couple of centuries have been like hungry ghosts with no real roots, wandering on the land but not of the land, since all the spiritual stories relating to the land have been relegated to the second sale bin of legend and myth. This is an opportunity to really call this land ‘home’, to save this ghost by facing squarely and embracing the wrongs of the past, to listen deeply and take up the hope heard in the voice of the land.

“We leave base camp and start our trek”, but as Buddhists we know that the Trek, the Way, is also finding peace in this moment here, abandoning the seeds of fear, greed and violence in myself.

Thich Nhat Hanh wrote about stopping and looking deeply at the habits of mind we have received from our ancestors and collectively from our society. He wrote: “We have to live in a way that liberates the ancestors and future generations who are inside of us. Joy, peace, freedom and harmony are not individual matters. If we do not liberate our ancestors, we will be in bondage all our lives, and we will transmit that to our children and grandchildren. Now is the time to do it.” This means that, rather than point the finger of blame, we look deeply at the suffering of all and take the actions that lead to peace.

Next week I have the great joy to accompany on piano the combined Upper Mountains Primary school choirs in their Narragunnawali festival (means ‘wellbeing’ and ‘coming together’ in the Ngunnawal language), and they will be raising their voices in a Yorta Yorta song in the concert. I feel glad that their school experience is so different to the schools of my era, and hope that in future generations we can build on this coming together in loving kindness and good will.

Upcoming Events

Noble Eightfold Path

Thursday evening Zoom series

Peter Bursky and Jane Andino will be presenting a Thursday evening 7pm Zoom series on The Noble Eightfold Path, beginning on September 21. This is following on from the earlier series in the year on the Four Noble Truths. Please join for two blocks of meditation, followed by a short talk and general discussion. The schedule is listed in the calendar in the newsletter and on the website.

To join: zoom.us

Women's Retreat

Friday 27 to Sunday 29 October at Kodoji

SZC retreat centre is at Gorricks Run in the upper McDonald Valley about 2 hours outside Sydney.

The retreat is open to all women who have a meditation practice. We have a weekend of zazen, sharing and mutually agreed other activities such as creative pursuits, walking, singing, bushcare etc.

Attendance can be from Friday afternoon 27 to Sunday 29 afternoon or part-time.

Sharing transport is arranged and a contribution of \$25 per night for members and \$30 per night for non-members. Camping, dormitory or sleeping on the veranda.

If it is too hot or a fire risk we will be relocating or changing plans.

Memorial Ceremony

Sunday 12 November

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 10am with two periods of zazen and the ceremony proper beginning at 11am. 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 on the altar. Then to finish, a potluck lunch! Don't forget some food to share.



Rohatsu 2023: The Buddha Sees the Morning Star

1-6 December, Annandale

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 1 through midday Wednesday December 6. 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.

Reports

Spring Samu

Father's day weekend!

A beautiful, clear weekend, not much to do because we finished off lots of little jobs in preparation for Tony's memorial. On Saturday Ben and Scott came up for the day. Ben mowed the main lawn and around the toilets and showers. Scott adjusted the double doors so they open more easily. Joe also came along for Saturday, he checked out the water tank stands which will need to be repaired, probably next year. The big job for the weekend was to paint the verandah decking around the cottage which we all had a go at, paint brushes and rollers quickly finished this off, steps were also tidied up with a coat of paint. It looks complete now!



On Sunday we stuck down new non-slip tape to each step.

Greg Carty arrived and he set to and sorted out the toilet lights, hopefully they will be reliable for sesshin.

Kerry attended to the inventory for sesshin and sent that off to Jill. She also cleaned everything.

The gas tanks were checked and full tanks attached, the batteries are in great condition and everything is working. I have arranged for the main paddock to be slashed before sesshin.

The buildings need to be painted again starting with the hojo and the sky light over the roof of the dojo. Big jobs for the future.

Kerry cleaning everything in the storeroom at Kodoji samu.

News from the Board

AGM – Sunday 15 October

Save the date for our Annual General Meeting at the Annandale zendo. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear the highlights of the last year from the Board and teachers; offer your time and skills for the many jobs that keep our Centre functioning; and make suggestions about our future. If you can't make it please fill out a proxy form (on the small table in the entry room) so someone else can vote for you. Please arrive around 10am to check in with your dharma buddies before official proceedings begin at 10.30am. Afterwards there will be a pot luck lunch. <http://szc.org.au/classes/annual-general-meeting>

Newcomers

The Board has decided to be more proactive in advertising our orientations so we can attract more newcomers to Zen. We have boosted our Facebook ads, asking how people are finding out about us, and are posting our orientations on the Buddhist Council's website. This seems to be working because our orientations each month have 10 people attending. We also have 7 new SZC members this financial year! Thanks to the Board, in particular John, our social media guru, and all the members who orientate the beginners.

Kodoji bushwalking weekend, 4-5 November

Experienced bushwalker Diana is leading this medium grade walk up the creek and into Yengo National park. This weekend is a great opportunity to have fun, share some laughs and delicious meals, learn about and explore the bush surrounding Kodoji with your Dharma buddies. So, make sure you put the weekend in your diary.

<http://szc.org.au/classes/walking-weekend>

Contact: Diana diana.r.levy@gmail.com



Greg and Ben at samu, Kodoji

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.

Mondays

Annandale - Subhana

Tuesdays online

Mini morning meditation

6.55–7.00am Join/welcome

7.00–7.25am Meditation

7.25–7.30am Great Vows

Wednesdays

Annandale - Gillian Coote

Thursdays online

With Jane Andino or Peter Bursky

7.00–8.00pm Meditation/walking

8.00–8.30pm Discussion/Great Vows

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 Gillian by appointment

The Blue Mountains Zen Group

We usually meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, 3-5 pm. However, the next meeting is October 29.

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

Email Jane janeandino@yahoo.com.au for more details.



Photo: Kerry Stewart



Members of the Board

Kerry Stewart (Chairperson) stewartkerry4@gmail.com, Zoe Thurner (secretary), Joe Gaebel (treasurer), William Verity, John McLean, Helen Sanderson, Julie Robinson.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Selby janetselby@bigpond.com

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

October 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Spring sesshin | 2 Spring sesshin | 3 Spring sesshin | 4 Spring sesshin | 5 ZAZEN Zoom 7-9pm Peter Spring sesshin | 6 Spring sesshin | 7 Spring sesshin |
| 8 | 9 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Peter | 10 Board Meeting 6:30pm | 11 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 12 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana | 17 | 18 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 19 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana | 24 | 25 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 26 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane | 27 Women's retreat | 28 Women's retreat |
| 29 Women's retreat | 30 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm FMC <i>Not praising myself</i> Subhana | 31 Orientation | | | | |

November 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | 1 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm FMC <i>Not praising myself</i> Gilly | 2 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter | 3 | 4 Walking weekend |
| 5 Walking weekend | 6 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Peter | 7 | 8 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 9 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane | 10 | 11 |
| 12 Memorial Ceremony Maggie | 13 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana | 14 Board Meeting 6:30pm | 15 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 16 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter | 17 | 18 |
| 19 Zazenka Peter | 20 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Subhana | 21 Orientation | 22 ZAZEN Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 23 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Jane | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Subhana | 28 | 29 Dharma Cafe Annandale 7-9pm Gilly | 30 ZAZEN Zoom 7-8:30pm Peter | Dec 1 Rohatsu Sesshin | 2 Rohatsu Sesshin |