



Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation Inc. Newsletter Summer 2011

ZASEP TULKU RINPOCHE



Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation has a long-standing relationship with the Venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, a meditation master of the Gelugpa Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Rinpoche received his training under some of the most competent Buddhist masters in Tibet prior to the Chinese invasion of that country. Later on in India he graduated from Varanasi Sanskrit University with an Acharya degree and spent 18 months in Thailand at the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He first came to Australia in 1977 and taught for three years before leaving for Canada. He has established Buddhist centres and taught throughout North America. Rinpoche has also been the Spiritual Director of Dorje Ling Retreat Centre (formerly Illusion Farm) in Tasmania for many years. He is recognized as the 13th incarnation of the great Kagyu teacher Lama Chabdak who lived in the Kham region of Eastern Tibet and founded Zuru Gompa 600 years ago. Rinpoche is known for his gentle compassion and good humoured wisdom.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation AGM 30 November 2010

This last year has again been a busy one again for our small but committed organisation and its hard working committee and again much has happened. I often reflect on what Zasep Rinpoche said when we were trying to decide whether or not to go all out to raise the funds needed to buy the centre for the organisation and so take it out of private ownership and place it in the hands of the dharma community. He told us to go for it and that if we did buy it, the energy would flow like the mighty Mekong River. It's worth thinking about, as we embark on another year and another committee full of enthusiasm for things possible. It's not like you can be a part of such a flowing and yet watch from the sidelines – it requires immersion and a letting go into a process which has its own pace and demands, and calls on each of us more than once to give up our own ego controls in whatever form they take and surrender to that. Being on this committee stretches us – stretches me. The first paramita is generosity, and the foundation for all the other paramitas. One of the characteristics of giving is the generation of flow. One teacher I know calls on students of dharma to give, and give, and give again, till “you” completely give over. We can see being on this committee as hard work and demanding, or we can see it as an opportunity to stretch our self-imposed limits and create more flow both in our own lives and in the life of the dharma community of which we are a part. That's up to each one of us individually. But what an opportunity we are presented with.

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for
mobile
devices

Tashi Choling Buddhist Centre has continued to offer its regular Tuesday evening program, and the Wednesday evening Meditation and Mindfulness for Beginners course has joined its Tuesday night counterpart in being reliably “on” no matter what for the small groups of folk who attend each evening. Both evenings also provide that excellent next step for those who have participated in our also now regular *Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation* course, offered each term through Adult Education. These classes continue to be fully subscribed, with very positive feedback received, including repeated requests for us to consider running either a longer introductory class or “Next step” class following the Introductory class to take people further in their explorations of Buddhism and meditation. And Madhu has run a monthly Buddhism for Mothers class, helping mums to take buddhadharma into the world of parenting.

Tarchin Hearn visited Tasmania again in February and offered both evenings of teaching in town and a week’s retreat at Lorinna. Leander Kane visited in August for a really successful first visit to Hobart, with full classes for her *Liberation Through the Body* teaching, and we have just recently hosted Bonni Ross, both for evening and weekend teachings in town and for a week’s retreat at Dorje Ling.

Things have been busy at Dorje Ling too. In January the centre hosted a Permaculture course with some thirty-five people attending. This may become a biennial event for the centre. In March over the Labour Day weekend, we held a planning and visioning weekend there, facilitated by Andreas and attended by some fifteen people. At this weekend we had the opportunity to shape our vision for the future of the centre, as well as discuss concerns, and map out an agenda of work which will last the next twenty years or more! It was at this weekend that the idea of the big raffle was hatched, and of course this is running now, in an effort to raise funds to help bring some of those visions to fruition.

At Easter we ran our own first retreat, led by long term Tashi Choling students, and ably supported by our friend Turiya who led daily Feldenkrais awareness through movement sessions to support the discourses and meditations. It was a really successful weekend and we plan to make it an annual Easter event.

We had our annual working bee there again spanning the Hobart Show weekend in October. Over twenty people came this year, the most people we have ever had, and some amazing things happened. Our yurt was erected in what was a mammoth undertaking, it definitely takes a whole village to erect and take it down so we won’t be doing that too often, but it is an awesome space, about to receive its first “initiation” with the holding of the upcoming Vajrayogini retreat in it. It seems made for Vajrayogini with its bright red painted poles and uprights, and its red inner wall together with its womb-like environment. The gumpa also received some much needed loving attention with exterior and interior oiling, and new chinking. Work was carried out on the construction of new bedrooms off the main house, in preparation for the upcoming retreat, this work to be completed this weekend, and completion stage activities were carried out on the shower facility. Not to mention the work on laying the new water line, to totally revamp our water supply system, being carried out by Rob, with support from our neighbour Damien and also Ross.

Our caretakers of the last eighteen months or so are on the verge of leaving, eventually to move onto their own land in the valley and so to become neighbours. It has made such a difference to us to have Rob and Catriona at Dorje Ling, sharing and helping to bring more and more into being the vision for the place, and resiliently coping with the challenges of working to a committee who without exception live at the other end of the State. Much has changed at Dorje Ling as a result of their being there, including a big veggie garden complete with electric fence, the new aforementioned water system, vast tracts brushcut, visitors welcomed, and the most recent success of our latest TCDF application for funding to build a new hydro electric system to supplement the solar power. They have built great relationships with the rest of the valley community and will continue

to support us into the future, through helping to organise events at Dorje Ling, such as a possible Leander Kane retreat and a Council for all Beings workshop with John Seed, from time to time. Thank you alone doesn’t seem enough, but great thanks are due and we wish them well in the next stage of their lives.

Luckily for us we will not have a gap between caretakers but look forward to the arrival of Todd Wilson this week to pick up the role of caretaker until Easter. There is also much planned for next year already so again we will be busy.

And in just over a week we welcome back our beloved spiritual director, Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, after three years. His continued support and guidance are the ground upon which everything else in the Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation is built.

Thanks are due to so many people. To Guy, Chani, Andy, Roger, Madhu, Maria and Kate, the rest of the committee of 2010, thanks for this latest part of what I think is really an ongoing and life journey. Thanks to Rob and Catriona for giving so much as caretakers. Thanks to all the other people who joined us at working bees – Pete and Michaela, Jill, Mary and Anand, Mark Farrell, Charles, Isaac, Ben, Wendy and Collom. Thanks to Andreas for his efforts in leading us through the visioning weekend. Thanks to all the leaders of classes and courses. Thanks to our friends in the Valley, especially Annie and Bart whose help to us seems unconditional and upon whom we rely so much, Damien our close neighbour on whom we also rely, and Ross whose zen-like touch with the earthmover is amazing. And John for all his pathmaking, may there be much more for us all to enjoy. I hope I haven’t missed anyone. Again I have really appreciated the opportunity you have given me to be President for this last year, bringing with it as it has, continued opportunities for me to learn and grow, as well as contribute to an organisation that makes a difference.

Thank you.

Sue Willey

TASHI CHOLING MONTHLY PROGRAM

1st Tuesday of every month – **Long Chen Pa** (led by Tony Dix)

The Dharma. “Kindly Bent to Ease Us.” Long Chen Pa A gentle exploration of the Buddha’s teachings and meditation practices. The Path: Study, contemplation and meditation.

2nd Tuesday of every month – **Lojong, Mind Training** (led by Charles Chadwick)

Lojong means “to tame.” It is also known as Thought Transformation. With Lojong training we can achieve Bodhisattva mind.

3rd Tuesday of every month – **Mahamudra** (led by Roger McLennan)

Mahamudra – “great gesture.” Mahamudra meditation unifies calm abiding and insight to bring us to an experience of “ordinary mind,” that state of natural awakesness and luminosity which lies at the heart of all experience, beyond suffering and duality.

4th Tuesday of every month – **Lam Rim** (led by Sue Willey)

Lam Rim – the words actually mean “stages of the path.” The Lam Rim condenses all of the teachings of Buddhadharma into a series of graded and logical steps which, if followed, lead one directly to the experience of awakening or Buddhahood. Beginning with a consideration of what it means to be human with the particular gifts and opportunities that this affords us, through issues such as death and impermanence, the nature and cause of suffering, through to a thorough investigation of the interdependence of all phenomena and the resulting awakening of compassion, a good heart, the Lam Rim is a ready guide on the enlightenment path.

Wednesday evenings, 6:30-7:45 pm : Introduction to Meditation (leaders: various)

An opportunity to investigate and practice simple meditation led by experienced practitioners. Learn a way of finding some peace and centredness in an often painful and busy life. Join us for a regular weekly practice to develop awareness and stability in your daily life. This class is open to anyone at any time. You do not need previous experience in meditation to attend, just curiosity and an open mind.

Introduction to Meditation – These regular courses extend over several weeks, and are intended to provide participants with an introduction to the Buddhist view, with the main emphasis on being able to try out a range of meditations, and having the opportunity to engage in lively discussion. Four or five of us participate as leaders, with each person taking it in turns to lead one evening, but with all of us participating in the discussion and questioning that follows. More details on times and bookings are through **Adult Education**. The funds raised from this course will be put towards the ongoing improvements at Dorje Ling.

Buddhism for Mothers – An opportunity to take some respite from the challenging path of motherhood. Includes Buddhist meditation practices and teachings to enable us to remain peaceful and kind to ourselves and others. Allowing us to cope with the day to day challenges of motherhood with a good heart. These courses are run from time to time through **Adult Education**. Please contact them for bookings. The funds raised from this course will be put towards the ongoing improvements at Dorje Ling. For more details contact Madhu on 0407369012 or madhulilley@gmail.com

Location – All sessions (except Adult Education sessions) are held at the Tashi Choling rooms, Floor 2, 71 Liverpool St, Hobart. Go down the laneway to the right of the building, then look for the door between the two bamboo pots. Continue upstairs to the second floor. Gold coin donation appreciated. All welcome.

Tsog – Tsog practice with Roslyn Alexander. Roslyn writes: “Tsog gives me an intent to do sadhana practice twice a month when I know thousands of other students world wide are doing the same. Since the dates are set by the new moon, I feel the potency of the practice is amplified by synchronising it with others who use a deity practice to inspire them. Having had the golden opportunity to sit long retreats with other students of Zasep Rinpoche, I delight in remembering the sangha practising together and imagine them sitting with me.”

Upcoming dates based on dark moon being day 1, Australian calendar: Feb 12 & 27, Mar 14 & 29, Apr 12 & 27.

40 REASONS WHY I NEED MY GURU

1. I am an ignorant woman
2. I am so deadly smart I can rationalise anything
3. My perceptions can't be fully trusted
4. Life is tangibly different when Zasep Rinpoche is close by
5. I like to have fun
6. And sometimes be wild
7. And then I can lose my way
8. But I'm an adult, and can accept the consequences of my actions. Though it's a rocky old road, and to be able to talk with a wise friend is indescribably precious
9. And it is lonely without guidance
10. The lessons have to be spelled out clearly (see 1)
11. I need positive role models – Rinpoche is the best!
12. I need positive male role models
13. We need exemplary spiritual role models
14. And it really helps to be able to see the person, the expert, the friend
15. Sometimes it can be lonely not seeing the guru for years. Sometimes it can be scary too
16. Rinpoche's smile can melt a hundred anxieties in three seconds (my statistics)
17. This is the so-called mid-life. Help! What if it's not.
18. On the spiritual path I might be about a Grade 5 or perhaps at best a Year 8 student
19. An adolescent in an aging body. It's time for the real work; to know the Dharma, meditation and guru at an intrinsic level
20. I'm an Australian. I've got spunk, attitude, brattitude, intelligence, a lazy streak and a bit of a problem with authority structures, but I need to know a real guru-disciple relationship
21. Rinpoche has shown me over and over that he accepts me as I am, and knows my potential (refer to points 4 and 17)
22. You can have a laugh with Rinpoche. A proper one
23. "O dispeller of the urbane cynicism and coddling precocity that masquerades as realism, Come back! We need you!"
24. It's not just me. There's so many people who would benefit from your guidance
25. We are a sincere mob
26. Little Aussie battlers
27. Heroes bold and strong – making a difference, guerrillas in a peaceful revolution!
28. Who need a commander at the front lines
29. Rinpoche you show us how to love purely
30. The rest can be pretty tacky, or even taffy, because that is what it can feel like. Yes, like trying to cross a road made of three feet deep caramel toffee
31. I know there's a better way but.... (see above)
32. There's so many things I/we need to know. I don't know "the two sets of eight and the four sets of four"
33. Or how to respect the ancient spirits in our land
34. Or how to really get to know bliss
35. To make clear light and clear knowing my own
36. To honestly not be afraid if death came tomorrow
37. To really know that I don't have to come back and learn these crappy lessons again
38. So the ripple effect can really happen and we can, all of us together, really make a difference
39. This isn't just one person's song. Rinpoche, you do make such a difference to our lives and your students need you. Please come back soon!

Sue Erica Smith

BODHI

BODHI (Benevolent Organization for Development, Health and Insight) is an NGO whose purpose is to provide support for people who are very disadvantaged, through means such as improved health care, education and networking.

It was founded by Colin Butler and Susan Woldenberg in 1989 and its patron is His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

BODHI works mainly (but not exclusively) with Buddhist populations, including Tibetans, Chakmas and Dalits.

BODHI has a long association with both Dorje Ling and Ven. Zasep Tulku, and is currently supporting the establishment of the Manhla Institute in Ulaanbaator, Mongolia, a project under the supervision of Ven Zasep Tulku. This will be the eighth country in Asia in which BODHI has been active.

Donations made to BODHI are tax deductible in both Australia and the US.

BODHI is one of the oldest Buddhist inspired development NGOs based in the West.

More details are available at www.bodhi.net.au



Seat on one of the new walking tracks at Dorje Ling

DORJE LING SUMMER RETREAT SETS THE TONE FOR THE YEAR

The week before Christmas 2010, a group of people ranging in age from 18 to 75 chose to retreat at Dorje Ling in the Lorinna valley, Northern Tasmania, under the spiritual guidance of the venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche.

Hosting two retreats concurrently was a first for the Tashi Choling Committee, but we were all inspired by the possibility now that we have the Mongolian Yurt (gur) established in the paddock between the Gompa and Rinpoche's house.

The Lam Rim course went for one week and was taught in the Gompa (shining from her new coat of oil and gap filling). The course was divided and presented with admirable skill and depth by the five of Rinpoche's senior students: Sue Willey, Madhu Lilley, Guy Turnbull, Charles Chadwick and Roger McLennan.



Madhu teaching

The Lam Rim text: *A graduated Path to Enlightenment* by Geshe Lodon, translated by Zasep Tulku Rinpoche in 1978, was a popular text used by the teachers. Tashi Choling Library has a selection of Lam Rim books, including this one, which are available for loan to TCDF members.

The course was a rich time of sharing knowledge from experienced meditators and people who had studied the dharma for 20 or 30 years ... Amongst the participants were siblings and families who had been students of Rinpoche's all their lives. The richness of the content and the depth and variation of questioning were reflective

of the diversity of backgrounds in the group.

When questions or comments were called upon everyone contributed. The more challenging questions were kept of the times that Zasep Rinpoche was in the Gompa for the afternoon discussions.



The Vajrayogini group (Angela, Aaron, Sujata and Sue Smith absent)

When he wasn't teaching Rinpoche enjoyed walking the beautiful new paths at Dorje Ling, studying computer skills with the new caretaker Todd, visiting the Lorinna valley community and catching up on the recent road access developments and new baby, Minnow, born to Bart and Annie's daughter Orana.

One afternoon, the Lorinna Valley people were invited to afternoon tea and a tour of the new developments at the retreat centre. After the delicious afternoon tea, Rinpoche led a meditation in the Gompa which was attended by the 40+ visitors.

For New Year's Eve we shared slides and stories of Mongolia, and discussed the new health centre and soup kitchen 'Manhla Institute' that Gaden Relief are building there. Later, we watched the inspiring documentary *'Buddha's Lost Children'*. This documentary is based on the work of a monk on the border of Burma and Thailand, with orphans from broken families in the Golden Triangle.

Beside the course content and meditation, the meals that sustained all of us from 1-3 weeks were an incredible offering. Wonderful fresh food, beautifully presented. The menu was co-ordinated and designed by Marguerite, Mark and Mary. Produce was provided by Ricky and Geraldine from the Lorinna Valley.

There were many more unscheduled magical moments over the 2010-2011 retreat weeks, including music, painting, pujas, land offerings, walks, birthdays. View the website for more photos: www.tashicholing.net.

If you're disillusioned by the commercial hype of Christmas, consider booking in for next year's summer retreat when Rinpoche suggested he would like to return again, and break the long Canadian winter with a warm spell in Australia.

Also, you could come to the upcoming Easter Retreat at Dorje Ling, to be led by senior students.

- Roslyn Alexander

Along with this retreat there were 15 people studying VajraYogini and chanting 100,000 mantras for 3 weeks in the new Mongolian Yurt. We are so blessed that Rinpoche gave so generously of his time and knowledge.



Marguerite in the kitchen



Rinpoche assists with artwork

2010 LAM RIM RETREAT REPORT

If road design and construction is an expression of the 21st century's human condition, there couldn't be a better indicator of my internal situation, than the drive in to Dorje Ling. But then there's the arrival. Sun & showers streaming onto ancient forest. Green fields embracing a Tibetan gumpa. I find a welcome, calm and warm, from Todd and Roger. Immediately I knew I was in good hands.

Having never studied or practiced Buddhism, or been on retreat, this was a tremendous experience. What I mean is, tremor-inducing of a tectonic proportion, like a new internal landscape being forged. The shared teachings come from deeply considered study and life experience. The food, created with love and generosity, nourished us on the path. And the struggle of meditation (watch the thought, let it go. Come back to the breath. Ignore the knees. Watch the thought, let it go. Come back to the breath. Can't ignore the knees ... Move. Come back to the breath). What can I say? I'm a beginner. It's a beginning.

Rinpoche was also quite a discovery. And so generous in sharing his humanness. His teachings were accessible and inspiring. And funny. This was skilful means and wisdom in action.



Lam Rim 2010 (Michaela and Madhu absent)

But mostly I feel like I've discovered Sangha and bodhicitta in the way of this special group of people sharing the retreat. All able to give. Space. Tranquillity. Compassion. Support. Inspired teaching. Nurturing food. Silence and conversation. From all walks of life but all on a path and sharing the journey. Thank you. This feels like a beginning.

- Tess Dryza

SPRINGTIME AT DORJE LING 2011: RETREAT WITH BONNIE ROSS

Anticipation of a 10 day silent retreat at Dorje Ling led by Bonnie Ross had been a 'carrot' for my long winter of teaching and study. Ahh, the quiet at last.

'Healing the Wounded Heart' vipassana style retreat proved to be another stimulating, deeply reflective and inspiring meditation experience with Bonnie.

After morning prayers and instructions we were left free to sit wherever and as much as possible between that and the evening group meditation. After four days we lay out our crayon "feeling expressions" of our sits and saw the symbolic lines of emergence and avoidance as energy arose in our minds with our primary focus staying in the heart centre.

The rainy but warm first 5 days were suitably quietening. Keeping our minds on the focus 24/7 while walking, swimming, karma yoga, and sleeping enabled a deep rich process.

The sweet delights prepared by Katrina??? cooks name and her affectionate little boys were icing on the cake of the experience.

Our silence was broken with the unique mantra offering of 'Om mani pedme Hung' led by Viraj in his usual divinely melodic tones.



Bonni Ross teaching at Dorje Ling

Thanks to the Lorinna valley people and their generous contributions, and the consideration of all who took part ... we flowed into a profound and deep retreat.

Dorje Ling is such a rare precious and remote Centre for such an undertaking. And its ours to share ... consider being there!

OM AH HUNG
Roslyn Alexander

TILOPA'S MAHAMUDRA INSTRUCTION TO NAROPA IN TWENTY EIGHT VERSES

(translated by Keith Dowman)

Homage to the Eighty Four Mahasiddhas!
Homage to Mahamudra!
Homage to the Vajra Dakini!

Mahamudra cannot be taught. But most intelligent Naropa,
Since you have undergone rigorous austerity,
With forbearance in suffering and with devotion to your Guru,
Blessed One, take this secret instruction to heart.

Is space anywhere supported? Upon what does it rest?
Like space, Mahamudra is dependant upon nothing;
Relax and settle in the continuum of unalloyed purity,
And, your bonds loosening, release is certain.

Gazing intently into the empty sky, vision ceases;
Likewise, when mind gazes into mind itself,
The train of discursive and conceptual thought ends
And supreme enlightenment is gained.

Like the morning mist that dissolves into thin air,
Going nowhere but ceasing to be,
Waves of conceptualization, all the mind's creation, dissolve,
When you behold your mind's true nature.

Pure space has neither colour nor shape
And it cannot be stained either black or white;
So also, mind's essence is beyond both colour and shape
And it cannot be sullied by black or white deeds.

The darkness of a thousand aeons is powerless
To dim the crystal clarity of the sun's heart;
And likewise, aeons of samsara have no power
To veil the clear light of the mind's essence.

Although space has been designated "empty",
In reality it is inexpressible;
Although the nature of mind is called "clear light",
Its every ascription is baseless verbal fiction.

The mind's original nature is like space;
It pervades and embraces all things under the sun.

Be still and stay relaxed in genuine ease,
Be quiet and let sound reverberate as an echo,
Keep your mind silent and watch the ending of all worlds.

The body is essentially empty like the stem of a reed,
And the mind, like pure space, utterly transcends the world of
thought:
Relax into your intrinsic nature with neither abandon nor
control -
Mind with no objective is Mahamudra -
And, with practice perfected, supreme enlightenment is
gained.



Zasep Tulku Rinpoche gave an inspiring commentary on Mahamudra at Weeroona Yoga Studio over the weekend December 13-15. These teachings were recorded and will be available for sale on CD in MP3 format. Please contact Maria if you are interested.

The clear light of Mahamudra cannot be revealed
By the canonical scriptures or metaphysical treatises
Of the Mantravada, the Paramitas or the Tripitaka;
The clear light is veiled by concepts and ideals.

By harbouring rigid precepts the true samaya is impaired,
But with cessation of mental activity all fixed notions subside;
When the swell of the ocean is at one with its peaceful depths,
When mind never strays from indeterminate, non-conceptual truth,
The unbroken samaya is a lamp lit in spiritual darkness.

Free of intellectual conceits, disavowing dogmatic principles,
The truth of every school and scripture is revealed.

Absorbed in Mahamudra, you are free from the prison of samsara;
Poised in Mahamudra, guilt and negativity are consumed;
And as master of Mahamudra you are the light of the Doctrine.

The fool in his ignorance, disdaining Mahamudra,
Knows nothing but struggle in the flood of samsara.
Have compassion for those who suffer constant anxiety!
Sick of unrelenting pain and desiring release, adhere to a master,
For when his blessing touches your heart, the mind is liberated.

KYE HO! Listen with joy!
Investment in samsara is futile; it is the cause of every anxiety.

Continued next page

Since worldly involvement is pointless, seek the heart of reality!

In the transcending of mind's dualities is Supreme vision;
In a still and silent mind is Supreme Meditation;
In spontaneity is Supreme Activity;
And when all hopes and fears have died, the Goal is reached.

Beyond all mental images the mind is naturally clear:
Follow no path to follow the path of the Buddhas;
Employ no technique to gain supreme enlightenment.

KYE MA! Listen with sympathy!
With insight into your sorry worldly predicament,
Realising that nothing can last, that all is as dreamlike illusion,
Meaningless illusion provoking frustration and boredom,
Turn around and abandon your mundane pursuits.

Cut away involvement with your homeland and friends
And meditate alone in a forest or mountain retreat;
Exist there in a state of non-meditation
And attaining no-attainment, you attain Mahamudra.

A tree spreads its branches and puts forth leaves,
But when its root is cut its foliage withers;
So too, when the root of the mind is severed,
The branches of the tree of samsara die.

A single lamp dispels the darkness of a thousand aeons;
Likewise, a single flash of the mind's clear light
Erases aeons of karmic conditioning and spiritual blindness.

KYE HO! Listen with joy!
The truth beyond mind cannot be grasped by any faculty of mind;
The meaning of non-action cannot be understood in compulsive activity;
To realise the meaning of non-action and beyond mind,
Cut the mind at its root and rest in naked awareness.

Allow the muddy waters of mental activity to clear;
Refrain from both positive and negative projection - leave appearances alone:
The phenomenal world, without addition or subtraction, is Mahamudra.

The unborn omnipresent base dissolves your impulses and delusions:
Do not be conceited or calculating but rest in the unborn essence
And let all conceptions of yourself and the universe melt away.

The highest vision opens every gate;
The highest meditation plumbs the infinite depths;
The highest activity is ungoverned yet decisive;
And the highest goal is ordinary being devoid of hope and fear.

At first your karma is like a river falling through a gorge;
In mid-course it flows like a gently meandering River Ganga;
And finally, as a river becomes one with the ocean,
It ends in consummation like the meeting of mother and son.

If the mind is dull and you are unable to practice these instructions,
Retaining essential breath and expelling the sap of awareness,
Practising fixed gazes - methods of focussing the mind,
Discipline yourself until the state of total awareness abides.

When serving a karmamudra, the pure awareness of bliss and emptiness will arise:
Composed in a blessed union of insight and means,
Slowly send down, retain and draw back up the bodhichitta,
And conducting it to the source, saturate the entire body.
But only if lust and attachment are absent will that awareness arise.

Then gaining long-life and eternal youth, waxing like the moon,
Radiant and clear, with the strength of a lion,
You will quickly gain mundane power and supreme enlightenment.

May this pith instruction in Mahamudra
Remain in the hearts of fortunate beings.

Tilopa's Mahamudra Instruction to Naropa in Twenty Eight Verses was transmitted by the Great Guru and Mahasiddha Tilopa to the Kashmiri Pandit, Sage and Siddha, Naropa, near the banks of the River Ganga upon the completion of his Twelve Austerities. Naropa transmitted the teaching in Sanskrit in the form of twenty eight verses to the great Tibetan translator Mar pa Chos kyi blos gros, who made a free translation of it at his village of Pulahari on the Tibet - Bhutan border. This text is contained in the collection of Mahamudra instruction called the Do ha mdzod brgyad ces bya ba Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag gsal bar ston pa'i gzhung, which is printed at the Gyalwa Karmapa's monastery at Rumtek, Sikkim. The Tibetan title is Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag, or Phyag rgya chen po rdo rje'i tsig rkang nyi shu rtsa brgyad pa. This translation into English has been done by Kunzang Tenzin [Keith Dowman] in 1977, after transmission of the oral teaching by Khamtrul Rinpoche in Tashi Jong, Kangra Valley, India. <http://keithdowman.net/mahamudra/tilopa.htm>

DORJE LING WORKING BEE

You know the vibes up at Dorje Ling these days are quite magnificent.

The moment you arrive you just know you are in the right place ... and then it just gets better!

Now you might think that this is due mostly to all the great meditators who have passed through in the many years the place has been humming. You would be almost correct if that is your thought.

The energy that keeps the place going is not just meditation energy, but is actually yer good old workin' bee energy!! And have we got just the opportunity for you ... to accumulate lots of good karma and have heaps of pure activity enjoyment.

The next working bee at Dorje Ling is scheduled for the long weekend of March 12, 13, 14.

And it just keeps getting better because for the first time in the history of the universe we are having the divine Mary Steed catering for all our culinary needs ... (see the notice from Mary).

Now please don't for a millisecond believe that you are not able, or such crazy self-talk. You ARE VERY ABLE to help in any capacity you like.

We will be painting internal and external walls; perhaps demolishing buildings that are asking to be demolished; did someone say a deck for the caretaker's house? ... always the garden is asking for our love and attention and those pesky thistles keep appearing! Tracks can be cleared and special sitting places cared for, the gompa always loves our tender loving touch and there are tasks that aren't even thought of yet as well ... so please come along and bring any basic tools and earmuffs if you have them, and if not, let not that be an excuse!!

Hope to see you there and please feel free to contact me on guy@tashicholing.net for more info or to register.

-Guy Turnbull



Previous working bee: after erecting the yurt



Previous working bee: moving water tank

Calling all working beings for a Dorje Ling Pure Land working bee!

- this working bee will be catered for
- cooking will be done by kitchen dakinis
- food provided
- you only need to bring your favourite treats, wine, etc
- please let us know any dietary preference (and yes, meat is allowed, how naughty!)
- do let us know if you're coming so we can count the heads
- Dorje Ling is remote and forward planning is necessary for hauling that food in...

So, little vegemites out there, get your diaries out and pencil in a date with Dorje Ling on Sat 12, Sun 13, Mon 14th March.

... be there or be square ...

“Terrible or not, difficult or not, the only thing that is beautiful, noble, religious and mystical is to be happy.”

~ Arnaud Desjardins, from *Buddhist Offerings 365 Days*

- Mary Steed

Well, it's time to take stock after a very intensive time of activity over the past few months, hosting retreats, preparing for retreats by way of improving the facilities at Dorje Ling and a major fundraising raffle.



As always, I continue to be amazed by our collective efforts to achieve so much with limited resources and masses of enthusiasm. Through the efforts of many who were inspired by Chani's motivation to fundraise, we raised \$10,860, excluding \$2,500 to purchase one Antarctic ticket whilst the other was kindly donated.

We continue to pay the monthly mortgage on Dorje Ling. Of the original loan of \$160,000 there is a remaining principal \$112,354 to pay. Thus far we have paid \$47,646. \$1005.30 is paid monthly and at the last payment \$421.33 was paid in interest and \$584.97 was paying the principle.

Of our two Accounts, the Building Acc currently has a balance of \$1,268.76, with Total Expenditure for Nov, Dec Jan being \$9008.54 and Total Income at \$2,485. Essentially apart from meeting the Mortgage repayments, this Account funded building works at Dorje Ling to the tune of \$5967.94 and \$1000 went in Retreat Cooking costs.

The Working Account Balance as of 18/1/2011 was \$16,667.61.

TOTAL INCOME for the period Nov Dec, Jan was \$33,018.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE was \$18,564.

I will give you a brief idea of where funds come and go. Tashi Choling was rewarded after persistent efforts to secure a Community Grant to upgrade the Dorje Ling power system with a grant of \$ 9,988. Adult Education course \$1280. Rinpoche's Retreats in Hobart and Dorje Ling raised \$18,378. Takings from Tashi Choling

CAN YOU HELP?

Needed at Dorje Ling:

- # vacuum cleaner - the one here does not have much suck left in it
- # some decent sized soup bowls for retreats
- # New cushions - Sue has a woollen futon that would be perfect but we need a volunteer or few to transform this into cushions
- # Thicker winter curtains for Caretaker's, Purple house, and Rinpoche's - maybe a volunteer could make these? Helena has donated some fabric, probably not enough to do them all, but a start
- # Printer/Office supplies
- # Prayer flags
- # Cake tins
- # small-medium sized saucepans, preferably stainless steel
- # Small/medium mixing bowls
- # Hanging rack for large utensils
- # Knife rack
- # Good knives varying sizes
- # Frying pans a few different sizes
- # large fry pans and saucepans with lids for industrial size stove
- # blender
- # bamix/stab wand
- # electric grinder
- # good sharp knives
- # sharpening steel or stone
- # 4 bed side lamps for new accommodation rooms
- # rags
- # old shirts for working in

mediation evenings \$454. Donations \$816. Membership \$270.

What goes in... goes out... Retreat Expenses \$644.50. Food and Cooks services \$12,165. Land Tax \$490. Gas \$576. Building and Maintenance \$3,531.50. Teacher's Airfares [Tarchin] \$429. And there are various other smaller amounts; wood, power, internet, Telstra, that complete the picture. As always, we continue to be prudent in our allocating of funds and doing that fascinating juggle to get the balance right between what needs to be attended to and aspiring to see our Centres grow. Many thanks to all who so kindly donated wonderful prizes for the raffle and those who bought and sold tickets. It was a truly fabulous effort.

- Kate MacNicol, Treasurer.

Donations or pledges towards the mortgage payments can be made to the Commonwealth Bank BSB 067002 Acc Number 10162638 (Dharma Foundation of Tasmania). Please record your name with your transaction.

RAFFLE RAFFLE RAFFLE...

A huge "Thank You" to the many who bought and sold tickets for our Fundraiser. The motivation was to raise much needed funds to improve the facilities at Dorje Ling, and we raised \$10,860! Zazep Rinpoche had much pleasure in pulling the winning tickets from the hat along with a happy band of retreatants at Dorje Ling in January.

The winners were ...

1. Imelda McShane 2. Tang Soo Tao
3. Ella Thompson 4. Janice Piercy
5. Elyse Acacia 6. Diane Pitman 7. Mark Pauchet 8. W. Bouman 9. Sarah Morgan Broome 10. Stephen Barton 11. Nicola Ramm 12. Konya Roy 13. Robyn Willey 14. Manisa Lornie 15. Bev Lea 16. Jean MacNicol 17. Kylie Colless 18. Michael VanHeel 19. Arielle Olive Magnus.

Ticket Sellers Prize: Catriona Scott.