



Tashi Choling Dharma Foundation Inc. Newsletter Summer 2006

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 recognised 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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Dear Friends

Firstly I would like to thank all our committee members for hanging in there through another year. The commitment to practise is one thing, the commitment to supporting the practise of others is another thing altogether. It requires quite a bit of true grit and perseverance...especially when we all seem to lead ridiculously busy lives in an already busy world! So I really feel a vote of thanks is deserved for all of the people on and off the committee who assisted in bringing teachers and teachings to our local community.

The visits were many and varied. Early in the year we hosted a visit from Cecillie Kwiat and also Tarchin Hearn. Both these teachers are gradually building a really strong rapport with many local practitioners and we welcome them back as long as they feel it beneficial to return. In fact Tarchin did return late in the year and I believe a splendid time was had at Dorje Ling during the ten-day retreat.

Easter 2005 was a remarkable time at Dorje Ling, with the sharing of a widely diverse group of teachings including Indigenous Australian Aboriginal spirit singing with Delmae, Tibetan chanting with Tendar and a whole range of other participants who found themselves alternating as students and teachers...this was a truly enriching time for all who attended.

We also assisted in a small way with the visit to Hobart of the Cham Dance Troupe. The Theatre Royal performances were spectacular, but for me the sight of a dozen robed monks on Mt Wellington throwing snowballs at each other was the sweetest thing...quite a few had not seen snow before as they had been born and grew up in India. Then after some hilarious frolicking the mood quickly changed to an offering ceremony.

Now for those of you who missed the Midwinter Nights Scene I can only say I am sorry. The range of talent and generosity of spirit demonstrated that night showed such depth that there are many more sights and sounds in my memory than the image of the naked sadhu performing a guitar solo in the winter chill. (Though that was a pretty daring highlight!) Thanks again to our (almost) regular MC Mr Iain Laing!! And to all who contributed in time, food and madness.

As you all know only too well by now, the reason we are so committed to keeping this old show on the road is the fact that we are well into the journey of 'buying back the farm' i.e. Dorje Ling Retreat Centre. The need to keep ahead of repayments and other regular costs is only necessary as long as we recognise the value of the benefit this remote place plays in the lives of most who come in touch with it.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT continued:

It is due to a large group of regular contributors that we are still in the game and I would like to give you a truly heartfelt cheer. The fact that we are only just in the game prompted me to write an appeal letter this year and to those who responded we again send thanks.

For our regular Tashi Choling attendees there was a special treat late in the year. Clearly Sue Willey returned from an extended period at Wangapeka and she began offering to share her experience in deep meditation practice. We hope that she stays clear for a while longer and continues to lead some more weekly meditations!.

Now as a final sentiment I would again like to invite anyone with 'true grit' to consider joining our committee and share in the planning and running of our facilities and programs...is there anyone out there???

Is there anybody in here???
Guy

Oh ay ay ay!! I just realised I have not talked about the imminent visit to Tasmania of our main man The Venerable Zasep Tulku Rinpoche...
If you have even half a chance to catch one (at least) of the teaching events during his April visit to Hobart and Dorje Ling, then please seize the opportunity. I hope to see you there.

2006 COMMITTEE

TASHI CHOLING DHARMA FOUNDATION COMMITTEE consists of:

President: Guy Turnbull

Secretary: Maria Grist

Treasurer: Keith o'Hara (welcome aboard Keith! and thanks)

Public Officer: Margaret Steadman

Committee: Roslyn Alexander, Tony Dix, Anna Crotty, Annie Willock, Kate McNicol

MEMBERSHIP - HAVE YOU RENEWED?

Please note that all memberships for 2006 fell due at the AGM in December last year. A membership form is included in this newsletter. Even if you are a member due to your donation to Dorje Ling, we would still appreciate it if you would subscribe, as this helps us to defray costs such as printing and postage.

MEDITATION CUSHIONS - MATERIALS NEEDED

Old kapok mattresses or sheep fleeces, and/or bits of firm weave but soft fabric suitable for covers - needed to make meditation cushions for Dorje Ling. If you can help, contact Sue Willey 6234 1507 (after hours) or email suew@southcom.com.au

REGULAR MEDITATION MEETINGS

Our regular meditation meetings are held at 7.30 pm every Tuesday above Gould's Naturopathica in Liverpool St Hobart.

We request that whenever you attend, you consider leaving a gold coin in our collection box. This helps us to pay our power bill and also helps us to defray costs whenever a visiting teacher comes to our Centre or to Dorje Ling.

THANKS from the TCDF Committee.

VISIT BY VEN. GESHE JAMPAL SENGE

by Sue Watts

The Ven Geshe Jampel Senge was warmly welcomed during his first visit to Tasmania in December 2005. At the public talk on Thursday December 15 more than thirty people packed the yoga studio at Weeroona House in North Hobart to listen to Geshe-la's talk on 'Dealing with Anger'.

On Saturday Geshe-la offered a brief and concise presentation on the Lam Rim, to those who took time out from christmas preparations to soak up the teachings. When it came to question time, there was a lively interaction and all had an opportunity to explore their understanding and seek any further clarification. It was very interactive! 'A rare opportunity to access the precious teachings from such a clear and knowledgeable teacher', was one of the comments.

Apart from the weekend, Geshe Senge was also requested to give a talk on Mental Health from the Buddhist perspective, to a group of more than 20 mental health practitioners in Hobart. Geshe-la was delighted with the welcome he received and has indicated he would be very happy to make a return visit, if a request was made. He asked that a special thank you be given to Rosie and Guy for their generous welcome, as well as to those who enjoyed showing him some of the sights around our wonderful State during his holiday.

Lets hope we can tempt him to come back for a longer visit with a more detailed program of teachings in the not too distant future.



Geshe Jampal Senge (second from left) relaxing at the beach with friends during his Tasmanian stay

**BUSHWALK - Sunday 26
February 2006**

*Dharma Community and Friends
Due to inclement weather our previous bushwalk was cancelled. So we are re-scheduling this walk.*

We will hunt up some huts on Mt Wellington which you might not have seen before. The walk is not long but some sections are steep and/or rocky. We will take it slowly.

Bring: Strong shoes, a drink, a raincoat, and plenty of energy. Meet at the Fern Tree Tavern at 10 am. Leaders: John and Maria Grist (ph 62349404)



Vajrayogini Tsog Dates:

Feb (Thu 23)
Mar (Thu 9, Fri 24)
Apr (Fri 7, Sat 22)
May (Sun 7, Mon 22)
Jun (Mon 5, Tue 20)
Jul (Web 5, Thu 20)

*Initiates who wish to practice together,
please contact Rosie 043 999 5655*

DORJE LING RETREAT WITH TARCHIN IN DECEMBER 2006
(by Sue Gregory)

"The most profound mysteries are right here in the ordinary. There are not years left for different meditation practices so right now, what we need to do is be..... 'appreciatively awake now' (Tarchin 2006).

.....Instead of trying to get from bystander position to fluid, flexible position, and instead of trying to get rid of the bystander, accept it is there. That is what you investigate. In the bystander you will find also the fluidity.....and that it is not separate".

Tarchin's powerful use of metaphor really helped me to understand this. He used the finger dance to illustrate moving from bystander to being really there. It involved standing in pairs, closing our eyes, staying with our breath in our belly, joining pointer fingers and allowing them to move, sometimes one leading, then the other, and gradually moving into a mutual dance of spontaneity and total responsiveness to what was happening between us, in our fingers, in the moment. He then invited us to take this approach into being with the breath (or any distraction such as dullness). Not watching it, but being totally with it.

**WORKING BEE "insight
and on-site preparation"
AT DORJE LING**

**Long weekend 11, 12, 13
March**

To prepare for Rinpoche's visit as well as finish off lining the bathroom and installing a woodheater (donation of woodheater needed!), gathering and stacking firewood, also cleaning of Gompa and other general preparation for retreat.

Contact Guy if you can come
- ph 0409 713 813



**VEN. GESHE SONAM
RINCHEN AND RUTH
SONAM UPDATE**

Geshe Sonam Rinchen and Ruth are migrating to New Zealand, arriving in October 2006.

Over Christmas Guy and Roslyn visited the centre and discussed Geshe-La's move. Kaari is appealing for more \$ support as Geshe-La wants to know that sponsorship support is shared among all his students in the southern hemisphere.

He plans to travel between centres after migration, using the Jam Tse Dhargyā centre as a base.



For sponsor forms and information regarding the process of their move, go to:

<http://www.sonamfoundation.org>
or email:
onamfoundation@igrin.co.nz

or contact Kaari Schlebach at the
Jam Tse Dhargyā Ling Centre in
New Zealand, sfftibet@igrin.co.nz

To heighten our understanding of the attentiveness to the breath (or dullness or whatever) he used another metaphor. In pairs he had us pretend to pass a tiny baby across a chasm of deep water, as if one of us was on a boat and the other on the dock. We practised doing this with care and attentiveness so as not to suddenly drop the baby. We then sat down to be with the breath with the same gentleness and attentiveness.

For me, this experience gave a whole new depth of understanding - the richness of enjoying an old friend in a new way. As Tarchin said, "The most meaningful work will seem like play!"

The flavour of my meditation and my approach to it seemed to change within this retreat. Instead of the effortful, trying to "cling" to the breath with awareness like a dog with a bone, somehow the puppy dog sat down beside it, with no holding - simply savouring the colours, textures, smells and deliciousness, without trying to do anything - the exquisiteness of total enjoyment. How rich. How wonderful to experience!...
... And the meals by Bunji were just as good! The experiencing of savouring the waiting for the dinner bell was very heightened!

On another note, at one stage Tarchin gave an overview of the general direction of meditation practice. Here are the notes I took at the time:

In the West, most work needs to start with:

Tranquil Abiding
- Sammardhi



Stillness



Focus of attention
- which is usually poor due to fear (continual reacting to all stimuli) or greed (need something else to be complete)



Deep healing of the whole (all things in life that have happened that can affect moving to a wider view)



Feeling of worthiness



Strong ego



THEN penetrative insight (exploring perception and what's actually going on - first of all by investigating the a) still mind b) active mind c) manifesting action i.e. experiencing the still mind in the action. This is the Mahamudra (the degree of insight will be limited by the degree of wellbeing and mind stillness as we all have an unconscious vested interest in staying away from danger zones during exploration).



Then, go back to the market place/workplace/family with a clear knowing



Manifesting the realisation in ordinary life - where you can see the overview, the solidness to vision and BE there with others and yourself in the dukka.

I found this overview very helpful. Tarchin used this pattern of approach throughout the retreat, moving us into calm abiding and then into exploration - back and forth between the two - which are really one and the same.

It was a wonderful 10 days, and the interstate and international crowd from Tas, Vic, NSW, Qld and New Zealand would all agree I'm sure. The final day was topped off by a 21st birthday, cake and balloons on our final day!

Sue Gregory



(We are inspired to re-run this article due to the \$3000 cost TCDF have incurred as legal fees as a result of the inaccurate naming of our organisation in a recent bequest. Your gift can become a liability!)

FORMAT OF WILL

In general, a bequest is a written statement in a will, which directs that a gift be made to a charity, organization or individuals, upon the death of the person who established the will (the testator).

One of the most important factors to remember if you wish to bequeath a gift to a charity or organization of your choice is that it must be done in accordance with legal requirements.

For example, bequeathing property to your local football club in West Hobart will be considered invalid by the Courts and will be set aside for uncertainty. The law is very strict on the requirements of legal identification and location of the organization you wish to bequeath to as well as the precision of the gift.

So ensure that the 'full registered name of the charity or organization' is precisely named in accordance with its legal registration. Even minor discrepancies such as a misspelt word or 'common usage used to describe an organization' will make the gift invalid.

Secondly, make sure you state precisely what you are leaving. If it is a sum of money specify that sum of money. If you wish to bequeath property describe the property as well as the legal title of the property. If the property is held in shares or tenants in common specify your share of the property. If the property is held in joint tenancy you usually cannot bequest this property to any other person or organization other than the person you hold jointly with. It is safer to describe the property in legal terms and often a copy of the Certificate of Title of the property is included in the will.

Thirdly, it is important to have the current address of the charity or organization described properly in the will. Although the address may change before the will provisions are invoked the courts have stated that the address goes to mitigating circumstances if there is any misunderstanding.

Fourthly, if you wish to place conditions of the inheritance of a 'specific gift' those conditions must be clearly described and be capable of actuality. For example, one cannot say that certain property shall be bequeath to a certain person if he or she flies to the moon. However, one can stipulate that a certain gift be inherited by an organization provided at the time of your death that it operates as a Buddhist organization in accordance to its constitutional objectives.

TYPES OF BEQUESTS

The most popular form of bequest is the specific gift. This is because during the estate administration, specific bequests are satisfied first. Thus if the estate cannot support all of the bequests made in a will the recipients of a specific bequest are more likely to inherit than other estate beneficiaries. There are also taxation benefits to the individuals and organization that inherit 'specific bequests'.

The usual wording in a will for specific gifts is below.

Remember it is not necessary to make a new will if you wish to make a bequest which has not been provided for in your original will. You can make a codicil and attach it to the original will. Once again this must be done in accordance to law. The same principals apply as described above as well as identifying in a proper way that the document is a codicil to the original will. This can be done by describing the will and the date it was signed and witnessed in the codicil itself and attaching the codicil to the original will.

Anna Crotty, a TCDF committee member who has expertise in these matters

The usual wording in a will for specific gifts is:

I give, devise and bequeath the following described property to**(Full registered name of organization and registered address)**.

Property known as**(Full address of property with particular description and attached Certificate of Title)**.

UPDATE ON TENTS4PEACE

'The amount of money raised so far in the second round of call for donations is approx. \$150,000. This amount along with the original \$120,000 raised in the first round of the project has been truly wonderful. The second round of the project just would not have got off the ground without the tremendous support and generosity of the Tashi Choling Foundation who did not hesitate to get behind the project when the call for 'help' went out. We were able to set up a separate account under the auspices of Tashi Choling and received our first lot of donations through this account. A huge heartfelt thanks to all and especially to Maria Grist and Guy Turnbull who pulled out all stops to get this project underway.

Just shows what can be achieved when people collectively operate without limitations and a good heart. (Anna is currently researching the possibilities of making Tashi Choling an organisation whereby donations and gifts can be tax deductible.)

Continuing:

Two returned airfares have been donated for two people to go to Pakistan/Kashmir to set up our project. The project is currently been run by Anna Crotty with the assistance of Mary Xuereb. Both women have worked tirelessly on the project spending most of their own personal money and savings on the administration costs.

We are working in with Father Brian Morrison who has recently received the Order of Australia for his work with the Aborigines of the Central Desert and the children of Pakistan. In conjunction with Father Brian we have identified the people who will be supplied with shelter and support from our project. These are predominantly female children of about 10 to 14 years of age who have been left parentless, homeless and with younger siblings to care for. These children are vulnerable and are at terrible risk. Already we have allocated a piece of land whereby a separate community can be set up along the lines of sustainable agriculture and self empowerment. The donation money is going directly to these children and older women to enable them to make their own shelters and sustain their own community. They will make the decisions and direct their own communities. Our role will to give supportive love and encouragement and not charity or control. The long-term vision is to have this community find its own strength and commitment to effect a workable and fair environment where men, women and children have equal rights and dignity.

Personally I would love to see in the long term some integration with our Pakistan/Kashmir community with our community at Dorje Ling. But this is another dreaming..... anyone want to help.

Once again thank you all.

Anna Crotty



T-SHIRTS for sale during Rinpoche's visit - proceeds to Dorje Ling (design below - green graphic)



**EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:
BIODYNAMIC COURSE
AT DORJE LING.**

Dorje Ling's garden is in need of some tender loving care. In her travels this year Anna Crotty our oversee caretaker of Dorje Ling spoke to a number of people who lecture on 'biodynamics at RMIT in Melbourne'. Being a little hesitant about high-faluting qualifications and not enough hands in the earth stuff Anna decided to check it out. She visited one of the biodynamic farms of the person who runs the course at RMIT and thought she had walked into the Garden of Eden.

One vision is to have our own local and capable biodynamic gardeners along with these people from the RMIT spend at least a week at Dorje Ling offering their wisdom and inspirations for the Dorje Ling garden. It will be a hands-on teaching program. Those of us who wish to learn and experience could be involved in the course and hopefully in our learning our garden will become the second Eden.

Cost will be minimal. Out of pocket expenses for Dorje Ling, cost of power, accommodation, food, fuel, wood and contribution to Dorje Ling poor struggling account. The teaching and company free. Anyone interested in such a project could they telephone Anna on 03 62 347 427 or John Beck on 03 63635178.

FIVE THEMES TO CONTEMPLATE - TARCHIN HEARN

(Reprinted from handout at Tarchin's recent public talk in Hobart)

Causality

Everything and everyone comes into being due to myriad causes and conditions. Ultimately, every action affects everything else. What I do affects you. What you do affects me. What one person does affects the whole community. What the community does affects the individual person. What the humans do affects the plants and animals. What the other creatures do affects the humans. Contemplate this deeply.

Interbeing

Each of us is carried and moved by the inspiration, the aspirations, and the life examples, of uncountable dharma teachers from many backgrounds and traditions; a great river of wisdom and compassion expressed through art and poetry, through writings and philosophies and through the examples of their own inspiring lives. Contemplate this deeply.

Each one of us is an embodied expression of our parents and our parents' parents, and that includes their hopes and fears and attitudes to life. We contain the talents and foibles of an ocean of ancestors; their patterns of speech, their genetic tendencies, their approaches to work, religion, child rearing, politics, property and power. Each person is a vast treasury of possibility. Contemplate this deeply.

Every person is an interbeing of myriad dimensions. Each of us is a manifesting of an entire unfolding ecosystem, an evolving planet arising now as you and me. The green plants, and the water cycles, the sun and the mineral realms, along with all the other creatures, are weaving the fabric of myself and yourself through every shifting moment. Each one of us is part of the other. Contemplate this deeply.

Individual Activity

Every action of body, communication and mind is the seed for a future result. Every person carries within them the seeds of love and hate, of greed and generosity, of wisdom and confusion, of humbleness and pride. These seeds were planted by the uncountable actions of ourselves and the innumerable ancestors who preceded us. How can we water the wholesome seeds in ourselves and in each other? How can we weed out the unwholesome seeds so that they don't sprout again in the future? Consider this deeply.

Mind and Knowing

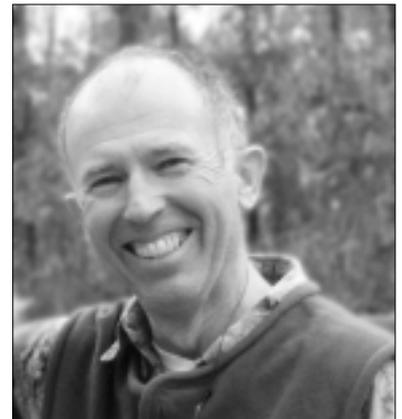
Everything that I experience arises in my own knowing. Each moment of perception is the bringing forth of a world, filled with meaning and import. At the same time, each being that I meet is, him, her or itself, also bringing forth an equally vast and meaningful world that is arising as their own unique knowing. The flavour of my knowing, my overall attitudes, typical emotional states, prejudices and aspirations helps to mould the universe I perceive and live in, and so too does yours. The universe that is my knowing shapes and affects the universe of your knowing while simultaneously the universe of your knowing is shaping and affecting the universe of my knowing. Contemplate this.

A Matrix of Knowing and Understanding

When we see the vast miracle that each being is, we relate to them differently than when we see them as a discrete fragment of our own field of experience. Each being is an expression of immeasurable inspiration, talent and raw material. Each being is a unique matrix of knowing with their own hopes and fears and aspirations. The question of wholesome relationship between ourselves and another, needs to consider not only how not to harm ourselves and others but also how to support each other as well.

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS

1 - Each day take one of the five themes and make it your main contemplation for an entire day. Use it to shine the light of fresh seeing on the ordinary activities of your life, such as relating to your family and friends, to the people you meet at work, to strangers, adversaries, flowers, trees, dogs, cats, birds and other creatures. At the end of the day review what you discovered and consider what this implies in terms of how you live with others and how you could live with others. Is there a difference here? In the light of this contemplation, would you change the way you do anything? Does this have any implications for how you earn your living, how you relax, in general, how you live your life?



2 - Do the above exercise with a small group of people, between 2 and 5. After exploring a theme for a day or so, come together in a group. Begin by spending a few minutes relaxing into awareness of your breathing. Then, if they are meaningful to you, recite the verses for Refuge along with the Bodhisattva Vow. Having expressed together a shared aspiration then share your insights with each other. What did you discover? Is there anything you feel bad about or regret? Are there ways that the contemplation has strengthened you? What do your discoveries imply in terms of how your behaviour helps or harms yourself or others?