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# Tara Institute News

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NOVEMBER 1992

## SNAP-SHOTS OF ADELE'S EXPEDITION



Lama Yeshe's sister, Tashi Dolma  
and brother, Rinchen

*Long-time Member and pillar of TI, Adèle Hulse has just returned from Tibet and India. Adèle is researching a book she is writing on the late Lama Yeshe, the founder of the FPMT and Tara Institute. Here is a little news from places she visited - including Sera Monastery in the south of India where she spent some time with Lama Yeshe's reincarnation, Lama Osel.*

*By the way, Adèle is still looking for your stories about Lama Yeshe. It doesn't matter how insignificant you think they are - they could reinforce or complement someone else's recollections or fill in an important gap.*

*Just jot down a few notes or put it on tape and drop it into the TI Office. Include your name, address and phone number and mark it to the attention of Adèle Hulse.*

**L**ama Yeshe's birthplace in Tibet is in a small settlement called Dechen near Tolung, about three hours drive out of Lhasa. The family name is Shing-gar-chang-mar and still living in the old mud and stone house are Dorje, Geshe Thinley's sister who is Lama's half-sister and Lama's full sister Tashi Dolma. Lama's full brother Rinchen is a monk who lives in a very small monastery a few minutes away from the house. A number of Lama's nieces and nephews also live there with their children.

The house is the last in the settlement and looks out onto empty vistas of barley fields and rocky mountains. The courtyard is home to a few small cows and the walls are stacked with dried cakes of yak dung in the traditional manner.

As soon as we arrived we were served butter tea which flowed endlessly and a meal of tsampa, yak meat and cauliflower with a bowl of fresh cheese. The family produce all their own food. On leaving I was given several kilos of tsampa, two bags of dried yak meat and a big bag of dried cheese to take to Lama Zopa and others.

**T**ibet is a very sad place. The sense of oppression is everywhere. The Potala was a miserable empty museum for statues or copies of statues which were destroyed. One is literally hustled through. All donations to the monasteries go straight to the government and most of the monks one sees receive no education. In the Barkhor many monks had

long hair which was very strange. Gen-la Lamrimpa at Drepung and Geshe Sengye at Sera are the only two active teachers in Lhasa and both are very old.

**K**opan is fabulous. Any old Kopan students who haven't been there for the last three years won't recognise the place as the only major building still standing is the old gompa and there are plans to pull that down as soon as possible and build a bigger one. There is an enormous new Meditation Hall and Inje Gompa for Western courses and the new Norbu Lingka, now home to 150 monks is vast and impressive. Forty nuns are also living in the Inje Gompa while their own nunnery is being built. Lama Lhundrub who is everywhere at once, runs the whole show with a quiet competent hand that brooks no trouble at all.

**T**ushita Retreat Centre at Dharamsala has changed its original function somewhat and has fully booked introductory courses every month that attract about 60 people and also hold follow-up group retreats. Ling Rinpoche came one day for puja. His house is next door. He is an extraordinarily composed small boy, attended by Kunga, a lay man who was his previous incarnation's attendant for about 30 years. Director at TRC is Ven Khedup, an old Kopan boy of whom we are all very proud.

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# NOVEMBER

## AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN NOVEMBER

*Auspicious days are calculated according to the lunar calendar.*

*On these days the benefits of actions are greatly multiplied, so they are especially good for spiritual practice.*

**MONDAY 2**  
Tibetan 8th  
Tara Day (Precepts)

**WEDNESDAY 4**  
Tibetan 10th  
Tsog Day

**TUESDAY 10**  
Tibetan 15th  
Full Moon (Precepts)

**MONDAY 16**  
Lha Bab Du Chen  
(Precepts)

**THURSDAY 19**  
Tibetan 25th  
Tsog Day

**TUESDAY 24**  
Tibetan 30th  
New Moon (Precepts)

### WEEK ONE

- **SUNDAY 1**  
9-5 Nyung Nä  
Commentary
- **MONDAY 2**  
6pm Tara Puja  
8pm Introduction  
to Buddhism
- **TUESDAY 3**  
6.30pm Kalachakra  
Information Session  
8pm Study Group
- **WEDNESDAY 4**  
6pm Guru Puja  
8pm Evening with  
Geshe Doga
- **SATURDAY 7**  
2-8pm Kalachakra  
Initiation
- **SUNDAY 8**  
2-8.30pm Kala-  
chakra initiation

### WEEK TWO

- **MONDAY 9**  
to
- **FRIDAY 13**  
10am-10pm  
Kalachakra  
Commentary  
7.30pm  
Commentary with Kirti  
Tsenshab Rinpoche
- **SATURDAY 14**  
9-5 Weekend Course
- **SUNDAY 15**  
9-5 Weekend Course

### WEEK THREE

- **MONDAY 16**  
8pm Lha Bab  
Du Chen Puja
- **TUESDAY 17**  
8pm Study Group
- **WEDNESDAY 18**  
8pm Evening with  
Geshe Doga
- **FRIDAY 20**  
to

- **MONDAY 23**  
Kirti Tsenshab  
Rinpoche at Atisha

### WEEK FOUR

- **MONDAY 23**  
8pm Introduction  
to Buddhism
- **TUESDAY 24**  
8pm Study Group
- **WEDNESDAY 25**  
8pm Evening with  
Geshe Doga

### WEEK FIVE

- **MONDAY 30**  
8pm Introduction  
to Buddhism

## MONDAY NIGHTS

### Introduction to Buddhism

- **Mon 2, 23, 30 at 8pm**

Ven. Kaye Miner, Buddhist Nun and Spiritual Program Co-ordinator at

TI will introduce meditation techniques to help change our limited self-view by developing new ways to relate to ourselves and the world. Designed for meditation beginners, these evenings are also beneficial for those who have been meditating for some time.

*A facilities fee of \$5 per class is asked to help cover administrative expenses. (Members free) Just turn up around 7.50pm or contact Wendy in the TI office on 596 8900 for more details.*

## TUESDAY NIGHTS

### Study Group

- **Tues 3, 17, 24 at 8pm**

Geshe Doga continues the regular teachings on Lam Rim.

These classes are suitable for both new and more experienced students of Buddhism. You are invited to 'sample' the Study Group at any time. However, as part of joining the Study Group you must be committed to attending regularly, prepared to take Refuge and willing to undertake a one-week Lam Rim meditation retreat.



*Contact Wendy on 596 8900 for more details. There is no charge.*

## WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

### Evenings with Geshe Doga

- **Wed 4, 18, 25 at 8pm**

Geshe Doga's warmth, sincerity and excellent understanding of the Western mind, make these evenings especially enjoyable. People often comment that an issue which had been troubling them suddenly becomes clear

or disappears once they have spent "An Evening with Geshe Doga". Using Shantideva's classic text *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* as a basis Geshe Doga describes methods for enhancing the quality of our lives.

*These nights are suitable for all students, both new and old. There is no charge.*



### Geshe Doga Anniversary

*November marks the eighth anniversary of Geshe Doga's coming to Tara Institute as resident Geshe.*

*In 1984 he and our translator Samdup Tsering took up the teaching reins and together they have guided us along the Buddha's path with great care and dedication ever since.*

*On behalf of everyone at TI, we thank you both and pray we will continue together until the work is completed.*

## VEN KIRTI TSENSHAB RINPOCHE'S TEACHINGS IN VICTORIA

**V**en Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche a highly renowned meditator who spent 15 years in meditative retreat, will teach at Tara Institute in November as part of his first world tour. Ven Lama Zopa Rinpoche, spiritual head of Tara Institute, describes his teacher, Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, as having "vast knowledge" and yet "there is not even the slightest smell of pride".

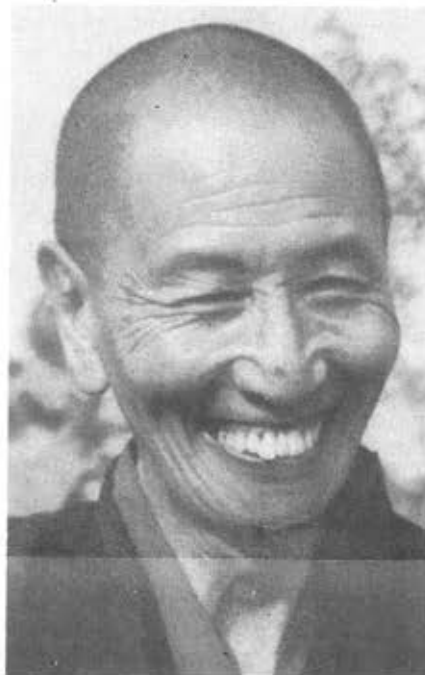
### Kalachakra Initiation

- Sat 7, 2pm-7pm to  
Sun 8, 2pm-8.30pm

*One event which should not be missed! May be taken as a blessing!*

This will be the first time the Kalachakra Initiation has been conferred in the southern hemisphere thus availing the people of Melbourne a most precious and rare opportunity. It is very auspicious for the peace in the world and is traditionally given to very large gatherings by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. It can be taken either as a blessing with no commitments or as a full initiation. Kalachakra is seen as the Buddha's supreme emanation to many Tibetan Buddhists as it is the form in which he taught his most profound and most comprehensive doctrines and practices. Merely listening to the initiation description accumulates great positive energy for the listener.

**COST:** \$110 (Members \$90) Includes supper, refreshments and materials.



### Kalachakra Commentary

- Mon 9 to Fri 13, 10am-10pm

*(NB: Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche will teach each evening 7.30pm-10pm)*

The Kalachakra Commentary will be meditation, discussion and explanation sessions during the day plus teachings each evening with Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche. The Commentary will explain in depth the practice of Kalachakra Meditation so there is a pre-requisite of having received the Kalachakra Initiation as a FULL INITIATION not just as a blessing.

**COST:** \$280 (Members \$225) Includes refreshments and materials.

### Kalachakra Information Session

- Tues 3, 6.30pm-7.30pm

This session will outline the schedule of the Initiation and answer any questions you may have.

### For Further Information

A brochure outlining all the events of Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche's visit at Tara Institute is available by calling Wendy in the TI Office on 596 8900. Interest in these events is already good so we request that bookings, especially for the Initiation be made by Wednesday November 4. Registration on initiation days will commence at 12.30pm. It is recommended that you arrive as early as possible to complete registration and seat allocation. **Doors close at 1.45pm.**

### Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche at Atisha Centre

#### CHENREZIG INITIATION and COMMENTARY

- November 20-23

Chenrezig is the deity symbolising the energy of enlightened compassion. Doing the practice of Chenrezig is a powerful method for rapidly developing enlightenment... compassion within our own consciousness.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
Bookings are essential and can be made by contacting Judy Green (054) 412705 or Bernice Smith (054) 423686. Atisha Centre is located in Eaglehawk near Bendigo.

## WEEKEND COURSE

### Three Principles of the Path

- Sat 14 to Sun 15, 9am-5pm

This weekend is suitable for everyone, beginners and more experienced students. There will be opportunities for meditation and discussion through the day, as well as receiving teachings from Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche on this most fundamental aspect of the Buddhist path.

**COST:** \$170 (Members \$130) Includes lunch, refreshments and course materials.



## Lha Bab Du Chen Puja

● Mon 16 at 8pm

*One of the most important days of the Buddhist calendar will be celebrated with a special Puja.*

In order to repay the kindness of his mother and to liberate her, Buddha Shakyamuni spent three months in Tushita Heaven where she had been reborn. There he was able to teach Dharma to her and many others. This major event (known as Lha Bab Du Chen or Buddha's Descent from the Pure Realms) marks the last of the four great yearly festivals related to his life, when the effects of negative and positive actions are multiplied a million times!!!

It is very good to come to the puja with the intention that through participating in it, all obscurations will vanish and our understanding increase.

Everyone is most welcome to attend and bring offerings for the puja.

*For more details, please ring Wendy on 596 8900.*

## What is a PUJA?

*Puja is a sanskrit word which means "offering". So a "Puja" is an offering ceremony. It is a practice that can lift the heart and lighten the mind so that the concerns of the day don't seem so tantalising, or leave such a 'bad taste'.*

*The Guru Puja, for example, held twice each month, is both a profound meditation and the most beautiful offering to the Guru. It can bring us closer to the Guru Buddha – nurturing a deep respect and trust which strengthens our relationships – not only with the Guru but with all our fellow beings. If one has not yet found a 'Guru', such a meeting can come about more quickly as a result of this meditation. This puja contains all the steps to Enlightenment and can help lead us along the entire path.*

*There are no pre-requisites for attending pujas. All are welcome. It is completely alright to just 'come along'. Even if you're not really sure what's going on, there is much to enjoy – chanting, singing praises (in English and Tibetan), reciting mantras, making offerings, or just 'being there'.*

*If one is unable to actually attend, it is possible to sponsor a puja by offering food and/or money for the benefit of a particular person – say, a sick friend or, of course, for the benefit of all.*

# INTRODUCTION to TANTRA A Vision of Totality

by Lama Thubten Yeshe, founder of Tara Institute and the FPMT



## CHAPTER 2 Desire and Happiness

DESIRE, FRUSTRATION  
and SELF-CONTROL

We are living in a realm of desire. From the moment we wake up until the moment we fall asleep at night, we are driven by desire.

Each of our senses is hungry for its own particular food. Our eye craves to see interesting shapes and colours; our ear wants to hear pleasing sounds; our nose actively sniffs out agreeable odours and turns away in disgust from smells that offend it; our tongue seeks exciting new tastes and our sense of touch is forever craving contact of one kind or another.

This desire for sensory stimulation is so deeply ingrained that if we are isolated from sights, sounds, smells and so forth for long enough we begin to hallucinate them.

Our desires are not limited to the things we can see, hear, smell, taste and touch. Our mind itself runs after ideas as greedily as our tongue hungers for tastes. Abstractions such as knowledge, reputation, security and contentment are pursued with as much vigour as if they were things that could be held in the hand or seen by the eye.

Desire is so pervasive, in fact, that it is doubtful whether there is anything that we do that is not motivated by it. No matter what field we may be involved in – whether it be business, sport or even spiritual pursuits – it is desire of one form or another that drives us to achieve success in it.

Desires are such an integral part of our life that most people would consider life without them to be a living death.

Behind all our desires is the wish to be happy. In this respect, everyone is exactly equal for we all want happiness – even though we may define it differently – and none of us wishes even the slightest suffering or disappointment.

If we check up carefully we can see that all our actions are motivated by either desire to experience what is pleasurable or the desire to avoid experiencing the unpleasant.

Yet in spite of all our wishes to have nothing but happiness our life is full of pain and dissatisfaction. Our prize possession that we worked so hard for either breaks, is lost or stolen, or simply ceases to give us pleasure. Our loving husband or wife soon becomes our worst enemy, or dies and leaves us forlorn. The job we coveted turns into a heavy burden that consumes all our time and energy. Our reputation is smeared, our smooth skin becomes wrinkled, our intelligence starts to fade. In all these ways, then, desired happiness eludes our grasp.

Sometimes it seems that the more we try to be happy, the more miserable we become. From this point of view life seems to be a meaningless rat race; our efforts to find happiness lead us around in circles until we end up frustrated and exhausted.

Many different philosophers and spiritual teachers have described this circle of perpetual frustration and have offered advice on how to break free from it, or at least on how to put up with it.

Shakyamuni Buddha, for example, referred to this condition of repeated dissatisfaction as samsara – a Sanskrit term meaning, 'to circle' – and prescribed many different methods for liberating ourselves from it. In the most well known of his teachings, the source of all our problems and disappointments is said to be ignorantly produced desire itself. Liberation, or nirvana, is achieved by completely uprooting all such craving desire from our heart.

Because our eyes, ears, nose and so forth are the very gateways of desire, those wishing to break free and achieve liberation from this circle of suffering are encouraged to become especially distrustful of the five physical senses. These are to be recognised as exerting an unhealthy

CONTINUED OVERLEAF ▶

## Coffee Corner RE-OPENS


After a few months in the milk-bar Bardo, the Coffee Corner has been reborn – renewed and full of energy.

Now you can enjoy a delicious cappuccino or a freshly squeezed juice before or after Teachings. And toasted sandwiches, and chocolates, and lollies, and drinks, and biscuits, and whatever else you want.

We've been looking for dedicated help for some time and now – and thanks to Di Johns and Craig Lee – once again we can all enjoy the convenience of puja and snack shopping at TI.

Di and Craig have generously volunteered to get the Coffee Corner up and running and they'll be introducing additional new concepts as they go along. If you have any ideas or if you would like to try other things through the Coffee Corner, have a talk to Di and Craig.

Remember, because we buy in bulk at wholesale prices – you pay no more than you do in a regular shop – yet TI collects the difference. So buying your supplies at the Coffee Corner is not only more convenient – it is also a painless way to support the Centre without it actually costing you any more.



**Coffee in the Corner.**  
**COFFEE CORNER IS OPEN:**

- Mondays and Wednesdays  
7pm – 10pm
- Before Pujas  
7pm – 8pm



## PLANT YOURSELF in the greening of Tara

Spring is here in a big way, and the garden at TI is getting a wonderful "going over" from Bernard Nagle and TI Member John Carroll, both professional gardeners who have been donating time and plants to the Centre. Thanks to you both! (and many thanks to Heinz and Rosalind Gross for their generous help in the past.)

With all this energy happening in the garden, we thought we'd organise a **PLANT DRIVE**. We need lots of punnets of annuals, hardy flowering shrubs, climbers and creepers. The courtyard also needs large to very large pots and tubs. So next time you're at the nursery, supermarket, or out in the back yard (potted cuttings are most welcome), perhaps you could pick up one of the above & drop it in to TI (with a note, so I can ring and thank you!) If you're unsure as to what or how, please ring me on **596 1303** and we'll dish the dirt.

David Wicks

## Become a TARA INSTITUTE MEMBER and SAVE . . .

Most people become TI Members because they want to save Tara Institute for a rainy day . . . they want to save it for when family members get sick or die; for moments of doubt and despair; for when they need guidance through some mental or physical storm.

Others join because they want to support the Centre's positive works of helping and saving others; providing shelter and refuge; preserving and presenting the Buddha's teachings in Melbourne and around the world.

Some people become TI Members because they see it as a sensible way to save money while trying to put the teachings into action.

But most people become Members so they can do the lot. Members share in the benefits of every action the Centre carries out – because when you are a Member you directly take part in all the Centre's activities; without Members there can be no TI.

By becoming a Tara Institute Member you are *saving* the Centre so that others will be able to benefit from its work for many decades to come.

You can pick up Membership forms at TI or you can join over the phone by ringing the TI Office (03) 596 8900.

(You'll save almost a half a year's worth of Membership dues just on Kirti Tsenshab's visit alone!)

## BOOK REVIEW

## Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand

In 1921, some 700 Tibetan monks, nuns and lay people gathered near Lhasa, to receive a Lam Rim discourse from the renowned teacher and most influential Gelug lama this century, Kyabje Pabongka Rinpoche. For the next 24 days they listened to what has become one of the most famous teachings ever given in Tibet. Among those present was Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang, later to become Junior Tutor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and root guru of many lamas of our lineage. Trijang Rinpoche took notes at the teachings, and over the next 37 years edited them painstakingly until they were published as *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*.

This very important Lam Rim text is a favourite of such lamas as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey. For the last two years it has been the subject matter for the on-going Tuesday night study group with Venerable Geshe Doga.

With Michael Richards' colloquial translation, Eva Van Dam and Robert Beer's stylish illustrations, Ross Moore's comprehensive index, and contributions from many others, the result is an immensely enjoyable and readable book. It is also an excellent text-book for serious study. *Liberation in the Palm of your Hand* is available at the TI Bookshop for \$60 (Members \$54)



## TARA INSTITUTE

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A branch of the FPMT –  
Foundation for the Preservation of  
the Mahayana Tradition – a network of  
Buddhist Centres in Australia & world-wide.

control over the mind and must be treated with the utmost caution.

The behaviour of someone following this path to individual liberation is therefore characterised by extreme self-control. The practitioner posts a strict guard at the door of the senses and is extremely suspicious of whatever wants to enter.

If, for example, a desirous sight should appear – such as an attractive man or woman – the practitioner is advised to be alert to the possible danger of falling under its spell.

When following this type of training we combat the tendency of running blindly after objects of attachment, and thereby falling victim to pain and disappointment, by teaching ourselves to focus on those aspects of the object that will reduce our desire for it.

For instance, we can neutralise our longing for a beautiful person by concentrating on the unclean parts of his or her body. The aim of this practice is to keep desire from upsetting our minds and the intended result is to attain a peacefulness and tranquillity that cannot be disturbed by the changing fortunes of our life.

Compared to a system like tantra, which actually uses the energy of desire, this cautious approach to the spiritual path is considered inferior. But this is not to say that such an approach has no value.

On the contrary, it is crucial to know when it is appropriate to withdraw our attention from things that disturb our mind. However, if the only way we know how to deal with desirous objects is to avoid them, there will be severe limits to how far our spiritual practice can take us.

Tantra's approach is very different. Instead of viewing pleasure and desire as

something to be avoided at all costs, tantra recognises the powerful energy aroused by our desires to be an indispensable resource for the spiritual path.

Because the goal is nothing less than the realisation of our highest human potential, tantra seeks to transform every experience – no matter how 'unreligious' it may appear – into the path of fulfilment.

It is precisely because our present life is so inseparably linked with desire that we must make use of desire's tremendous energy if we wish to transform our life into something transcendental.

Thus the logic of tantra is really very simple: our experience of ordinary pleasure can be used as the resource for attaining the supremely pleasurable experience of totality, or enlightenment.

It is natural that qualities of the mind, when cultivated, produce something similar, not opposite, to themselves. This is true for both positive and negative states of mind. In the same way that dissatisfaction itself can never become satisfaction, misery does not naturally evolve into happiness.

According to tantra, we cannot hope to attain our goal of universal and complete happiness by systematically making ourselves more and more miserable.

This is contrary to the way things actually work. It is only by cultivating small experiences of calm and satisfaction – now – that we will be able to achieve our ultimate goal of peace and tranquillity in the future. And similarly, it is only through the skillful use of desirous energy and by building up the habit of experiencing what we call true pleasure that we can hope to achieve the everlasting bliss and joy of full illumination.

## Visit the Buddhist Holy Places with Friends



*The 1993 Tara Institute Pilgrimage leaves Melbourne on January 4, and returns on February 2.*

The Pilgrimage will visit the four main places of the Buddha's life: where he was born; where he achieved enlightenment; where he first taught; and where he died. It will also visit Dharamsala (the home of HH the Dalai Lama) and Kathmandu (one of Buddhism's most powerful locations and home of the FPMT).

It's a wonderful opportunity for you to see and experience the historic roots of Buddhism. You will be able to actually enter the caves used by great yogis you've read about. This is a journey you will never forget!

You will be travelling with Dharmacharya friends, many of whom have made this pilgrimage before. Because it's all arranged for you, you'll save money and time and be sure to see all the major sites. You will be able to purify some negative karma without having to worry about tedious travel arrangements.

A dozen people have already joined up for the 'India experience'. If you are interested in going with them or joining for any section of the pilgrimage, come along to the **Information Night at TI at 7.30pm on Thursday November 19.**

Unfortunately, it will be your last chance to join the Pilgrimage. After that date, we will not be able to guarantee travel on all legs of the tour. Please don't leave it to the last minute.



*Lama Yeshe's family house*

**A**t Sera, Lama Osel enjoys his lovely house set in a walled garden with two dogs. His day starts at 6.45 with prayers and recitations guided by his

attendant, Ven Juan Manzanera and the day includes lessons from Norma, his Western education teacher, Ven Michael Lobsang Yeshe, a Belgian Greek boy who entered Kopan at the age of four and speaks perfect Tibetan and English, and his Tibetan Gen-la in the evening. Lama loves to roll on the floor with his dogs or tear about with his He-man toys and a number of young Rinpoches often call in to play. Lama is a great builder, constructing quite complicated houses and tunnels. It was hard to say goodbye to everyone.