tara house news

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAR 3576

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1984

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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our little business ventures are both up and running. A number of people are to be thanked for their terrific effort in trying to establish a steady income for the Centre - and provide employment too. You can help us out and earn a living doing it. Commissions and piece work available. We need workers and more work, so if you have any ideas please ring Gill/Delbert at the Centre. 513784. WHITE CROW commercial cleaning. SOFT BYTE secretarial.

CARRYING ON THE WORK

- by Geshe Zopa

Geshe Zopa, Professor of Buddhist studies at the University of Wisconsin in the United States, was a teacher of Lama Yeshe. He gave a talk in California after Lama died and an edited version appears below. Any misinterpretations are the fault of the editor.

I was the teacher of Lama Yeshe in Tibet for a long time when he was a really young boy, therefore, we have known each other for a long time in a teacher-student relationship. We had a good relationship all the way through to this point. As Lama Zopa requested I have come here but I have nothing much to tell you, just to show up and say a few words that I would like to say.

One thing of course is how Lama Yeshe had in these past years given so much activity which is really of benefit to many people, especially those in the West. Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa really did a wonderful job. How much benefit they have done can be seen in the results everywhere in the West. So many Centres, so many students and how they have established themselves and the organisation and the Teaching, and follow the Teaching seriously. The students had also the wonderful opportunity to meet other teachers and receive many, many instructions and tachings. Really, when you look somewhere for that kind of opportunity, even in Tibet, we don't have so much. These high Lamas are teaching all the time and high initiations are available all the time - these kinds of things are very, very rare.

You have had really wonderful things, opportunities and capacities for several years now so, therefore, I am really happy and admire them and the people, the followers also. It is difficult to follow certain new religions or cultures or certain kinds of customs which are from a completely different culture and field and it is not easy for us to become interested in or accepting or follow. But I see so many of you people are doing it enthusiastically and faithfully and many, many great works have been done and I have seen so many practitioners that I am kind of amazed when I look at this everywhere. That is the one thing that makes me really joyful and happy.

Go West

Now Lama Yeshe has passed away but while he was alive I think that most of the time he wanted to go to the West, beginning with small groups in Nepal, starting from there and spreading everywhere like catching fire. And then each Centre had groups when they returned to their homes and they needed the same kind of tradition, the same kind of teaching, the same kind of atmosphere, something like this for their benefit.

So the Centres with different Teachers and groups developed what they wanted to develop and follow continuously. So that is the reason for the spreading of the Teachings everywhere. The Teaching is the only medicine or true cure for the misery of sentient beings. The only medicine is 'tenpa', the Teaching. Without spiritual 'tenpa' there is no real cure or complete, permanent freedom from misery or suffering.

Therefore, if the Teaching survives, if the Teaching spreads everywhere, then there is great benefit, great cure spreads everywhere. So spreading the teachings is one of the most excellent services for the rest of the people or humans. Wherever the Teaching spreads it brings only some form of the highest goal or happiness, so it is service for the Teaching and also service for the benefit of all others. The Teaching does not bring any kind of misery or suffering or trauma, but is supposed to bring peace and happiness and to cure the suffering so therefore, I think that this is the goal also.

When this happens he would be very, very hapy and joyous, to see the Teaching like this in so many places with many, many followers. And also there are so many people who dedicate themselves, sometimes sacrifice themselves trying to help this kind of teaching to develop, not only for oneself but for the benefit of others, in both groups and individual people. In order to spread this kind of teaching, many, many forms of help are needed and I can also see so many people really dedicating themselves towards these. So therefore each of these various organisations or Centres has very many people who are really dedicated to doing things for the benefit of other groups and following the wishes of the teacher. So that is a wonderful thing. I really admire all of them.

Proper Goal

So now that Lama has passed away everybody hopes the people, his students, will still continue to follow him, his teaching and the groups which he has organised, not letting them down but trying to develop in the right way, the proper way the goal which he wished to accomplish - this goal many of you will know, particularly his older students. Also his favourite student, Lama Zopa, is still alive and he can also continue the following, helping new people and teaching continuously. I also hope in the same way. I hope also that many people wish in the same way for the continuation of the Teachings and get advice from him. And then they might also help to develop the Teaching and the organisation and help to develop the peoples' minds. This religious system teaches peace and calm and these are spreading everywhere. That is one of the main goals.

Of course in order for the Teachings to survive we need to practise. Also in the Teachings there are so many different levels and traditions and from each system certain traditions follow.

When you follow a system, you should do so without too much mess-up or mixing of the pure system because there are many, many systems with the same goal but sometimes the systems are mixed and it doesn't work. Like travelling sometimes into the far distance, reaching it by aeroplane, or by car or by walking many different ways.But each person has their own system whichever way they are going. Therefore, in following, each has their own system. So if one follows the pure system completely, one will accomplish one's goal.

Friendly

So then, there are also Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa who together established so many Centres and there are so many students everwhere. Therefore, it is very important that they are very, very friendly to one another as they are all children of the one spiritual mother or father, under one Teacher, and so should be very, very harmonious towards one another and try to help each other towards this goal, thinking: 'How can I help? How can I serve for this goal? What is the best thing? What is the most good?'

As humans we have so much intellect and can do a lot of things in the proper way by thinking and examining like this:"At the moment I am doing things with the earnest attitude towards this goal, whatever it is." Then you can accomplish great enormous things. For the human has intellect and if you go the evil way, evil things can also be accomplished in a most powerful way. We have this special kind of intellect so we must use our human intellect for the benefit of the spiritual goal and the benefit of all others, or the benefit of oneself, so therefore, one of the goals is, I think, to be harmonious with one another, our religious friends, religious brother or religious sister, feeling to help one another, thinking:"What is the best way to help?"

Of course humans make errors sometimes, and when one sees an error, try to stop it and if some people can help us when a certain problem has started, then get the other people to help solve it. In this way, I think that that is one of the most importat things and is keeping and continuing the project that Lama Yeshe had.

Excellent thing

You have only a general goal or general way of doing things which is already experienced, already known, so continue to dedicate towards these familiar areas. That will be a very excellent thing because I know so many people are working so hard, so very, very earnestly in a very sympathetic and faithful way, trying with their own body and mind to do service towards the goal, to reach the goal.

I hope that everybody will do these excellent things continuously from here in the same way that will fulfil his goal or his wishes. Lama Zopa is also still here and he now has many students.

Several years ago when Lama Yeshe was in hospital and was undergoing an examination to check whether or not to actually operate, he had, I know, a very strong wish in his mind to take care of Lama Zopa. Lama Zopa is very young but even though he is young he is one of the young Lamas who is very, very special, who has studied seriously, who has practised seriously and who can teach this to other people. His wishes are also to help with whatever is needed, the students in certain areas needing help.

So I think that at the moment he has great activities everywhere and everywhere he is establishing seeds in the ground. One drop of the spiritual teachings is most beneficial for all sentient beings and for developing the seeds already planted in the ground and therefore, each Guru can concentrate in their own way, doing whatever they can do to best develop the seeds. Not interrupting others, helping each other, sharing, good ideas - things like this will be very good.

FAREWELL BENEFIT BUFFET FOR ACHARYA KELSANG TSERING

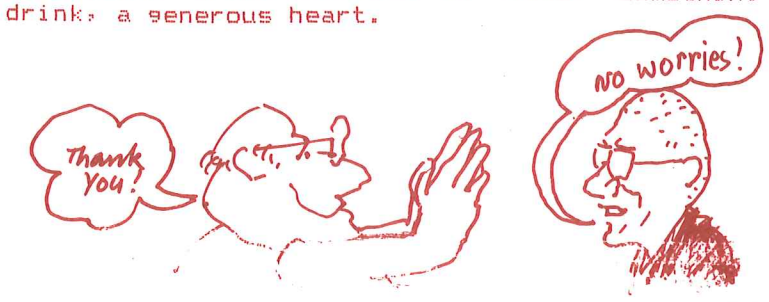
Our Translator, Kelsang Tsering, has worked for Tara Institute since December 1980. In that time Kelsang has given invaluable service to both the Centre and the wider Australian Buddhist Community. This service has included translating for Geshe Dawo during formal Teachings and for personal interviews, attending funerals, conducting pujas, teaching Tibetan, counselling and contributing his knowledge and energy to the everyday running of Tara Institute.

Kelsang will now be returning to Sera Monastery in India to resume his studies for the Geshe degree. Our best wishes and thanks go with him. As a sign of our appreciation for his help in providing the Buddha Dharma in Australia, we are holding a Benefit Buffet for Kelsang .

Some international food from Tibet to Australia will be provided. BYO-though some drink provided. All proceeds to go to Kelsang's airfare and for the building of his own unit at Sera Je.

Please make an effort to come along and say thank-you. To make it easy for everyone to come, entrance is by donation. We suggest $10 but please don't let that stop you giving more if you can afford to.

TIME: Sunday May 6th, 6.30pm
PLACE: Tara Institute, 3 Crimea St, St Kilda.
PLEASE bring a plate of food, something to drink, a generous heart.



AGM 84

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

If there's a meeting worth attending each year it's this one. The matters presented will have a large influence on the future of the Centre and how it is run. Firstly, the President and others on the Executive Committee will present reports and how they see future developments in their areas, then, elections will be held for all those positions. They include President (successful candidate has to be approved by Lama Zopa before taking up the position), vice-president, program director, treasurer, house manager, staff director and for the optional position of community welfare.

All Members of Tara Institute are eligible to vote on the night and to nominate for the positions. Nominations closed on April 20 though late nominations will be considered.

EVENT: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF TARA INSTITUTE.
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
TIME: MONDAY MAY 28 AT 8PM.

PLACE: TARA INSTITUTE,
3 CRIMEA ST, ST KILDA.

PH 513784.

Please make an extra special effort to come to this one. I'll hear you there on Monday 28th May.
Peter

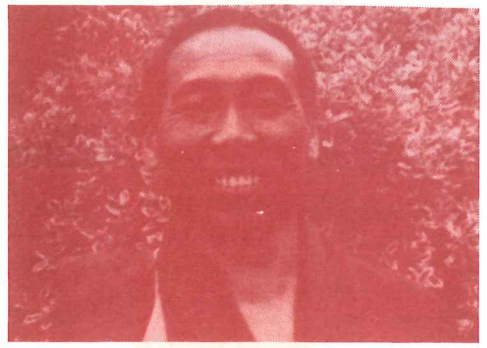
MAY

SPIRITUAL PROGRAM

GENERAL PROGRAM

MONDAY DHARMA, Monday May 7,14,21,28. 8PM

Each week a different person leads a meditation followed by a discussion designed to help apply the teachings to everday life. Those leading in May are: 7/5:Peter Guiliano. 14/5: Roz McMurty. 21/5: George Farley. 28/5: Fifi Mina



WEDNESDAY NIGHT TEACHINGS May 2,9,16,23,30. 8PM

"Supplement to the Middle Way" by Chandrakirti. The more philosophical teachings on this text, explaining the Buddhist view of Emptiness will continue.

THURSDAY NIGHT TEACHINGS, May 3,10,17,24,31. 8PM

"The Wheel of Sharp Weapons" by Dharmaraksita Geshe Dosa will start teaching this famous mind-training text and Geshe Dawo will take over when he gets back. It is a very practical text suitable for new and experienced students. It explains the common misconceptions we have in daily life.

8PM

FRIDAY NIGHT MEDITATION, May 4,11,18,25.

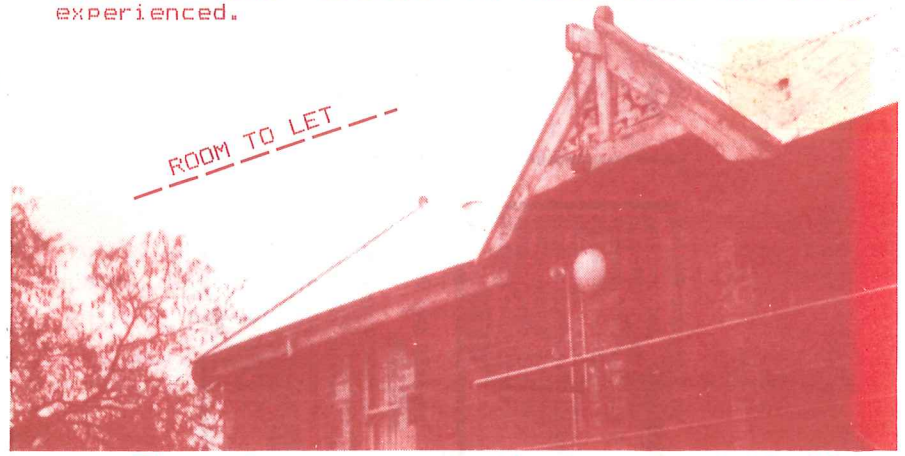
Vajrasattva meditation recommended by Lama Yeshe. This powerful meditation involves prostrations and a mantra designed to quickly purify the karma from negative thoughts and action.

Kids at creche during Sunday morning meditation

SUNDAY MORNING MEDITATION, May 6,13,27 10AM (not May 20)

***** Creche facilities available ***

Group breathing and walking meditations designed to still the mind. Suitable for experienced and not so experienced.



There is an opportunity for a spiritually minded person to live in the Centre. The particular room is practically a self-contained flat at the back of the main building. It has been professionally renovated and has its own shower and cooking facilities.

For further details contact Lynne at Tara Institute on 513784. Another room is being renovated out the back and is expected to be available soon.

THE UNSEEN HELPERS AT TARA INSTITUTE

Phil Lengyel lives with his wife Isabel in the Centre. Phil has lived there since residents moved in more than a year ago. He helps manage the house, does maintenance work on the place and helps out with the computer.

"I guess many outside the house think the residents are keen Buddhists but they are just ordinary people trying to practise Buddhism. Some practise a lot and some don't practise much at all and it's easy to see the results of both. You see it in their response to others who live in the house. I guess in terms of formal practise I'd do 15 minutes morning and night.

"Living in a Dharma Community is a constant reminder of Buddhism. When the mind is unsettled you are reminded more often than outside the Centre that you should check it. Living in the Centre is not like living in just another boarding house.

"With the number of people here there's a good chance of conflicts arising. Being a Dharma Centre, and with the example of others around, there are many chances to face up to problems. That's good because if the problems aren't faced they become more ingrained.

"I pay $72 a week rent for both of us. It's a fair bit even though it includes gas and electricity. I know I wouldn't want to live anywhere else at the moment."

Bits & pieces

* Geshe Dawo sick: Latest from India is that Geshe Dawo has not been well and he won't be returning until early in May. Meanwhile, Geshe Dopa has agreed to stay on and will give the normal program scheduled for May.

* Thanks: To those who gave money to sending a wreath to Lama Yeshe's cremation. In addition, $700 was sent from the Centre to help pay some of the enormous costs of looking after Lama before he died.

* Dinner: About 40 people attended 'The Great Restoration Dinner' at Tony's Bar and Grill. It was a great time, and thanks to generous donations, raised more than $400 towards some needed renovations to the facilities. There's another fund raising dinner on Sunday May 6 so we can make a farewell gift to our translator, Kelsang Tsering, who has served us so well over the last three-and-a-half years.

CHOLELEN FASTING RETREAT

Lama Zopa Rinpoche suggested it would be beneficial to do a Pill Retreat at Chenrezig Institute. The retreat is planned for one month starting on May 17.

The retreat is based on the practise of the Chenrezig Yoga method and one of the great benefits is that Single Pointed Concentration is developed and practised. Contact Gill at Tara Institute, 513784.

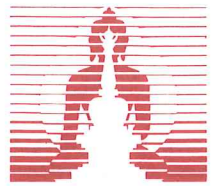
ONE YEAR RETREAT AND ENLIGHTENMENT EXPERIENCE CELEBRATION 2

One of Lama Yeshe's final instructions was that after his passing away there should be a one-year Vajrasattva retreat wherever his body was. Accordingly, the greater part of the holy relics remaining after Lama's body was offered to fire at Vajrapani Centre in California have been taken to Kopan Gompa outside Kathmandu in Nepal (having been consecrated by His Holiness Song Rinpoche in Switzerland). At Kopan a larger-than-life-size statue of Lama will be made with the relics inside.

The retreat will probably have started by the time you receive this newsletter. Students can participate in this retreat for as long (or as short) as they want. An effort to obtain special long visas for Nepal will be made - please contact Pam Cayton, Box 817, Kathmandu, about this. The main feature of the retreat is that the mantra is to be recited continuously, 24 hours a day - that is, at least one person should be reciting the mantra at any time. The Mahakala puja will be done each evening.

Lama Zopa thought it best to postpone the Enlightenment Experience Celebration 2 for a year so all our energy can be directed towards this retreat. The EEC 2 will now start with the Kopan Course in November 1985. The 1984 Kopan Course will be held as usual and during the Vajrasattva retreat there will be other teachings, possibly by His Holiness Song Rinpoche and other Lamas.

His Holiness Song Rinpoche has accepted Lama Zopa Rinpoche's request to teach a commentary on The 50 Verses of Guru Devotion at the postponed EEC2. He will also give a commentary with teachings on thought transformation of the Guru Puja. Gomo Rinpoche, the sole holder of all the initiations in the Gelug tradition, will give the extremely rare set of 100 initiations of Dorje Trengwa.



AGM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Anyone is welcome to attend. But only Financial Members can vote.

EVENT: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF TARA INSTITUTE.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

TIME: MONDAY MAY 28 AT 8PM.

PLACE: TARA INSTITUTE,
3 CRIMEA ST, ST KILDA.

PH 513784.

SPECIAL EVENTS

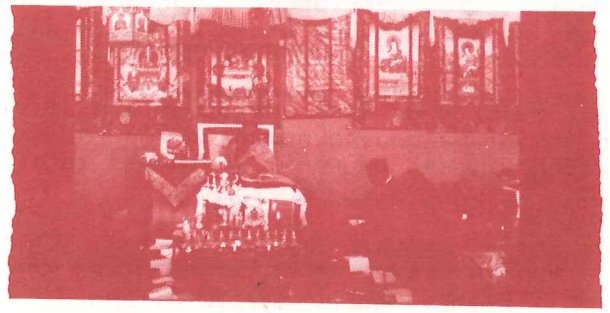
WEEKEND COURSE ON HEART SUTRA

Geshe Dawo will give teachings on this sutra containing the essence of Buddhism - the concept of emptiness. There will also be meditations designed to increase the practitioner's understanding of this vital concept.

DATES: May 18,19,20.
TIMES: Fri night 8pm, Sat 9am to 9pm, Sun 9am to 1pm on
PLACE: Tara Institute, 3 Crimea St, St Kilda, ph 513784

COST: $35, $30 (MEMBERS)

INQUIRIES: Registration closes Monday May 14. Contact Owen Cole at the Centre.

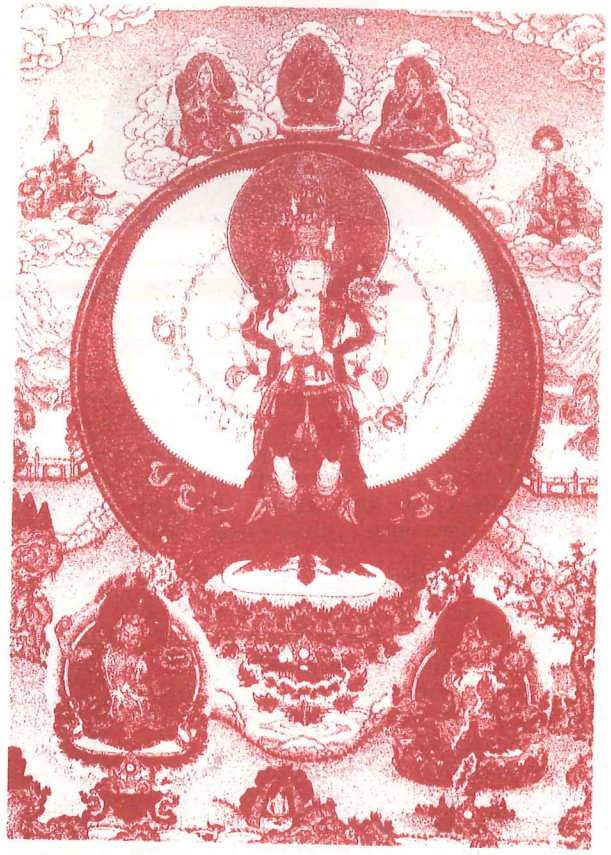


EXPLANATION OF RITUALS

This special talk will explain the significance of the prayers before teachings, the visualisations for prostrations, the various Tibetan deities displayed in the gompa and what the altar is and how it is set up.

TIME: Sunday May 13 at 2.30pm.

NYUNG NA WEEKEND



This fasting retreat on the deity of compassion, Chenrezig, will be held on June 9 & 10 in the country. Cost $40, $35 (members). Registration closes May 31. Details Owen Cole, 513784.

++++++++ DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER ++++++++++++
SUNDAY MAY 13