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# Tara Institute News

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DECEMBER 1992

## THE END OF A BUSY YEAR!

Looking back over 1992 it's difficult to comprehend what a monumental 'Dharma Year' this has been for Melbourne and especially for Tara Institute.

The obvious highlight was the visit by HH the Dalai Lama. TI and its Members played a crucial role: sending the initial invitation; calling the first meeting; working on the Interim and Tour Committees which set the ball rolling for the entire national tour; organising and fundraising.

We provided the Tour Office at TI where there was a phenomenal amount of activity and non-stop excitement.

*Swami* Dhargyey and Geshe Dawa stayed with us. And we gladly drowned in the unprecedented overflow crowd at the Tennis Centre.

At Lama Zopa's prompting, we launched and held two Healing Courses which have given so much help and support to suffering people who would not normally contact Dharma.

Geshe Doga's Weekend Courses continued generating wonderful power through the year. Numbers grew at his free weekly teachings. 220 people attended Geshela's annual White Tara Initiation. Saka Dawa was a great success as usual.

Our third Open Day was packed with people all day and went so very well.

Landcox Hall was rented out throughout the year and Tai Chi classes began there.

We rearranged rooms, putting the Library into the best room, and setting up a general office of generous size (where the library used to be) – now full of computers and activity.

Geshe Doga's altar was finally completed. The very threadbare stairs were re-carpeted.

We began a detailed review and systems analysis as the first step in improving TI's administration.

The TI Bookshop grew and grew better; a mail order service began.

We held our Annual General Meeting at the beginning of the year and later, our annual Picnic at Hanging Rock with Atisha Centre.

I attended two Australia and New Zealand Regional Meetings (at Buddha House and Vajrayana Institute) and flew to Spain for CPMT Council Meeting with all the FPMT Centres.

At CPMT, I had lunch and a long talk about TI with Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

Theo took over from Tom as Treasurer. Wendy finished in the Office.

In the imaginary gaps, we continue to pursue our claim for tax-deductibility for donations.

## Next year . . .

TI Members will be invited to our Annual General Meeting.

Building maintenance and improvement will have to come back to centre-



Alison Ribush

stage after a couple of years in the wings.

We will be making further advances in management techniques to improve our administration and to curb costs.

There is also a possible tour of Australia by monks from Kopan in Nepal.

Finally, I want to thank Geshela, Samdup and Thubten for their important role at the head of the Program . . . and my Assistant Director, Julia Gardiner, Kaye and all the members of the Executive Committee, our residents, workers, supporters and our Members . . . everyone who has made TI work so superbly this year. And let me wish you a wonderful holiday break and a bright and happy 1993.

Alison Ribush, TI Centre Director

# DECEMBER

## AUSPICIOUS DAYS IN DECEMBER

*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.*

WEDNESDAY 2  
Tibetan 8th  
Tara Day (Precepts)

FRIDAY 4  
Tibetan 10th  
Tsog Day

WEDNESDAY 9  
Tibetan 15th  
Full Moon (Precepts)

SATURDAY 19  
Tibetan 25th  
Lama Tsong Khapa Day (Tsog Day)

WEDNESDAY 23  
Tibetan 30th  
New Moon (Precepts)

### WEEK ONE

- TUESDAY 1  
8pm Study Group
- WEDNESDAY 2  
6pm Tara Puja
- 8pm Evening with Geshe Doga
- FRIDAY 4  
8pm Guru Puja

### WEEK TWO

- MONDAY 7  
8pm Introduction to Buddhist Meditation
- TUESDAY 8  
8pm Study Group
- WEDNESDAY 9  
8pm Evening with Geshe Doga
- FRIDAY 11  
8pm  
to
- MONDAY 14  
6.30am  
Nyung Nä

### WEEK THREE

- MONDAY 14  
8pm Introduction to Buddhist Meditation
- TUESDAY 15  
8pm Final Study Group for 1992
- WEDNESDAY 16  
8pm Final teaching with Geshe Doga for 1992
- SATURDAY 19  
8pm Lama Tsong Khapa Puja

### CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

*The formal teaching program at Tara Institute for 1992 will finish on:-*  
● Wednesday 16 and resume on:-  
● Monday 11 Jan, '93 with a new Introduction to Meditation series. Details of the complete program in the January 1993 Newsletter.  
*In the meantime, thanks for your participation in 1992 and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.*

Born in Tibet in 1935, VEN GESHE DOGA (pictured) entered the great Sera Monastery in Lhasa at the age of 17. In 1959 he was forced to flee Tibet, but continued his studies in India where he eventually achieved the highest title of Lharampa Geshe. After two years at our sister Centre, Atisha Centre in Bendigo, Geshe-la came to Tara Institute in 1984. Under his guidance the teaching program and the Centre itself have moved from strength to strength, becoming one of the world's leading Tibetan Buddhist Centres.



## MONDAY NIGHTS

### Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

- Monday 7, 14 at 8pm

New Members' Rep. Allys Andrews (pictured) will conduct our final Introductory series for 1992. Allys' good humoured, down-to-earth approach to life and families inspires and encourages us to remain calm and happy during this most hectic time of year.



*A facilities fee of \$5 per class is asked to help cover administrative expenses (members free). Just turn up around 7.50pm or phone 596 8900 for more details.*

## TUESDAY NIGHTS

### Study Group

- Tuesday 1, 8, 15 at 8pm

Throughout 1992, Geshe Doga has shared his insights into the profound teachings of the Graduated Path to

Liberation with over 60 fortunate and very grateful students. Geshe-la will give the last Study Group teaching for 1992 on **December 15** using the opportunity to give further advice and encouragement to Study Group members.

*Please contact Wendy on 596 8900 for details. There is no charge for these classes.*

## WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

### Evenings with Geshe Doga

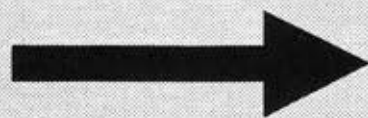
- Wednesday 2, 9, 16 at 8pm
- Wednesday 16 at 8pm

Using Shantideva's *A Guide to a Bodhisattva's Way of Life* as a basis, Geshe Doga draws on his own experience, and that of his teachers, to give practical advice on how to make each day worthwhile.

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

Tonight is the **FINAL TEACHING** that Geshe Doga will give at Tara Institute in 1992. As in previous years Geshe-la has agreed to give a special teaching based on his personal understanding of what is most beneficial for Dharma practice in the West. This is a great opportunity for those who haven't heard Geshe Doga teach before. Please do come to thank him for his kindness and patience in showing us the Path to Enlightenment and in making the Centre such a wonderful place.

*All welcome!*



## Nyung Nä Fasting Retreat on Compassion

● Fri 11 (evening) to  
Mon 14 (morning)

Nyung Nä is a powerful purification retreat based on Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion. It is short (two days) but intense. This practice involves maintaining the Eight Mahayana Precepts plus on the second day, additional vows of not eating, drinking or talking for 24 hours. The meditation sessions include praises, prostrations and mantra recitation. The retreat finishes early Monday morning in time for breakfast and work. Geshe Doga gave an extensive commentary on this practice in October.

*All are welcome. No pre-requisites.  
Please book with Wendy on 596 8900.  
Sponsorships of participants, or  
donations are greatly appreciated.  
Cost: \$35 residential, \$20 non-residential  
(including meals)*

## Lama Tsong Khapa Day SPECIAL PUJA

● Sat 19 at 8pm

For centuries Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhists have commemorated the passing of the famous Tibetan yogi and scholar Tsong Khapa whose life and work is comparable to that other great Tibetan saint Milarepa. Lama Tsong Khapa was considered an emanation of Manjushri and single-handedly inspired an entire religious renaissance. He founded the Gelugpa lineage, which continues to this day, and includes the existence of Tara Institute and the FPMT. Today, many thousands of Western Buddhists also join in commemorating this anniversary by making candlelight offerings and singing praises so that the Buddha's teachings may continue to flourish. Please come and join us in this special celebration. Offerings of candles, flowers or food etc. are most welcome.



The TI kitchen is one of the most crucial and demanding activities we run. Over the years at Brighton, many wonderfully dedicated cooks have fed our multitudes under sometimes gruelling conditions.

So it's with sincere thanks we say goodbye to Julia Phillips who has been holding the fort while we've searched for 'permanency'. She has filled in generously as our 1992 saint of the stove.

And now we've got some great new energy cooking in the kitchen. Vanessa Walsh has (deliciously) filled in for Julia a couple of times over the last few months, and now we've snapped her up 'permanently'. Thanks Vanessa, you'll be grate.

If you would like to add some creative ingredients to the mix, we'd love to hear your ideas for how we can get more out of the kitchen and Coffee Corner. Please talk to Assistant Director, Julia Gardiner or to Di Johns in the Coffee Corner.

Incidentally, you are welcome to eat dinner in the Diner (nothing could be finer) before teachings any night - please ring the Office on 596 8900 and book in before 3pm.



### TARA INSTITUTE

3 Mavis Avenue,  
East Brighton, VIC 3187  
phone (03) 596 8900

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



*Was it the sound of pan-pipes? Geshe-la and picnickers, transfixed on top of Hanging Rock at the Picnic in October*

# KALACHAKRA INITIATION'S IMPACT on TI

This month we welcome the first article by new News recruit, Adair Bunnett. We had a lot of positive reaction to our call for fresh perspectives on TI News, and Adair is the first one into print. Adair specialises in producing education material using her own Mac computer (a point we haven't overlooked!) and we look forward to further collaboration. Thank you Adair for all the good energy you put into this project. If you are interested in working on News assignments, drop us a line.

**T**he Kalachakra event offered a set of challenges to us because of the large numbers of participants expected at Tara Institute. Preparations were detailed and thorough. Of necessity they had commenced well before the occasion. All the building and Gomba were thoroughly cleaned weeks in advance. Some residents moved out of their usual rooms to accommodate the special visitors who were expected. The logistics of such an occasion are frightening! Basic human needs for food, drinks and toilets have to be met in quantities not normally required. Even with our experience managing large numbers, it is always difficult to predict time factors and anticipate unusual quantities of commonplace items. The bookshop, too, had to be stocked to cater for an unusual and increased demand.

**A**s October moved towards November, Wendy's desk became a work of art with different piles of paper – each representing equally urgent tasks for each of the different phases of the program. The telephone rang with increasing frequency and the requests for information and advice came more insistently. Yet day-to-day tasks still needed to be completed. Throughout, Wendy remained calm and efficient (at least on the surface!)

**O**n Wednesday November 4 a welcoming party assembled at Tullamarine airport at 8.30 in the morning to greet Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche and his attendants. The group (both greeters and greeted) made a dramatic contrast to the unrelievedly grey-suited male passengers at that time of the morning. This contrast effectively symbolised the special nature of the experience that was to follow.



Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche at the St Kilda Pier offering vase water from all the initiations he has done on his current World Tour (congratulations to the lucky pretas of Port Phillip Bay!)

**O**n Saturday November 7 the participants for the Kalachakra Initiation began to assemble from noon onwards. There were people from all over Australia – from Sydney, Queensland, Western and South Australia. Some had even come from New Zealand. As registration proceeded there was an air of anticipatory excitement. At about 2 o'clock over 250 people filed into the Gomba, and squeezed up tight. It was nearly equivalent to a Boeing 747-load of people. Up at the front, there sat a row of eight members of the Sangha from around Australia.

**A**s the preparatory day progressed a number of distinctive and strong waves of group spirit were apparent. It moved from suppressed excitement in anticipation of the event, through a quietly subdued feeling following being blessed by Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, to happiness and joy at the conclusion of the day. At other times there was alert interest and a festive atmosphere. Each phase of the initiation generated a quite different atmosphere that conveyed itself to the participants. At the conclusion of the day on Saturday, Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche announced that he had given Tara Institute a statue of the Buddha and a photo of himself and His holiness the Dalai Lama (these have been placed in the Gomba), then a magnificent meal was served in the courtyard. While eating the delicious food, friendships were formed and interstate visitors and others caught up with each other.

**I**n the early afternoon of Sunday, we all reassembled, friendships made the previous day were renewed, and confidences about the effect of Saturday's ceremonies were shared. Then the Gomba was filled once more. Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche had already spent several hours in preparation. By the early evening break most people could be seen gently flexing stiff joints. Near the conclusion a Tsog Offering was made with splendid fervour and vigour.

**T**he Kalachakra Initiation did indeed produce a sense of peace, tranquillity and joy in having shared a rare and precious experience. It was cleansing and purifying, and at the same time the ceremony generated sense of warmth and fellowship amongst the participants. It was a long but immensely rewarding experience.

Adair Bunnett

## Report on the greening of Tara

Many thanks from David Wicks to the people who have given plants recently to the Centre.

If you would like to flex your green finger but have forgotten, don't worry, the *Plant Drive* is still 'on'. So do bring along a little something to lift the look and spirits of TI's garden. It's easy – you can pick up something nice at the supermarket or nursery or even from your own garden. But do it now before you forget. Forget-me-not. Also, feel free to ring David Wicks on 596 1303.

# TARA INSTITUTE RAFFLE

## WIN 10 nights for two in Bali

Picture yourself at the Bali Holiday Resort . . . sunshine, sandals and surf. Flat out doing nothing but lapping up a great break (except from your practice and the contemplation of the effects of karma, of course).

The prize includes transfer to and from the airport, airfares and accommodation.

Second prize is your choice of \$600 worth of beautiful jewellery from Gazelle in the Centreway Arcade in Collins Street, Melbourne (thanks to Gabe Wallace.)

Third Prize is a 'Just One Night' package for two at exclusive Delgany in Portsea.

It includes accommodation in an Executive or Deluxe suite with continental Breakfast, Luncheon and three course a la Carte Dinner in their famous Two Faces Restaurant.

A fabulous opportunity to be pampered (while focussing on Emptiness at all times of course.)



Bali Holiday Resort

Get your books of 15, \$5 tickets at the Office. The Raffle closes on the 2nd of February; drawn on the 13th.



Delgany, Portsea

Only a maximum of 3000 tickets will be sold, so you are practically guaranteed a win – well, almost. The prizes are really excellent but the cause is even better – improving TI. So please take and sell as many tickets as you can, it will greatly help the future running of your Centre.

Send your cheque or postal order for the required number of tickets (plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope if possible) to TI, C/- Julia Gardiner. Or alternatively, you can buy at the Office, Bookshop or Coffee Corner.

Everything you can do is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

### Can you help make sure the TI Welcome mat is put out on Monday nights?

We're looking for a reliable manager to organise our Monday Night Meeters-and-Greeters.

We've got two bright eyed front-of-house personalities – Stephanie Brennan and Karen Bell who, on behalf of us all, officially welcome visitors to TI on Monday nights.

Unfortunately, they are not able to look after the rostering. That leaves the door open for you (even if you're a man!) It's an important job for the Centre and a positive way to meet people. It doesn't take a lot of work, just reliability.

#### **MORE MONDAY NIGHT GREETERS WANTED, TOO . . .**

Have you been looking for a way to train yourself to be warm and welcoming towards others? This is one of the best ways to learn how to put the teachings into action.

If you can remember the overwhelming feeling when you turned up at TI for the first time . . . then you can appreciate just how important it is for new people to be welcomed by a smiling face at the front door.

TI's founder, Lama Yeshe told us the Centre was set up to serve others . . . and being a Reception person is one of the easiest ways to do it.

If you are interested in either managing Monday night front-of-house or just want to give greeting a try, call Alison at Tara Institute (596 8900) on Monday afternoons until 5.45pm.

Alison especially wants to pass on her sincere thanks to Stephanie, Karen, and Jane Lewis for doing such an excellent and essential job for the Centre and for its visitors.

## COFFEE CORNER lifts Centre

If you've been around the Centre for teachings lately, you'll know how good it is to have the Coffee Corner back in action.

Another nice thing for TI is the fact that it has already raised several hundred dollars to support the Centre – equivalent to getting more Members joining.

Now, Manager, Di Johns is looking for other ways to provide service to patrons and more support for TI.

She has valuable contacts for the best coffee, foccacias (that delicious flat Italian bread), cakes and lots of other things. Di would love to hear from you if you have any ideas or ways she can help you.

#### **COFFEE CORNER IS OPEN:**

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

## Wendy flies

After three years in one of TI's hottest seats, Wendy Cook is taking off for new adventures. She leaves the post of Office Manager this month.

We will miss your warm and friendly approach to answering our sometimes rambling and often heart-breaking phone calls. You have done a fantastic job of being the front-line for everything that impacts on TI, looking after unimagined emergencies, putting up with all kinds of chaos, madness and brain numbing details that few people could handle at all.

We wish you a wonderful future and we pray everything goes well for you. And we thank you for all the marvellous energy you have put into TI - before, during and after work.

## WANTED

**a dedicated worker  
to manage TI Office  
AWARD WAGES**

If you would like a job with important responsibilities, a chance to develop your professional skills and you are keen to play a crucial role in the day to day operations of Tara Institute, here's what you will need:

- ◆ Minimum typing speed of 60 wpm.
- ◆ Competency with word-processing packages.
- ◆ Organisation and management abilities.
- ◆ Good interpersonal skills.
- ◆ Pleasant telephone manner.
- ◆ Proven maturity.
- ◆ Ability to manage yourself.

You will work a basic 34 hour week. We pay Award wages plus superannuation, WorkSafe, holiday pay.

You must send your written application and references to Centre Director, Alison Ribush at Tara Institute by December 15, 1992.

## An enormous THANK YOU to Noel Farquharson - with interest

After a year's stint as assistant to our last two Treasurers, Noel is retiring.

He has done a tremendous job with many long hours painstakingly sifting through the complex details of TI's finances. It's one of the most difficult and unheralded jobs around the Centre because most of the work is done after hours and locked away from public view.

But make no mistake, the responsibility is great and the work essential to all that TI does.

Noel, everybody at Tara Institute thanks you for your great dedication. Now, at last, you might be able to get some time for teachings again.

We are also very grateful to Wendy White who has generously agreed to contribute her considerable skill in helping TI's Treasurer Theo van Embden on Wednesday nights.

## New Members' Representative announced

David Wicks is retiring from the position at the end of the year and handing over to long time Member, Allys Andrews.

Thanks for your time at the helm, David (and even more importantly, thanks for continuing with the News desktop publishing -Ed.)

Allys will be taking over at the start of the new year and she will be more than happy to hear from you, so drop her a line with ideas and suggestions. You can contact her through the TI Office.

## Rinpoche greets new babies

Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche paid particular attention to new offsprings of two TI Member families. One was Tara, the daughter of long-time residents, Christine and Richard. The other was Eric, recently born son of former residents, Isabel and Phil Lengyel.

## Big numbers take first KALACHAKRA INITIATION

Ven Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche took Melbourne by quiet storm last month when over 250 people filled the TI gomba. It was the largest participation we have ever had for an initiation at Tara Institute. 55 People also attended the week-long Commentary.

Spiritual Program Coordinator, Ven Kaye Miner, had done an incredible job of organising a million and one details into an operation which went off with military precision.

Major efforts were also put in by Julia, Damien, Gabe, Andy, Alan and Peter Guiliano. Ven Thubten Dony prepared the gomba with all the tantric particulars. The beautiful flowers which covered the altar were donated by Max and Maggie and by Gil and Leslee.

At the beginning of proceedings, Alison, our Centre Director, made an offering of body, speech and mind to request Rinpoche to give the initiation.

FPMT sangha were sponsored for the event and we were delighted to see the following sangha at TI - Dolma from WA; Losang (Myles) and our own Gill Jelbart from Chenrezig Institute; Pende Hawter from Karuna; Antonio, the translator from Vajrayana; and Robina flew in from Germany.

And these FPMT Centre Directors also joined us - Paul Bourke from Wisdom; Margaret Castles from Regional Office; Renate Ogilvie from Shakyamuni Buddha Hospice in Sydney; Assistant Director of Vajrayana, Chris Beveridge; and of course Ven Pende. Plus many people from Chenrezig Institute and other Centres.

Alison particularly wants to thank everyone who made the event such an excellent success.

And another new birth has occurred in our ranks; Suzanne and ex-Treasurer, Tom Castles have recently brought forth Callum.

Congratulations to all our new parents and children (and perseverance to all our old ones too.)