

KATHINA ROBE OFFERING CEREMONY

In remembrance of and with respect to our grandparents and parents

Friends from 1993 batch Institute of Medicine (1) Yangon and Family

Sunday 8th October 2017



When My Son Became a Monk

A mother adjusts to her son's new way of being in the world. By [Sarah Conover](#) 2017

There's a saying I've heard among some Western Buddhists: to lose yourself, either meditate or travel. What about doing both at once, while keeping pace with your 28-year-old son, whom you named Nathan Dale at birth but who is now Tan Nisabho, a Thai Forest monk? Long gone is the wavy cap of nut-brown hair and thick eyebrows; his gleaming skull appears and disappears like stages of the moon between his fortnightly shavings.

On those just-shaved full moon days, Tan Nisabho (Tan Po for short) looks a lot like the infant whose newborn eyes gazed unflinchingly into mine, prompting me to say aloud something utterly unexpected after he was cleaned and swaddled: "Oh! This one's not going the normal route! A monastic!" My mother, standing beside me and looking down at his face, had a similar reaction, calling him "Old Soul." Intuitions like these are rare, but not unheard of for mothers; I know that this first hello with my boy made it easier years later to say good-bye when he stepped on the plane to Asia with the intention of finding a monastic home to replace the one he'd grown up in.



How did Buddhism wend its way into my son's life to prompt the radical step of ordination in his twenties? Born in Marin County, California, he began asking ontological unanswerables during toddlerhood: "How can you be sure your dreams aren't the real life, and your real life isn't a dream?" Indeed. We raised Nate on a menu of Buddhism lite: silent dinners using Thich Nhat Hanh's Plum Village chanting book and an evening *metta* meditation; as he grew older, we initiated a Teen Dharma Circle, mostly comprising Nate's best friends, all eager to explore the processes and contents of their minds. According to our son, these encounters with the dharma plus the fact that his parents were spiritual companions primed him. Yet the certainty that monasticism would shape his future occurred when, at 15, he read Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*.

Keeping a couple of toes in the dharma through meditation, books, and a few retreats, our son dove into an intense course load at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, into group sing-alongs that he convened, into love affairs and ensuing breakups, into mountaineering and all that the Northwest offers in the way of outdoor bliss. Yet during his junior year at college, he told us in private that he'd already seen enough of human suffering to know that society's approaches to unhappiness did not address its root causes. He felt ready to pursue the life of a monk. We asked him to finish college first, just in case.

Now that Tan Po has been ordained for nearly five years, missing, along with his hair and every possession, is his fireplug physique. On our Skype calls between our home in Spokane, Washington, and his monastery in Thailand, I insist that he back up from the camera and turn sideways. My motherly eye assesses any further corporeal diminishment. What's left of the old Nate? Not much. But that's the

point of monasticism, isn't it, to cast off, bit by bit, every dimension of what we identify as self?

Monasticism is truly a world apart from the mainstream, mentally and physically; no individual leaps across that rift without leaving behind bewildered, bereft non-Buddhist friends and relatives. Tan Po's choice necessitated relinquishing almost every aspect of his former identity, and that included his former social life. His first visit back home, for a memorial—a special leniency for a monk with less than five years of practice—was as awkward for him as it was for friends and relatives. He kept a rigid monastic schedule right in the midst of events, as his teacher had instructed him to do. Refraining from idle speech, he found he had much less in common with his friends who were now all about career and relationships. An indelible memory sticks with me of a breakfast in a Seattle restaurant with some of his friends from Reed College: staring at Tan Po's transformation, sensing the scope of the chasm between them now, his friend Cathy sat speechless, tears dripping into her untouched food over the course of two hours.

Monastics cannot ordain without their parents' permission, and some go to radical lengths for the go-ahead. I know monks who have refused to eat until their parents agreed to let them ordain. Western, non-Buddhist parents of monks must navigate a huge stretch in understanding between their disparate worlds. We've heard of many sad, befuddled, and confused families, but in general, says my son, Western parents, whether they are Buddhist or not, come around after they see how content their child is. Some Thai parents, especially the wealthy, put up considerable resistance when their sons incline toward a lifetime commitment of monasticism, trying to entice them with such prizes as a fancy car, an arranged marriage, or a top CEO job in the family business.

Although Doug and I are Buddhist practitioners and have always supported Tan Po's monasticism, we have worried. Our first two visits to Thailand were not reassuring—neither the first trip, a visit to witness his ordination in the middle of the alien environment of a Thai wat; nor the second trip, a junket across the country to meet the living saints he'd heard so much about from fellow monks. During those trips, we were caught unaware at moments when grief over our boy's absence would surface: for Doug, it was a gut-wrenching sobbing in the bathroom of our first return flight from Bangkok; I thought I was just fine until Tan Po asked me face-to-face during our second visit if his new life was hard for me. We were casually walking on a monastery road, sun shining, tropical birds singing. Overcome with sudden anguish, I found myself nearly unable to stand. He didn't know what to do. Neither did I at the time.

At the tail end of 2016, while the United States was wildly disoriented with postelection euphoria or despair, Doug and I landed across the planet for a let's-try-skippping-Christmas family reunion. The last of our family's elders, my sweet 93-year-old mother, had died in May, and we hadn't seen Tan Po in person in almost two years. Jamey, and her boyfriend, Max, not practitioners, planned to be with us for two weeks. Doug and I planned to stay six.

Sister and brother longed for this reunion, but it soon became clear that their travel agendas weren't compatible in the least. One wanted to follow the threads of intrigue hidden in Bangkok backstreets till the wee hours; the other would rise a few hours later for meditation and chanting. Because of Tan Po's monastic rules restricting entertainment, the daytime tourism menu we could enjoy together included sacred monuments and monasteries, as many as we wanted, all the day long. Oh, and I forgot museums. We could also see museums together.

Tan Po after an alms round

It's no accident that the Vinaya, the Buddhist monastic code, makes it nigh impossible to blend lay and monk lives easily. A monastic's purpose is singular; this is hardly so for most laypeople, and our attempt at togetherness exposed the fault line between us that often

feels unbridgeable. Following a monk wasn't turning out to be what Jamey or Max had envisioned for Max's first trip abroad. Tan Po, Doug and I gave them our blessings to go seek out their own adventures.

Scrapping our original group plan, we three decided to dedicate the next month to a *tudong*, a mobile retreat to monasteries and sacred sites of the Thai Forest tradition. *Tudong* is a Thai word that derives from the *Palidhutanga*, referring to one who "polishes off defilements, an ascetic." These days, the term is shorthand for a Forest monk's wandering through the countryside by foot, vulnerable to the elements and dependent on people's kindness. Many of the great spiritual masters of Thailand have practiced *tudong* for years at a time. Our version had little in common with their asceticism, but maybe there was a similarity in spiritual focus, an openness to the ways in which life and dharma might meet us—and change us—down the road.

This decision marked a shift in our own perceptions, as well as a shift in the perceptions of the Thai people we encountered. We were no longer seen as tourists. Instead, we comprised a perhaps never-seen-before trio walking on the side of busy highways and quiet back roads, apparently deserving of an outpouring of generosity. Indeed we were an odd trifecta: a heavenly messenger—the Buddha's term for monastics, sickness, old age, and death—and two late-middle-aged foreigners with large backpacks. (With Doug and me hovering at 60 years old, we might have had two of the four heavenly messengers covered.)

Doug and I looked like tourists who had taken the wrong turn on the way to a beach resort. Doug wore a baseball cap and almost-monastery-worthy whites so we'd be viewed, maybe just a little, as religious pilgrims. Because Thailand's beloved king had recently died, I wore black slacks in his honor (also because I can't keep anything white clean) and the women's lavender polyester top ubiquitous at Thai monasteries. My sun-blocking umbrella, much needed along the shadeless roads, completed the tableau.

That Doug and I were Buddhist practitioners supporting our son's life in the dharma struck a deep chord with many we met. In our *tudong*, says Tan Po, Doug and I occupied a role similar to his in Thailand—providing signposts of practice along the path that is the heart of Thai culture. In calling ourselves Buddhists and encouraging our son's training, we honored Thailand's great teachers and tradition. Says Tan Po: "If some Westerners with all their wealth can give up their son to the dharma, the Thais perceive it as a call back to their native faith."

When we left the comfort of his mother ship, as I call his home monastery, I marked our travels by the kindnesses heaped upon us—in fact, they amassed so fast that both my husband and I began journaling a list halfway through our trip and couldn't keep up. We began our walking *tudong* at the outskirts of the city of Ubon Ratchathani in the early morning. Within five minutes, the main road bisected a food market for farmworkers—food stands sheltered from rain or sun by makeshift roofs resting at rakish angles on jury-rigged walls. Tan Po hadn't eaten his one meal of the day, so this would likely be his alms round.

A few stalls and steps later, his bowl topped out, but the bounty continued. If a monk turns down an offering, he is not allowed to eat. By the time we reached the finish line, Tan Po had chanted a number of blessings and his parent-porters carried the rest of the largess. These offerings of food are given in silence without eye contact; if the givers wanted a blessing, they'd ask by kneeling, barefoot, on a bamboo mat laid down in anticipation. Once they were kneeling, with their heads bowed, Tan Po would then chant a prayer that ended with these words:

"May the angels always protect you. By all the power of the Buddha may you always be well; by all the power of dhamma may you always be well; by all the power of the sangha may you always be well."

Tan Po gives a blessing.

The laity offer food to something far greater than any individual present. Buddhist tradition, says my son, frowns upon a monk responding with a flimsy two-syllable "Thank you," as it diminishes the immense beauty of the act. The offering is made to the monastic robes, to the ideal of awakening, not to the individual monk, who merely expresses that ideal.

The old ladies bowing to Tan Po on the street and the ubiquitous generosity toward Thailand's monks used to embarrass him. "After a while," he says now, "you shut up and take it. It's not for you; it becomes another opportunity to shed self."

Being on *tudong* with our son shifted our understanding of the depth and beauty of what he has chosen to do with his life. The context of being in a Buddhist country and traveling by foot refined the awareness: the unbounded generosity toward his robes allowed us to see clearly that he represented a shared experience of virtue for laity and monastic alike, a gift to both. What we witnessed was never a give-and-take, but more like a give-and-give. All the great *ajahns*, or teachers, speak of monastic renunciation—the trainings to abandon evil, distraction, sensual pleasures, hindrances, and ignorance—as an offering. To watch how a light shone in people's faces as they ran up to Tan Po with food, to see my son in his new role softly chant a blessing on the side of a busy street, to feel time stop and witness those on both sides create something intimate, shared, and sacred, brought tears to my eyes many times.

Tan Po is unwavering in earnestness when he asserts that he can't imagine a more beautiful life than his present one. But mothers understandably gasp when I tell them I'm not allowed to hug my son. (My personal addendum to the rule: not allowed to hug him in public.) And coming to terms with Tan Po's new life has been quite a challenge for his sister, Jamey. At first, she felt it as a stark desertion—no more brother to pal around with, no more sing-alongs, no more Thanksgivings or birthdays. No more Christmas presents to open together or jelly bean trails to follow to an Easter basket (we've kept up the cultural rituals of Christianity that Doug and I grew up with). Angry, she would taunt him instead of giving voice to her pain. But when she went to visit him on her own a few years after his ordination, she said, "Seeing him at the monastery was like seeing an animal in its natural habitat." She couldn't envision him doing anything else.

Many of Tan Po's friends and relatives continue to feel abandoned, certain also that he's wasting his true potential. Even though I angle into discussions with "It's a calling! What healthy young 20-something would give up so much if it weren't?" the bare fact stands that seclusion from normal society is central to a monastic's mindfulness and practice, essential not only to learn to abide by hundreds of rules for living in community with his brother monks but also to follow that elusive, fragile spiritual thread. I am reminded of the first few lines of William Stafford's "The Way It Is": *There's a thread you follow. It goes among / things that change. But it doesn't change. / People wonder what you are pursuing.* Many still wonder what Tan Po pursues, but he can't imagine a better life than one wherein cultivating inner goodness is what you do all day.

The arc of my relationship with my son over the past five years began with cheery if somewhat naive parental support for his decision, tinged with keen moments of letting go and a tentative faith that we'd eventually all find our footing. I believe we have, and he has. He writes and calls friends and relatives from time to time. He and his sister stay connected. We speak with Tan Po every other week for two hours or so about dharma. On our recent *tudong*, the Thai faithful honored us as practitioner-parents of a monk, showing us that the dharma is a shared home, spilling over with the goodness of its occupants. I had homed in on the contrasts between a monastery and lay life on our first visits to Thailand, but our *tudong* built a bridge between the two, ushering us through a door that our son opened wide, a way of being in the world with spirituality at its core for both monk and layperson. For Doug and me, there's a growing recognition and astonishment that Tan Po is now leading the way, just as he did on *tudong*.

Analysis: Rohingya Desire for Ethnicity Seen as Separatist Agenda: Former US Ambassador to Myanmar A Rohingya refugee waits for aid in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, Sept. 20, 2017.

By THE IRRAWADDY 28 September 2017

YANGON — The former US ambassador to Myanmar said ethnic Arakanese and others in Myanmar see the self-identifying Rohingya's desire for recognized ethnicity in the country and the current militant activity in their name as a separatist agenda by other means that many in the West fail to understand.

Derek Mitchell, who served as US ambassador to Burma from 2012 to 2016, told The Atlantic that while the international community saw the self-identifying Rohingya as innocent people who just want to call themselves a name and who are uniquely abused for it, the name suggests something much more to people in Myanmar.

The northwestern part of Rakhine State in western Myanmar is now reeling from Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) attacks on 30 police outposts on Aug. 25 and subsequent violence affecting civilians. The Myanmar government declared the Muslim militant group a terrorist organization has since begun military "clearance operations" in the area, leading to Buddhist Arakanese and other Rakhine sub-ethnicities to flee their homes while more than 400,000 self-identifying Rohingya have sought shelter at refugee camps in neighboring Bangladesh.

No other subject in Myanmar has gotten the same international attention as the persecution of the self-identifying Rohingya, who have been called to be recognized as an ethnicity of Myanmar.

But the government, military and the majority of the country's people insist that they are "Bengali" and claim they are illegal migrants from neighboring Bangladesh brought to Rakhine State by the British in the early 1900s.

Successive governments had restricted their basic rights, such as freedom of movement, as they do not hold citizenship status. The previous U Thein Sein government as well as the current National League for Democracy (NLD) administration said such rights would be granted only with citizenship, but most Muslims in the region refused to apply for it as the process did not acknowledge them ethnically as Rohingya.

The story 'The Misunderstood Roots of Burma's Rohingya Crisis' in The Atlantic says where humanitarian groups and Western nations see the self-identifying Rohingya as the world's most persecuted minority, the government of Myanmar and an overwhelming majority of its people see a foreign group with a separatist agenda, fueled by Islam, and funded from overseas. It's this difference in perception that will make any resolution of the Rohingya issue extremely difficult.

"It gets to this notion of ethnicity in the Myanmar mind that I think the West doesn't quite understand," Derek Mitchell was quoted as saying in the story.

The former ambassador was in Myanmar when communal strife between Muslim and Buddhists hit Rakhine in 2012 and

witnessed the following unrest across the country during his term. He told The Atlantic that activists and leaders in the [Rohingya] community are very protective of that name. They see it as protective of their identity and dignity after so many

basic rights have been taken from them in recent years.

"The name has also been essential to their international campaign for attention," Mitchell said to the magazine.

The article also explained the government's concern about the acknowledgement of Rakhine's Muslims as members of the Rohingya ethnic group. The writer says if the government acknowledges Rakhine's Muslims as members of the Rohingya ethnic group, the Muslims would be allowed an autonomous area within the country and the Myanmar people fear a Rohingya autonomous area along the border with Bangladesh would come at the expense of Rakhine territory. The Burmese military, which has cracked down on Rohingya civilians, views this as a possible staging area for terrorism by groups like ARSA.

This fear was also reflected in what the government said in the wake of the militants' attack last month.

In the diplomatic briefing about the attacks, Myanmar's home affairs minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe said ARSA was trying to establish an "Islamic State" in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships.

"They plan to take over the area as a Bengali-only land," said Police Brig-Gen Win Tun at the briefing, using the term for Rohingya Muslims that implies they are interlopers from Bangladesh.

"This fear is very deeply felt and not understood in the West—and it comes from a real place rooted in Burma's history," Mitchell said to The Atlantic.

That "real place" dates back to the aftermath of World War II, when the forebears of the Rohingya appealed to Pakistan, which at the time included what is now Bangladesh, to annex their territory. Pakistan did not do so. Subsequently, many of the Muslims took up arms and fought a separatist rebellion until the 1960s, though vestiges of the rebellion continued until the 1990s.

"So when the [Arakanese] and others in Myanmar look at what's going on with the name Rohingya, the desire for recognition as an accepted ethnicity, now this militant activity in their name, and calls by some for international intervention, including a safe zone, they see that as a separatist agenda by other means," Mitchell was quoted as saying in the story.

"And those caught in the middle are hundreds of thousands of innocent Rohingya," the former US ambassador to Myanmar said.

VIHARA NEWS

Spiritual Director Dr Ottara Nyana

Pagoda News

Sitagu Sayadaw's visit

Sitagu Academic tour including 12 scholar monks and 3 people visited to UK from 18th to 30th June 2017. The group visited to Birmingham Buddhist Vihara on the 28th June. Dr Ottara Nyana explained about the Pagoda, Vihara and ongoing progress about the Buddhist Academy and he donated Vihara published books to four Sitagu Buddhist Academies. Sitagu Sayadaw was very pleased to meet 90 girls students from a school visit and answering their various questions about Buddhism during his visit to Vihara.



Pagoda Anniversary

Dhammatalaka Peace Pagoda 19th Anniversary and Waso Robe Offering ceremony was celebrated on the 9th July. Over two hundred supporters attended to the Anniversary and sponsored by Daw Aye Mya Khin (London), Dr Mar Mar Lwin (Birmingham) and Dr Wunna & Dr Barbara Wunna (Wakefield) family.

Abhidhamma & Pavarana (5th October from 6.30 to 8.30pm)

First, our sangha celebrated Pavarana in accordance with Vinaya (Discipline) and then chanting Patthana (Abhidhamma). It is also Lighting ceremony. Finally, Dr Ottara Nyana explained significant of this ceremony to visitors.

Ordination in Peace Pagoda

Two sons of U Kyaw Kyaw & Daw Waing from London were ordained in our Pagoda on the 23rd Jul 2017. New novices were happy with meditation for one week and to study Buddhism.

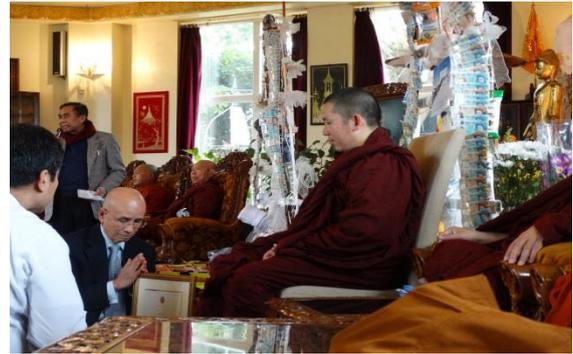
Ten days Insight Meditation Retreat

The retreat took place from 18th to 27th August to enable meditators to experience the characteristic of impermanence and nature of non-selfhood as part of the process of insight meditation. Twelve yogies with different age group participated and free vegetarian lunch was offered. Thank you all of our supporter for lunch dāna during retreat. During the retreat, Abhidhamma from meditation point of view was taught by Bhante for both theory and practical knowledge.

Kathina ceremony

Eleven monks and over two hundred of friends attended the Kathina ceremony on the 8th October, sponsored by friends from 1993 batch Institute of Medicine (1) Yangon and Family. Our sincere thanks to Kathina sponsors.

Sitagu International Missionary Trust donated £750.00 to Dr Janaka to honor his Doctorate from London Kings College during Kathina ceremony.



Vihara Maintenance

U Rattapala is taking care of the Pagoda and vihara. Dr Janaka is looking after the vihara campus together with his brother U Khemacara, who is visiting UK. Dr Mar Mar handles the kitchen. Alena and her husband Alan look after gold fishes in the pagoda pond and also help with the garden.

Volunteers

Ko Kyaw Min Lwin, Theha Chit Nyo and Soe Myint always lend a helping hand in every ceremony in our vihara. Thank you to all our volunteers.

Donations with Thanks!

Dr Kyaw Myint Oo and Daw Than Than Ywe donated £5000 for Pagoda roof repair and they invited over 60 friends to join their generous donation and lunch dana on the 20th Aug. Further donations are also made from visitors for the Pagoda. In addition, Dr Oo and Daw Than Than Ywe also donated teak curving panels of Lord Buddha, TV set, filing cabinet, bedding, toiletries, garden tools and accessories and Chinese carpets. Thank you for all your generous donations. Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu.

Thanks to U Gandhasara for donating hand made two nice donation boxes for the pagoda and Vihara.



****Birmingham Buddhist Vihara would like to pass on our special thanks to all Pagoda Roof Repair donors for your generous contributions towards spreading the Buddhism many more years to come.****

1.	Mrs. Than Than Aye & family	£ 100.00
2.	Drs. Win Htike & Win Nilar	£ 500.00
3.	Tom Wolfe	£ 70.00
4.	Michael Chan Poh Hian. family	£ 25.00
5.	Mrs Aye Mya Khin	£ 800.00
6.	Mr Mohan Patel	£ 20.00
7.	Drs Swe Win & Thinzar Min	£ 200.00
8.	John Michael. daughter Anna	£ 400.00
9.	Drs W.M. Aung & K T Han	£ 3000.00
10.	U Ba Maw & Daw Kyin Wun	£ 100.00
11.	Joe	£ 50.00
12.	U Htaik Tin Myint & Daw Khin Swe Oo	U\$ 1000.00
13.	Dr Htaik Tin Hla & family	U\$ 1000.00
14.	Dr & Mrs M. Lwin	£ 300.00
15.	Daw Khin Myint Myint & Family	£ 100.00
16.	Numauk EC Members in fond memory of U Balazeyya	£ 1000.00
17.	U Tin Han & Elizabeth	£ 100.00
18.	Dr & Mrs Myo Nyunt Oo	£ 200.00
19.	Dr. Lwin Oo Maung & Khin Sandar	£ 50.00
20.	Prince R. Sampla	£ 50.00
21.	Dr. Zeyar Win & Daw Hla Myat Lwin	£ 500.00
22.	Daw Khin Hla Kyi	£ 100.00
23.	Dr. Myint Myint Ohn Chein	£ 300.00
24.	Dr. Moe Thant & Theingi Thant. son Chris	£ 1000.00
25.	Mr. Laszlo Bencze & May Sandar	£ 100.00
26.	Drs. C.W. Saing & Sandar Kyaw. Min Thazin Bo	£ 100.00
27.	Dr. Than Htun Wai. Daw Nu Nu Wai family	£ 50.00
28.	U Soe Naing & Daw Lei Lei Win	£ 100.00
29.	Drs. Myat Soe Aung & Thi Thi Oo. daughter Thalin	£ 100.00
30.	Drs. Swe Win Maung & Wynn Tin Maung Aye	£ 100.00
31.	Dr. Zin Zin Htaik	£ 100.00
32.	U Min Min Zin & Dr. Thin Thin	£ 50.00
33.	Dr. Mg Po	£ 100.00
34.	May Nandar	£ 50.00
35.	U Maung Maung & Daw Khin May	£ 50.00
36.	Drs. Kyaw Min Thu & Sandar	£ 50.00
37.	Dr. Tin Win & Hnin Shein	£ 30.00
38.	Kathi Kyawt Soe and daughter	£ 30.00
39.	Dr. Kyaw Win	£ 100.00
40.	Drs. Aung Kyi Myint & Htay Htay Yee	£ 50.00
41.	Dr. Mya Mya Mu	£ 50.00
42.	Dr & Mrs Thet Win	£ 400.00
43.	Ellen Parker	£ 100.00
44.	Dr. Thein Myint & Sook Ling	£ 50.00
45.	Malika Kottegoda	£ 20.00
46.	Yann & Ann Lovelock	£ 100.00
47.	Dr. N T Kottegoda & Miss V U Kottegoda	£ 50.00
48.	Drs. T.M. Myint & Khin San Yee	£ 100.00
49.	U Nyunt Win & Daw Hla Hla Win's family	£ 50.00
50.	Mr. Martin Walker	£ 20.00
51.	Drs. Chit Ko Ko & Khin Mar Aye	£ 50.00
52.	Drs Mc Kinnon & Moe Thida Htay	£ 20.00
53.	U Sein Htay & Daw Swe Swe Oo	£ 20.00
54.	U Hla Htay	£ 10.00
55.	Dr & Mrs Kyaw Thynn	£ 30.00
56.	Drs. Kyaw Lin & K. P. Maw	£ 50.00
57.	U Sein Win & Dr. Min Min Paik	£ 100.00
58.	Dr. Kyaw Myint Oo & Daw Than Than Ywe family	£ 5000.00
59.	Ruby Oo	£ 300.00
60.	Buddhist Essential Support Trust	£ 2000.00
61.	Drs. Kyaw Htun Aye & Htet Nwe Win	£ 500.00
62.	U Ko Ko Gyi & Daw Yin Yin Mya & family	£ 150.00
63.	Dr. Mar Mar Lwin & Thae ² for U Win Sein's Birthday	£ 1000.00
64.	Dr Lay Maung & Daw Than Than Aye, London	£ 2000.00
65.	B D Cave & Daw Yu Yu Wai, London	£ 500.00
66.	Tun Tun & Rebacca and sister May, London	£ 200.00

Dr Ottara Nyana's Activities

Teaching Metta Sutta and Dhamma Cakka Sutta during 28th to 3rd August and 30 yogies participated in the retreat happily.



Vipassana Retreat in Dhammaramsi (Brussels, Belgium)

Again from 27th Oct to 5th Nov, Dr Ottara Nyana led ten days Vipassana meditation as well as studying Abhidhamma and 35 Yogies took part happily. Kathina and sangha day were celebrated at 4th November by Dr Ghel and Dr Khin Thetar family Brussels.

Dr Ottara Nyana's Future Activity

Dr Ottara Nyana will be going to Myanmar from 26th Nov to 21st Jan 2018.

Dr Nagaseana's Activities

One week meditation retreat was conducted by Dr Nagasena in Szczecin, Polish border town between Poland and German, Eastern Berlin. Thank you Tomasz Żuk, my sincere practitioner and student for many years, who arranged this vipassana meditation retreat possible.



Bhante also went to France for two weeks during October 2017 mostly for talks and ceremonial purposes to support Buddhists!



20th Anniversary of Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda - 22nd July 2018 (BUDDHA PUJANIYA)

Dear Dhamma Friends,

The Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda was built in July 1998. Dr. Rewata Dhamma and his devotees had worked very hard to build this pagoda, investing a lot of their time and effort. With continuous support from all devotees, the pagoda is still standing and will have reached its 20th anniversary on July 2018. However, due to its aging, renovation is required to maintain its structure for many more years to come. Vihara had already received generous donations for the pagoda repair from all supporters.

Many thanks for your donations and we would like to urge your continuous support.

As part of Pagoda 20th Anniversary celebration, we plan to offer gold leaf to Pagoda and offering requisites to Sangha (Buddha pujaniya sanghadana) on the 22nd July.

We also plan to construct pavement around the pagoda while renovating.

We would like to invite you to send us a few lines of any memorable event that you had about the pagoda to include in the next special Lotus issue. Email: venuttaranyana@gmail.com.

Hope you can join us in this special celebration.

*With Metta,
Birmingham Buddhist Vihara*

2562 BE/2018 EVENTS CALENDAR

BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST VIHARA - DHAMMATALAKA PEACE PAGODA- BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST ACADEMY

FESTIVALS

Buddha Day (Visaka)

Sunday 29 Apr 10:30am

Dr Rewata Dhamma's Memorial Service

Saturday 26th May 10.30am

Dhammacakka Day & Pagoda Anniversary

Sunday, 22 July 10:30am

Abhidhamma & Pavarana Day

Wednesday 24 Oct. 7:00pm

Kathina

Sunday, 28th Oct. 10:30am

Buddhist Studies Online Course

For information about these classes go to our website: birminghambuddhistacademy.org.

FULL MOON

Chanting in the Pagoda at 7:30pm except on festival days.

1st Jan, 31 Jan, 1st Mar,
31st Mar, 29th Apr, 29th May
27th Jun, 27th Jul, 26th Aug,
24th Sammep, 24th Oct,
22nd Nov, 22nd Dec

RETREATS

Easter Retreat

30th Mar – 2nd April
Led by Dr Ottara Nyana

10-DAY Insight Retreat

17th-26th Aug (experienced)
Led by Dr Ottara Nyana
Designed to enable meditators to experience the characteristic of impermanence and nature of non-selfhood as part of the process of insight meditation.

MAHASI INSIGHT RETREAT

9th December (suitable for all)
Led by Bhikkhu Bodhidhamma
Classic Mahasi insight technique specifically designed for the western mind and taught in a popular dynamic fashion.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR RETREAT

SCHOOL VISITS

25th – 31st Dec (suitable for all)
New year patthana chanting every year 6pm – 8pm new year day.
Contact : Dr Nagasana
Email : uk.suriya@gmail.com

SCHOOL VISIT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The number of school visits to the Pagoda is rising year on year and continues to provide students with invaluable experience to hear about the Buddha and his teachings and to meet Buddhist monks. For a school visit please contact:

Contact : Dr Nagasana

Email : buddhistschoolvisit@gmail.com

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

Sunday class

from 1pm - 3pm

Every Sunday except when it falls on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Suitable for 5 + years, but all welcome with or without children.

For further details please contact Ellen on her mobile: 07814 972 460 or email her at: ellen06_121@yahoo.co.uk

SUMMER COURSE FOR CHILDREN

(9th to 12th Aug.)

Please bring your children to the Vihara to stay here and learn about Buddhism. This three day course will include a Buddhist film as well as enjoyable teachings.

Accommodation will be available in our Vihara and we look forward to our children's course.

For details please contact Dr Nagasana:

uk.suriya@gmail.com

MEDITATION CLASSES

Beginners:

Thurs. 7:30pm

Advanced:

Mon. 7:30pm

PAGODA OPENING

Summer 9am – 6pm

Winter 9am – 5pm

The Pagoda is open most days but to avoid disappointment **please call or e-mail first** to ensure there will be someone available to welcome you and show you around.

Phone: 0121 454 6591 or

email: venuttaranyana@gmail.com

For school visit contact:

uk.suriya@gmail.com

Buddhist Studies Online Course

As second time, one year Diploma in Buddhist Studies course was started in Sep 2017 and students are currently studying Basic Buddhism, Abhidhamma, Pali Grammar and Meditation during their first semester. MA classes are also running for Pali grammar and Academic Writing. Both MA and Diploma classes are taking place during weekend and taught by Dr Ottara Nyana, Dr Nagasana and Dr Janaka.

For further details please contact:

Dr Ottara Nyana, email: venuttaranyana@gmail.com.