



Issue 9  
March, April &  
May 2013

# 'The Wisdom Age'

Newsletter of Drogmi Buddhist Institute  
A Tibetan Buddhist Centre in the Sakya Tradition

END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS at *Drogmi Buddhist Institute*

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Members and friends gathered on Sunday 9 December for the End of Year Celebrations, which included the Annual Long Life Puja (*White Tara*) offered to Khenpo-la and all our Teachers. The day was a beautiful blend of



formal ritual and fun. It began with members attending the Annual General

Meeting, at which Khenpo-la spoke of a very successful year in spreading the precious Dharma, and said he was looking forward to another great year in 2013. Then the puja commenced, during which a formal tea and auspicious rice offering was made, and a mandala offering to Khenpo-la, followed by attendees making their personal offerings to Khenpo.



After that it was time for student presentations. Five generous students shared what they had

learned in the year of Shedra study. It was very moving and inspiring to hear how they had benefited from the teachings. Khenpo-la and the committee then thanked members and friends who had made significant contributions



to the Centre throughout the year. After the formalities, it was party time, with a sumptuous BBQ

and foods awaiting. During the festivities we had the T - shirt slogan competition results announced, which was a highlight. There were five winners, Jack Heath our President being the outright winner with the slogan - **"Running on ... Emptiness"**



Finally the hamper raffle draw. The winner Noel so generously donated the hamper to the Centre. Members and friends of the Centre, long timers and ones new to the Dharma, from far and wide, all together, laughing and enjoying the day. It was a day that embodied Khenpo's frequently used mantra, **'Be joyful in the Dharma'**. We are all thankful to absolutely everyone who attended in contributing and sharing in such a wonderful occasion!

**Drogmi Buddhist Institute**

*Continued on page 3*





**Drogmi Buddhist Institute hosts  
Dr. Khenpo Ngawang Jorden PhD  
Director of the International Buddhist  
Academy (IBA) Kathmandu, Nepal  
for Five days of Teachings**

**March 13 (Wednesday): Springwood, Blue Mountains**  
*"Meditation. How it can help improve our mental capacity and health  
in body and mind".*

**Venue:** Springwood Uniting Church (lower) Hall, 4 Lewin St.  
Springwood.  
**7:30 - 9:00pm / \$15**

**March 14 (Thursday): Richmond**  
*"Meditation. How it can help improve our mental capacity and health  
in body and mind".*

**Venue:** Hall 3, Richmond Community Centre  
20 West Market St. Richmond  
(behind Richmond Neighbourhood Centre).  
**7:30 - 9:00pm / \$15**

*In these public talks, Dr. Khenpo Ngawang Jorden will outline that  
spending a short time daily in meditation can bring great benefit to  
our overall well-being.*

**March 15 (Friday): Public Talk - Ashfield Centre**  
*"Buddha Nature. How to Recognise the Inner Most Nature of our  
Mind".*

**Venue:** Drogmi Buddhist Institute, 37 Albert Parade Ashfield  
**7:30 - 9:00pm / \$15**

**March 16 & 17 (Saturday / Sunday): Weekend Workshop**  
*"Stages of Meditation"*

*Dr. Khenpo Jorden will offer commentary on this classic Buddhist text  
by the great Indian scholar Kamalashila. These are fundamental  
instructions on the study and practice of calm abiding and insight  
meditation.*

**Venue:** Drogmi Buddhist Institute, 37 Albert Parade Ashfield  
**10:00am - 4:00pm daily \$80 daily / or  
\$160 or \$144 concession / members**  
**WORKSHOP LUNCH AND REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED!**

**TICKETS FOR ALL EVENTS ON LINE AT [www.drogmi.org/](http://www.drogmi.org/)  
or EMAIL [info@drogmi.org](mailto:info@drogmi.org) / or CALL (02) 8005 1757**



**Shamatha and Mindfulness Retreat**

**Friday 29 to Sunday 31 March 2013 (Easter Weekend)**

*With*

**Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe**

At this three day retreat Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe will  
give detailed and practical explanations on mindfulness,  
both in meditation and everyday life. A unique  
opportunity in these busy times to settle the body and  
mind, to learn about these tried and proven techniques  
of meditation from an accomplished and experienced  
teacher.

**When:** Friday 29 to Sunday 31 March

**Times:** 10:00am Friday - 3:00pm Sunday

**Venue:** Ararat Lodge, 1055 Upper Colo Road, Upper Colo  
(Hawkesbury - approximately 70 minutes drive from Sydney)

**Accommodation:**

Dormitory style accommodation or camping. Accommodation is  
comfortable, in a beautiful country setting alongside the pristine  
Colo River.

**FULL RETREAT dormitory accommodation - \$275. Early bird /  
member discount - \$245.**

**FULL RETREAT camping - \$250. Early bird / member discount -  
\$225**

**Or \$110 per day. This includes teachings, all meals, refreshments  
and accommodation. Early bird discount valid until 25 March.**

**Bookings and further information**

**[www.drogmi.org](http://www.drogmi.org) or call (02) 8005 1757**



**A Workshop with  
Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe  
at  
The Buddhist Library, Camperdown**

***"An Afternoon with Khenpo - an Insight into our True  
(Buddha) Nature"***

**Time:** Saturday 20 April  
**1:30pm - 5:00pm**  
**Cost:** \$40 / \$35 members & concession  
**Address:** 90 Church Street, Camperdown

**Bookings on line [www.drogmi.org](http://www.drogmi.org)  
or call (02) 8005 1757**

**Loving Kindness & Compassion**

**A Non Residential - June Long Weekend Retreat  
with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe**

For every one of us, life presents us with so many challenges.  
There are many methods that we can use to help us deal with  
these daily life problems, however the most complete way is to  
develop loving kindness and compassion. Depending on what our  
goal is, either to be free or to better to cope with our daily  
problems, or to achieve Buddhahood or enlightenment, we can  
do all this when we develop our loving kindness and compassion.  
In this retreat, Khenpo-la will explain how developing these two  
aspects of ourselves can open our hearts and minds and  
genuinely help us achieve more loving relationships with others,  
and bring a real sense of joy and happiness to our lives.

***Please find cost of this retreat and options on page 3***

**Date:** 8 & 9 June

**Times:** 9:00am to 5:00pm each day

**Venue:** 37 Albert Parade Ashfield

***If you are visiting from out of town please enquire with us about  
local accommodation.***



**Annual Shamatha Retreat**

**4 - 12 October 2013**

**with**

**Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe**

The foundation to achieving a calm and stable mind is through the technique of Shamatha (Calm Abiding) Meditation. We all desire happiness and peace in our lives. Shamatha Meditation is that foundation for developing this peace and happiness, both spiritually and worldly.

This annual retreat will focus on learning and practising this ancient technique of single pointed meditation (Shamatha). In modern life we are emotionally distressed and physically unwell, mainly due to stress, here is a perfect example how to apply Shamatha Meditation into our daily lives with great benefit for ourselves and many others.

It is a wonderful and rare opportunity to spend eight days practising this meditation technique in a peaceful and pristine setting. Giving yourself this time can be a life changing experience and the most precious gift you can receive.

*It is not compulsory to attend the full retreat. So if you are have limited time you are most welcome to register and attend on a daily basis.*



**Venue: Ararat Lodge, Upper Colo Road  
Upper Colo NSW**

**National Teaching Dates of Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe  
NSW**

**Milton:** 3 - 5 May  
**Contact:** Manjushri Buddhist Centre (Lael Evans-Morrissey)  
*gyanchitta@internode.on.net / 0438 545 761*

**Bermagui:** 17 - 19 May / 1 - 3 November  
**Contact:** Samadhi Buddhist Centre (Annie Ray)  
*annieray77@hotmail.com*

**Forster:** 16 - 18 August  
**Contact:** Marpa Buddhist Centre (Peter Morgan)  
*pandjmorgan@ozemail.com.au*

**Dubbo:** 23 - 24 August  
**Contact:** Diedre Niar  
*diedre.niar@bigpond.com.au*

**ACT**

**Canberra:** 31 May - 1 June  
**Contact:** Ann Kelly 0403 799 099

**QLD**

**Gympie:** 12 - 14 April / 19 - 21 July / 8 - 10 November  
**Contact:** Dharmachakra Gompa (Rob Assink)  
*assink1@optusnet.com.au*

**Cairns:** 10 - 12 May / 6 - 8 September  
**Contact:** Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre (Ani Rinchen)  
*info@yuloling.com*

**Brisbane:** 28 - 30 June  
**Contact:** Rongton Buddhist Centre (Lekshe Tsultim)  
*rongtonbrisbane@gmail.com*

**Rockhampton:** 12 - 14 July  
**Contact:** Ananda Buddhist Centre (Dan Waterhouse)  
*dan.waterhouse@me.com*

**NT**

**Alice Springs:** 18 - 20 October  
**Contact:** Zara Kaye  
*kayezara@yahoo.com*

**New Zealand**

**Auckland:** 4 - 7 April  
**Contact:** Nyima Tashi Kagyu Buddhist Centre (Jangchub)  
*nyimatashi.nz@gmail.com*

**Easter - Shamatha and Mindfulness Retreat, 29 to 31 March 2013 (refer to page 2)**

**This Easter Retreat is the first Teaching programme upon Khenpo-la's return to Australia ( returning the day before)!**

**Cost of retreats**



**Queen's Birthday Long Weekend - Loving Kindness and Compassion Retreat (Non Residential)**

Full Retreat Non Member \$180 / Member \$162  
Non Member Early Bird \$170 / Member \$150  
Daily Rates Non Member \$110 / Members \$100



**Annual Shamatha Retreat**

Full Retreat Dormitory Non Member \$880 / Member \$790  
Full Retreat Dormitory Early Bird Non Member \$835 / Member \$750  
Full Retreat Camping Non Member \$800 / Member \$720  
Full Retreat Camping Early Bird Non Member \$760 / Member \$685

*Daily Rates Dormitory Non Member \$110 / Camping \$100, Dormitory Member \$100 / Camping \$90.*

***If you are finding it difficult to pay for a retreat, or any other Teaching offered by Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe, please know that you can contact the centre at [info@drogmi.org](mailto:info@drogmi.org) at any time to discuss payment options appropriate to your circumstances.***

***It is our wish to assist you with your study of the Dharma when or whenever possible.***



The Lawson group are so grateful for the teachings that Khenpo has provided for us this year. One particularly powerful teaching for me was about turning disadvantage into advantage. Since that night I have tried to apply the teaching as a central guide to my life. As soon as I go to complain about something or someone I look to see how I can turn it into something positive. By knowing that there is always someone worse off than me, by converting any loss into a gain, by trying to constantly generate a grateful attitude for what I have rather than what I haven't, trying to strengthen my positive thoughts. Khenpo has taught us that the Buddhist definition of happiness is having a positive mind and he has inspired us to know that we have the power to choose to be happy or unhappy. Using this attitude of turning disadvantage into advantage is a tool he has given me to make my life much happier.



Another way Khenpo has taught us to achieve happiness is to overcome our anger and arrogance by fostering a humble mind. Khenpo explained the way to do this is to be aware of the great value of others and to see their good qualities. He emphasised that everyone has a minimum of one good quality and that even meeting an angry person is a fortunate thing because we can be reminded of how damaging anger can be.

*To be continued on page 6*



I have been attending Khenpo-la's teachings on 'Stages on Meditation' by *Kamalashila* since March 2012. I would just like to say a few quick words on what I have learned... I don't normally make speeches, I don't normally join groups. I never have been one to show up for classes, to sit still for two hours at a time and I have definitely never listened to my teachers before. Now I find myself part of a group, looking forward to classes, sitting still and considering what my teacher says, all week long. I wonder what has happened?

This Dharma stuff must be powerful stuff! Learning to study the Dharma is not like studying other things. Each time I've read the 'Stages of Meditation' I've noticed something new, and the more I practice the more I seem to learn from this book. This text is practical, whilst it was written so long ago and so far away and by someone with far greater abilities and understanding than me. It has been written through direct experience and exactly for someone like you and me.

All positive and negative things I've experienced attempting my practice, *Kamalashila* has experienced before me and has given us this guide to progress our meditation, that each piece of practice has its own strength, but how you assemble those pieces is very important. To work on Shamatha meditation first before advancing our wisdom meditation relying on the sutras.

Like as each piece of a building has its own strength, but only when you assemble a building carefully following the plans. Then each piece becomes stronger locking together into the foundations. If you build a house in the wrong order or not on a solid foundation, it can give you shelter, yet it will collapse when put under pressure.

I will finish by saying that I believe we have all won the lottery here, we have a great place to practice, a wonderful sangha, an excellent Teacher and the Dharma so readily available to us. So as we've won the jackpot, let's spend up! **Dino**

### **T - Shirt Slogan Results**

The winners of the inaugural DBI T - Shirt Slogan Competition were announced at the End of Year Celebrations. The brief for organisers was to choose five of the best. The Committee would like to thank all those who entered. They received over forty entries and each one was wonderful and could have been a winner. The winners received a gift from the centre presented by Khenpo-la and will have their creation adorning a DBI T - Shirt very soon.

*Keep an eye out at the Dharma shop.*

**1st - Jack Heath: "Running on .... Emptiness"**

**2nd - Zara Kaye: "When in doubt try kindness"**

**Then it was a three way tie for 3rd**

**Linda McKeone: "Be calmer for good karma"**

**Suzi & Peter Walker: "It's calmer in the dharma"**

**Jack Heath: "Change your mind"**



**Sapan Shedra - Buddhist Philosophy Classes**

In 2012 Khenpo-la commenced teaching the Sapan Shedra course in three locations: the Sydney Centre, Richmond and Blue Mountains (Lawson). Sapan Shedra is a four year structural programme, designed to give people an opportunity to study Buddhist philosophy teachings. This course draws on some of the most fundamental and profound texts in the Mahayana tradition of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy.



**Sakya Pandita (1182 - 1251 AD)** is one of the most important, influential and revered masters in Tibetan Buddhist history. The fourth patriarch of the Sakya School, *Sakya Pandita* was renowned for his scholastic endeavours, and was the author of over one hundred works. **"Sapan"** was the nickname by which *Sakya Pandita* was widely and affectionately known, and the Drogmi Buddhist Institute Sapan Shedra course is so named in his honour.

**SYDNEY**

**Topic for 2013:**  
**"Four Hundred Verses on the Middle Way" by Aryadeva**

Over the course of this year Khenpo-la will teach from this important text in great detail. The Indian master **Aryadeva** was a disciple of *Nagarjuna* and his *Four Hundred Verses on the Middle Way* is a classic Buddhist text, being written to explain how, according to *Nagarjuna*, the practice of the Buddhist path enables those with Mahayana motivation to attain Buddhahood. He does this by explaining both conventional and ultimate reality in accordance with the philosophical views put forward by *Nagarjuna* Himself. As such, *Four Hundred Verses* is one of the foundational texts of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy. The text contains sixteen chapters, each with twenty - five verses. The first eight chapters discuss how to develop merit so as to understand emptiness, by showing how to correct distorted views of conventional reality and how to overcome disturbing emotions. The second eight chapters explain the nature of ultimate reality, according to *Prasangika Madhyamaka*.

**Term 1:** 11 April to 16 May (no class on 25 April, Anzac Day Public Holiday).  
**When:** Thursdays from 7:30 - 9:30pm  
**Where:** 37 Albert Parade Ashfield Centre (access via side gate, Gompa at back of the main house).  
**Cost:** \$15 per night

**RICHMOND**

**Topic for Terms 1 & 2 2013:**  
**"Seven Point Mind Training" by Atisha**

This year Khenpo-la will give teachings on this traditional foundation text. 'The Seven Point Mind Training', written by the great Indian sage *Atisha*, is at the heart of Tibetan Buddhist teachings. Whatever our practice, this mind training consists of advice that will deepen it. Such training is essential to develop our meditation and more generally to assist us in our daily lives. These trainings assist with the removal of obstacles along the path.

**Term 1:** 8 April to 13 May  
**When:** Mondays from 7:30 - 9:00pm  
**Where:** Richmond Community Hall, 20 West Market Street, Richmond (behind Richmond Neighbourhood Centre)  
**Cost:** \$15 per night

**BLUE MOUNTAINS (LAWSON)**

**Topic for Terms 1 & 2 2013:**  
**"Seven Point Mind Training" by Atisha**

**Term 1:** 10 April to 15 May  
**When:** Wednesdays from 7:00 - 8:30pm  
**Where:** Mountains Community Resource Centre, cnr San Jose & Loftus Streets, Lawson  
**Cost:** \$15 per night

**Pilgrimage 2013 in the planning to INDIA and NEPAL with Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe**

**Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe will be leading a three week pilgrimage to the four holy sites in India and Nepal.**

**The proposed dates are:**

**22 November - 13 December 2013!**

The cost of the pilgrimage will be approximately \$5,500.00 which will include airfares, internal transportation, accommodation and ALL meals. **More information will be available by mid-year, yet it would be HELPFUL to the organisers for people to register their interest in attending pilgrimage with Khenpo-la as soon as possible at [info@drogmi.org](mailto:info@drogmi.org) or call 02 8005 1757**





Above photos: Khenpo-la with Lama Kalsang at Parliament House and a morning of sightseeing with Noel and Ann

### Momo Workshop Returns with Lama Kalsang



A group of our friends decided to join in with Lama Kalsang's Momo Workshop, having just attended the recent New Year's Weekend Retreat - The Medicine Buddha / Vajrasattva Retreat with Khenpo-la and Lama Kalsang.

Some of us have visited India and Nepal and wanted to experience the renowned Tibetan momo's, and we were not disappointed!

It was lots of fun together and we were amazed at Lama's expert culinary skills!!!

Thank you so much to Lama Kalsang!

Paul

Each time I attend a teaching session with Khenpo-la, I come away with a more enlightened attitude to my daily life. I was surprised at my reaction to the event held recently in Canberra. A small group of us sat quite stunned after the second night. Negative thoughts that I had obviously had in my subconscious for some years came to the surface and pretty much dissolved as soon as I spoke about them to my friends. In this busy and sometimes hectic ever changing life, Khenpo's teachings are nourishment for the mind and soul.

Susan

### Continued from page 4

A particularly beautiful analogy that Khenpo used this year to help us learn how to be free of attachment was that we should learn to view all objects in the way we view rainbows. When we see rainbows we appreciate their beauty knowing that they will not last for long. We don't get attached to them as we know they are temporary and we don't become upset when they disappear. Khenpo guided us to look at everything in our life like a rainbow. Although I find this a difficult task, having Khenpo's wise words to guide my thoughts supports me in this challenge.

The Lawson group, like all of us, treasure the teachings Khenpo brings to our lives and we thank him for his dedication to teaching the dharma. It has allowed us to develop our minds this year and lead a much more positive and happy life.

Jennifer



Photo: Noel wins the hamper raffle at the End of Year Celebrations and immediately presents it back to the Drogmi Buddhist Institute Centre.

### Movie Fundraiser Events - more to come...

#### A review of 'The Cup' afternoon showing at DBI

As the temperature soared in Ashfield, twelve cheerful movie goers relaxed with iced tea and popcorn at the DBI Cinema for a screening of *The Cup*. Paul Warren (cinematographer for *The Cup*) gave us an insider's glimpse into the making of the movie and answered questions. We hope to host an ambitious *Four Movie Afternoons in 2013*, so come and join us for what one movie goer described as: "a truly wonderful afternoon - I've never been so well looked after".



I found the retreat with Khenpo valuable in helping me to grow in my understanding of the Buddha's teachings. Khenpo explained concepts in a way that was easy to understand and also has a kind heart with a wonderful sense of humour that aided me to relax and to truly enjoy the experience.

**Belinda**

I found the retreat very educational and motivating. Khenpo-la has a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings and has the skills to pass them on to our western audience. The Question and Answer sessions made this obvious. I also particularly enjoyed the guided meditations that helped to concentrate our attention. I feel I learnt a lot about not only karma and rebirth, but also many other teachings and guidelines for a happy life. Thank you Khenpo. **Dave**

*Photos above and right: Ananda Buddhist Centre*

We, at Ananda Buddhist Centre had requested the topic of "Karma and Rebirth" as several of our members had often talked about the seeming complexity of this subject and as westerners, often with Christian backgrounds, our limited knowledge and inability to fully reconcile with this fundamental Buddhist philosophy. When again given the precious opportunity to have Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe revisit to teach at our centre, we jumped at the chance to ask him to share his wisdom on this very technical subject!

The breadth and depth of Khenpo-la's knowledge of all things Dharma is truly awe inspiring. His ability to teach in a manner that all who listen can comprehend on some level is, in my experience, second to none. Everyone who attended had many wonderful things to say about the content and delivery of this retreat and has proven to be a great support to our individual and group Dharma practices.

**Dan**



Dharma students from Brisbane were fortunate to attend a two-day teaching with Khenpo-la on 'The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination' and 'Seven Point Mind Training'. As both teachings are seminal texts taught by all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Dharma practitioners and ordained Sangha from the Sakya, Gelug and Kagyu traditions attended the teachings, including Venerable Sister Susila and Venerable Bhante Wimalabuddhi Thero from the Theravada tradition (above photos). Khenpo-la gave a public talk on the Friday evening on 'Alchemy of Altruism'. He explained that the mind itself and how we perceive ourselves, others and all phenomena, including our experiences and the external world - is the cause of either happiness or suffering. The alchemy, or transformation that occurs when we practice loving kindness is that we create the conditions of happiness for others, and create the causes of happiness in our own mental continuum. On the Saturday Khenpo-la taught that the samsara and nirvana aspects of the 'Twelve Links of Dependent Origination' whilst using the Wheel of Life as a guide. Meditating on these links, starting with ignorance and ending with ageing and death, helps us to understand how we continually cycle through the state of samsara lifetime after lifetime, experiencing the fruits of our past actions (karma) and constantly creating new karma in our current and future lives. The next day, the teaching on 'Seven Point Mind Training', a whispered lineage, as it was given from the Buddha to Maitreya Buddha, then taught from realised teacher to student to the present day. I particularly took to the pith instruction "direct all blame towards oneself", which is not about feeling bad about oneself, yet realising that all suffering comes from self-cherishing mind putting oneself first. Personally what came through strongly over the teaching weekend, is that applying the Dharma into one's daily practice and life can be challenging, this is why we need to train, train and train, not to feel despondent but to help us be more realistic, practical and humble. Thank you Khenpo-la for a great weekend of teachings and we all look forward to seeing you in 2013. **Giovanna**



At the end of the Purification and Healing Retreat Khenpo-la led a White Tara Puja and Light Offerings to bring in the New Year. This was well attended with everyone squeezing into the Ashfield Gomba, old and new members and friends of the Centre all experiencing a truly precious event. A very special lamp offering was made by all the participants, then Khenpo-la very kindly bestowed on those present the Green and White Tara mantra transmissions before commencing the puja. Auspicious rice offerings were made to mark the occasion. Thank you Khenpo-la for such a wonderful few days. We wish you all the success and good health in your travels and look forward to your return to Australia in late March.

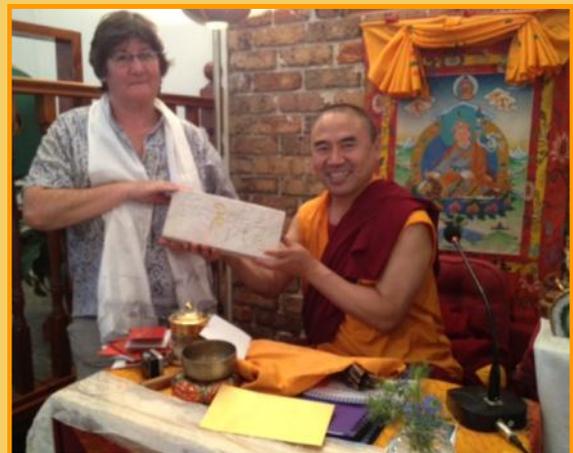
Participating in the Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha Retreat was a brilliant way to end 2012 and begin 2013! Over two and half days, Khenpo-la explained the benefits of both practices to heal and purify ourselves, and all other sentient beings, and also gave the transmissions for Green and White Tara mantras at the White Tara puja on 1 January.

During the retreat Khenpo shared so much information about the Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha practices but he also explained with great clarity many other wide-ranging topics to firmly ground both practices, including the meaning of taking refuge, the importance of the *Four Common Foundations*, having the right motivation (*Bodhicitta*) and dedicating the practice. Khenpo-la shared many practical tips and examples to fully understand and apply each practice - such as learning the mantra, visualisation and cleansing aspects, separately then bringing them all together, using the analogy of desalination to understand how the positive mind can heal and purify the delusional mind by comparing it to the transformation of salty water into fresh water. Some of the important take-away messages for me included the power of compassion to protect oneself and others, the importance of patience (patience and more patience) in dealing with others as it is only through the kindness of others positive qualities are developed, and how moment to moment I am responsible for acting more positively in what I do, say and think as my future happiness is dependent on my current actions and state of mind.

As I am based in Brisbane, this was my first time at the DBI centre, and I met so many friendly / dedicated practitioners from Sydney, Canberra, the Blue Mountains and Newcastle and was made to feel very welcome. The food was great, the Gomba awash with flowers, and truly a wonderful way to conclude one year and commence the next. I feel lighter and (yes a bit more) scrubbed clean, so thank you to Khenpo-la, thanks to everyone and a special thanks to Anita for letting me stay with her during the retreat.

**Giovanna**

**Photos: above right from top Lamp Offerings made 1 January 2013, Pam makes a special offering to Khenpo-la of her carving Om Mani Padme Hum in stone, and group at retreat.**





Khenpo-la departed Australia in early January after a very busy year of teaching and traveling, and then continued on turning the Wheel of Dharma during a full three week teaching programme in Malaysia and Singapore.

**Photos above and to the left:** Bodhi Path Centre Kuching, Malaysia

**Below left side:** Kuching Buddhist Association Kuching, Malaysia

**Below right:** Tsechen Samten Ling Matang, Singapore

**Bottom right:** Tsechen Samten Ling in Short Retreat



Dear Dharma friends,

Thank you for hosting my visit to Kuching and Singapore. I feel honoured to have had the opportunity to share this time with you.



Whilst I have been in Malaysia and Singapore, I have met many warm people, who have made me feel very welcome.



I especially thank the organisers and those hosting my visit and program, for your warm hospitality and making my stay very enjoyable.



I would very much like to visit you all again in the future.

I wish you all good health and success in your Dharma practices. **Khenpo**



**Water Snake Year 2140**



Losar is a big occasion for Tibetans. It is days of preparation, in the physical sense and of the mind, for the coming New Year.

I observed it is just as important to complete the old as well as it is to welcome in the new with enthusiasm.

At the Centre, we had the wonderful opportunity to witness first hand this tradition and in it a great method of how to prepare for change.

On the 29th day of the last lunar month, two days before the Tibetan New Year, Lama Kalsang and members held a group practice of *Vajrapani* and Lamp Offerings. *Vajrapani* is very important to Tibetans, and particularly in the Sakya Tradition. He is a major diety to subdue demons and evil spirits. After practice, a few stayed behind to enjoy more tradition, this time a family fun one of eating Tugpa, a Tibetan noodle soup. For Losar, Tugpa has to have nine ingredients. Lama had also hidden, as tradition has it, little written messages planted in the larger noodles. After eating most of this delicious soup, we all opened our messages, some were, let's say, easy to swallow than others.

**But, as Lama said, the Tugpa never lies..**

The next day was the last day of the year. Following more practice of Shamatha, a group of eager members spent the day cleaning the Gompa, the shrine and the rest of the Centre. This was interrupted for a short time only to enjoy a beautiful community lunch. Lama said the tradition has it that the shrine offerings and preparations need to all be completed by 12 midnight to welcome in the New Year. And completed it was.

Due to Monday (Losar) being a working day, and the Centre regular practice happening on a Tuesday, Khenpo-la had instructed for Lama Kalsang to lead the 16 Arhat Puja and make Lamp Offerings on the Tuesday evening. Those

present were led through this inspiring puja in beautiful Tibetan chanting.

Thank you Lama Kalsang for sharing so warmly your wonderful cultural traditions and to the Centre members who gave up a large portion of their weekend to share and experience as Sangha this wonderful New Year.

**Happy 2140 the Year of the Water Snake**

**Saga Dawa Duchen**



The fourth month of the Tibetan Buddhist lunar calendar is known as Saga Dawa Duchen and is the most holy period in the Buddhist calendar. This year Saga Dawa falls in May and June, and in particular, the 15th day (**25 May full moon**) marks three special events:

**The date Buddha entered the womb; attained enlightenment and passed into Parinirvana.**

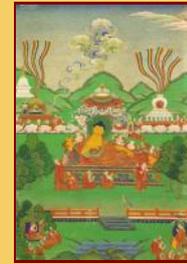


It is very good to practice Dharma during Saga Dawa and in particular on 25 May all actions negative and positive are multiplied 100 million times.

During this time, Khenpo-la also encourages everyone to be vegetarian as much as possible from 10 May till 8 June.

**The importance of releasing animals at Saga Dawa Duchen...**

It is a very virtuous act to release animals, caged or in danger of being eaten. It is seen as like opening the caged and limited views of ourselves. To remember how to be free. This most precious time in the Buddhist calendar is a gift of continuity, being connected to



all, as to let go of 'oneself' and to help the world, all sentient beings to be truly free...

*At the time of print, the Centre is finalising arrangements to perform an auspicious fish release ceremony, to coincide with Saga Dawa and the pending visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We hope to be able to carry this out on the eve of the Loving Kindness and Compassion Retreat in June. Updates will be emailed out and on our website.*

**Please join us to celebrate Saga Dawa at the Centre:**

**Light Offerings from 10 to 25 May:**

The Centre will be marking the very special and auspicious month of Saga Dawa with the lighting of 100 candles a day for the first fifteen days of the lunar month. We offer you the opportunity to sponsor a day for the lighting of these candles. Once you indicate your wish to sponsor (with a payment of \$20), via the Drogmi Buddhist Institute website [www.drogmi.org](http://www.drogmi.org) you will be emailed a date of sponsorship. You may also nominate a preferred date to sponsor by emailing us at [info@drogmi.org](mailto:info@drogmi.org) Please note that it may be the case that more than one person sponsors the lamps for the day. If you are able to attend the Centre it may be possible for you to the light the offering candles if a suitable time can be arranged, otherwise they will be made on your behalf.

**Buddha Shaykamuni Practice and Lamp Offerings Sunday 26 May:**

Although the auspicious fifteenth day of Saga Dawa, known as Saga Dawa Duchen or Wheel of Dharma Day falls on Saturday 25 May, the Centre will mark this most auspicious day of the Tibetan Buddhist calendar, on the following day at regular Shamatha practice on **26 May** from **10:00am - 11am** with a special Buddha Shakyamuni practice and the lighting of two hundred candles. **On this day it is auspicious to perform meritorious activities, the merit generated from these virtuous activities increases ten million fold!!!**

2013 brings with it great opportunities for all members and friends of Drogmi Buddhist Institute to further our Buddhist studies and our practice of meditation.

We understand that to learn and study Dharma requires the right combination of many, many circumstances and we sincerely believe that the opportunities we have available to us today to do so, are extraordinarily difficult to come by.

In Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe we have, as our Spiritual Director and Guide, one of - if not the - most accomplished, compassionate and respected teacher's of Buddhism in Australasia.

We have an assistant to Khenpo of great integrity and commitment to the Dharma in Lama Kalsang.

We have a management team totally committed to the growth and flourishing of Drogmi Buddhist Institute and, most importantly, to the Guru Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe.

We have members and friends who are keen to contribute to the Centre, to learn, to study and to practice the Dharma.

So we appreciate that this is an extremely rare meeting of opportunities.

**Therefore, as the management committee, we encourage you to take part in any way you can in the programmes offered at the Centre and to fully utilise the opportunities available to you.**

Drogmi Buddhist Institute, though a relatively new and small Centre, has a comprehensive spiritual programme second to none, including regular meditation sessions, Shedra philosophy classes, retreats, Tibetan language classes, numerous workshops and the Centre also plays host to teachers visiting Sydney from interstate and abroad who can, and are willing to, expound various aspects of Buddhist philosophy.

**Khenpo-la himself also offers one on one spiritual guidance and advice, an extraordinary blessing in and of itself.**

And whilst we are presented with a tremendous opportunity to not only learn and benefit for our own spiritual development from these circumstances, we also have an even greater opportunity

to help maintain, expand and secure Drogmi Buddhist Institute as a Buddhist institution capable of benefitting future generations.

**One way to help with the ongoing sustainability of this Centre is to assist in any way you can.**

This might be in driving the Teachers to appointments, cooking and cleaning for them, or volunteering to help run retreats and classes. Such assistance is invaluable and no Dharma Centre can operate without it.

We also have ongoing financial commitments such as rent and running costs. We aspire to purchasing a property in the near future, whereby the Centre can have greater physical stability, which in turn allows the Centre and the Dharma to grow and flourish well into the future.

To do this, to care for our precious Teacher and ordained Sangha, and to build for the future we require ongoing assistance from members and friends.

We ask you to please check our website on ways you can contribute financially to the running of the Centre at [www.drogmi.org](http://www.drogmi.org)

Whether it is becoming a financial member this year, making a regular sponsorship contribution, or a one-off donation, any contribution, at any time, is a worthwhile spiritual investment for ourselves and for others.

At this time, we would also like to encourage all our readers to consider attending the upcoming programme with Dr Khenpo Ngawang Jorden, whether it be in the Blue Mountains, Richmond or at the Centre in Sydney.

Dr Khenpo Jorden is a Dharma Teacher held in highest esteem, and Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe is very keen for all his students, DBI members and friends to attend if possible.

Having covered the Stages of Meditation in great detail during the 2012 Shedra programme, Khenpo-la specifically requested Dr Khenpo Jorden to share his insights and give further commentary on this subject during his visit to Sydney.

This is a must-not-miss occasion for all, both those new to these teachings and also to those who have studied previously

and wish to advance their knowledge.

**As always, we welcome your suggestions and feedback, and look forward to seeing you at the Centre one day very soon.**

Drogmi Buddhist Institute Committee

#### Reminder

**Renewal of memberships are due in March. All members are very welcome.**

**Please Note our New Postal Address  
P O Box 3089 ASQUITH NSW 2077**

#### Tibetan Language Class



On Wednesday evenings at Ashfield a group of between five to ten students have been gathering to learn the Tibetan language under the highly skilled guidance of Lama Kalsang. The group combines newcomers with some students who completed Lama's introductory course last year. Lama keeps the pace moving along, and creates a relaxed and comfortable environment. All agree that Lama is an excellent teacher, with the words "patient", "good humoured" and "helpful" being used by many.

*Students are learning to read and write, and already comments are being made that the class has added a different dimension when reciting mantras.*

#### Introduction to Mind Training Course

In this recent four week course "Introduction to Mind Training" we are happy to say it was well attended and helpful to all who were able to be there. We thank Hollie for her time spent and great effort in the running of this course.

**Thank you Hollie!**



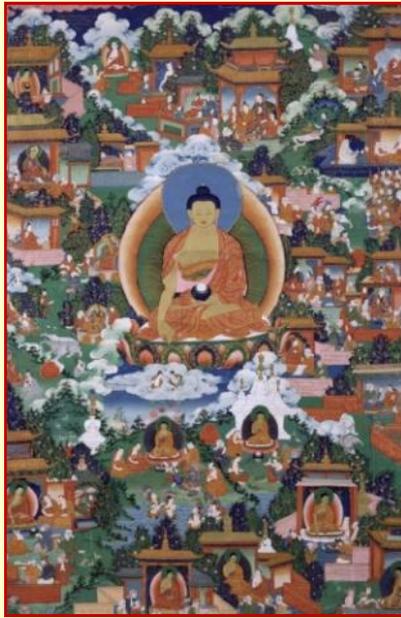
So if we constantly follow the guidance of the Buddha, take the path of the Dharma and the excellence of the Sangha this life is not the last, we will have 100% confidence we will have a life after life to be born in this precious human rebirth until we reach full and perfect enlightenment. From this point of view it is worth while and there is great reason to have joy, we should be happy and think how wonderful that we have this life, we cannot ask for anything better than what we have right now.

Now, we can just bring up others who are already on the path under the guidance of the Buddha, the practitioner who is similar to us, we wish for them continuous success on their spiritual journey and there are so many who are greater practitioners than us, we respect and rejoice towards them, someone who is much greater than us, we can follow in their footsteps, treat them as our kind elder brothers and elder sisters. There are many beings out there who have not found this path, not found this supreme guide and do not have this great companion, so may they find this perfect three excellences in their life. Wish everyone without any exception sooner or later may they find the Triple Gem. Whether present, when we take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha - we open our door and invite every being without any exception and visualise them in human form, not just ordinary precious human rebirth and then sincerely imagine oneself and all beings taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha from now until all of us reach full Buddhahood. So whilst we keep this in mind we meditate...

Now we all please recite the refuge prayer:

*"In the most sacred Guru who is the embodiment of the body, speech, mind qualities and activities of all the Tathagatas abiding in the ten directions and the three times, the source of the eighty-four thousand discourses on the Dharma, the Lord of all assemblies of Aryas and of all the sacred, Root and Lineage Gurus, I and all sentient beings, limitless as space, from this time forth until the essence of enlightenment is reached, take refuge in the venerable holy Gurus, take refuge in the blessed accomplished Buddhas, take refuge in the holy Teachings, take refuge in the Noble Assemblies"... (reciting three times or as many as possible).*

Let's now do our mental recitation, so when we are reciting, it is extremely



important our mind be focussed on this specific topic while you focus to remember all the qualities of the Triple Gem and as well to remember how fortunate we are to have this precious opportunity to practice refuge and at the same time remembering may all sentient beings have equal opportunity to practice refuge. It is very important to keep them in your mind and heart and to imagine all beings taking refuge with us. Now we will spend a few moments reciting this mental recitation...

Let's recite refuge again together three times...

Next, we will generate Bodhicitta.

*"I must attain complete enlightenment for the sake of liberating from samsara all living beings, who have all been my mother. For that purpose I will practice this profound yoga, the path of all the Buddhas"... (reciting three times).*

Again we shall do short training of our mind to learn how to generate Bodhicitta.

Firstly, we reflect on all sentient beings who are dwelling or trapped in these three realms, all beings who are dwelling in samsara are immature mind because they do not realise the Absolute reality, because in Absolute reality all the subjects and objects phenomena have never existed yet we think that it truly does exist, and that is how we perceive.

So normally we think that all subject and object phenomena truly exist as we perceive it our mind turns into misconception mind. This misconception mind is the nest to grow all of the delusion mind breeding ground. Due to this breeding nest, it multiplies, then leading us

to a karmic cycle of one life to another. Whilst we are in samsara we all have to experience every aspect of suffering. When we just open our heart and feel the suffering of sentient beings we cannot just do nothing about it, we must do something to help all these mother sentient beings.

There are so many ways we can help yet the best one is to show them the path, give them guidance. In order to give them guidance and show them the path, I, myself need to know the path, I, myself need to reach the destination so at this point I recognise myself as being in a very confused state, unclear state - we are not ready to guide others, therefore I must accumulate merit and wisdom to attain full enlightenment in order to guide, show them the path or to rescue them, not to suffer in samsara. So with this reason it is so important one must attain full and perfect Buddhahood, keeping this in our mind we will spend a few minutes to go to the depths of your heart, generally you try your best, this is again a great opportunity whilst we have this human life and human mind, it is much easier and more capable to cultivate this mind of enlightenment.

*Now we will recite the generation of Bodhicitta three more times...*

So now after our short break, bring your mind gently back and focus on your body, making sure your physical body is relaxed, then secondly rest your mind for a few moments. Once we are relaxed, rest your mind, we can now continue on from refuge and bodhicitta, we do the main part of training.

Firstly, whatever forms of practice we do, either through meditating, listening to the precious Dharma, helping others or reciting the verses, make sure none of them become for the sake of this life. None of them based on attachment to this life. If you put in that effort, for the sake of the attachment to this life, then every practice that we are committed to, the accumulation becomes the condition to grow the delusion mind. The delusion is the prime cause of all suffering that we experience in samsara. Therefore, one must carefully conscientiously with every practice that we do directly demolish or dismantle our delusion mind and this karma, then our path of happiness will turn into the Dharma. So based on that we mediate for a few minutes to make sure we understand what that means...

*To be continued in Issue 10 due out in June.*