

The Wisdom Age

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

Issue 15 February & March 2014

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Happy Losar Wood Horse Year 2141



The Tibetan Lunar New Year of 2141 Year of the Wood Horse will be celebrated here in the west on Sunday 2 March 2014.

Losar is a time for new beginnings and this time Tibetans and monasteries spend their time cleaning up and attending to housework duties with vigour. Traditionally for Tibetans the lead up to Losar is just

as important as the day itself. Before Tibetans celebrate the coming year, they complete unfinished business, purify any unhappy memories, clear out what they have outgrown, pass along what is no longer needed and make space for what is meaningful to the, now. On the last day of the year (this year being Saturday 1 March) monasteries are cleaned and elaborately decorated. In homes cakes, candies, breads, fruits and drink are offered on family alters. As with all New Year celebrations around the world there is much revelry, but it is also a time to visit stupas and monasteries to offer prayers and to pay respect to the Buddhas and the ordained Sangha. This is also carried out in the month following.



Please come and join us at Drogmi Buddhist Institute for our Losar Program: 28 February:

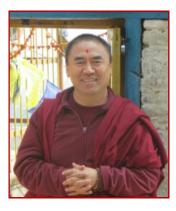
7:30 - 9:00pm

Vajrapani Practice and Light Offerings 1 March: 10:00am - 3:00pm Centre Cleaning Day 2 March: 9:00 - 10.00am Green Tara Puja 10:00am - 11:30am Sixteen Arhat Puja 12md: Community Lunch (Please bring a plate to share).

All light offerings and prayers on these most auspicious practice days are offered to the happiness of all beings.

Dedications are specifically made to all the monks, nuns, and lay practitioners in Tibet who are experiencing great sufferings and persecutions at this time and that the Dharma teachings continue to

Welcome Home to Australia Khenpo la



Sunday 30 March Program **10.00 - 11:30am** - 'Sixteen Arhat Puja' 12.00 - 1.00pm - Welcome Home Lunch

Khenpo la will be returning to Australia on Monday 24 March after leading a pilgrimage, a short rest with his family, and further teachings in Malaysia and Singapore. To mark Khenpo la's return, there will be the above program.

Everyone is encouraged to attend this program, to offer our deep personal and collective gratitude to Khenpo la that he has returned to teach the precious Dharma to all of us in Australia, and for all that he has given us over the last 20 years.

Please come and fill up the Gompa with chants of rejoicing of Khenpo la's return.



Above:

Khenpo la and Sangha at Kuching Sakya Association Malaysia celebrating his birthday after teachings given in February.

Lama Kalsang Returns to Oz in Full Swing!



On Sunday 16 February we welcomed our dear Lama Kalsang back to Sydney. Even though Lama arrived early in the morning after a twelve hour flight from India, he joined some students for a delicious lunch at DBI. It is great to have our joyful and dedicated Lama back with us, and we pray that our efforts to have Lama granted residency in Australia are successful.

It is timely to recall that our good fortune to have our precious teachers with us means that they are far away from their families. As we write, Lama's mother (one of Khenpo-la's sisters) is unfortunately experiencing difficulties with her health, and we invite all students to please include Lama's mother in their prayers for a swift and healthy recovery.



Introduction to Meditation Course, a Lovely Success

It was an excellent refresher, the teachers were really good, honest, funny and helpful. This course helped make it easier for me to apply into my daily life or acted as a reminder during the day. I am very grateful to Ann, Jack, Vanessa, Hollie and Gray for there time, they did a great job in sharing their knowledge and looking after everyone. I found that everybody was exceptionally open, kind and friendly and it was always a joy being there no matter how the day went.

Many thanks, Siv

I found the Introduction to Meditation course a great way to review some of the foundational topics, especially with a good

mix in the group of people who attended the session, with some who were further along the path and some just beginning on their path. Although many of us were quiet to start with, we eventually opened up and we had interesting discussions and reflections on various aspects of the Six Paramitas.

For me Khenpo's book that was used as the text in this course was the key for the depth of our discussions. In particular Khenpo's explanation on patience, equanimity and joy was extremely clear and meaningful to me. I'd like to add a special note of thanks to all the senior students at Drogmi Buddhist Institute for finding the time to coordinate this course. Thank you, David



Camperdown Buddhist Library & Meditation Centre



"Path to Happiness — Middle Way" 8 April 2014 (Tuesday) 7:00 - 9:00pm

Khenpo la will be a guest speaker at the Camperdown Buddhist Library & Meditation Centre.

Address:

90 Church Street Camperdown Information & all Enquiries: (02) 9519 6054 / www.buddhistlibrary.org.au

Khenpo la's teachings on Facebook

Commencing Monday 3 March, and each Monday fortnight there after, a video recording of the days teaching Khenpo la gave on 'Seven Point Mind Training' at the 2013 Shamatha Retreat, will be posted onto the centre Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/DrogmiBuddhistInstitute These teachings are truly exceptional explanations of this most famous Buddhist Text, and offer a rare opportunity for us all to increase our knowledge of the Dharma.

Easter Long Weekend Retreat





Retreat 18 - 20 April 2014 (Easter Weekend) with

Learn the ancient skills of single pointed meditation (Shamatha) and develop the method of Mindfulness. These meditations have been refined over the centuries to help us bring greater peace and happiness to our lives. This retreat is suitable for everyone. It is located in a beautiful and peaceful country setting in Upper Colo alongside the pristine Upper Colo River, 70 minutes drive from Sydney

Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe is the Founder and Spiritual Director of Drogmi Buddhist Institute in Sydney. He is one of the most experienced and respected teachers in Buddhism in Australia. Khenpo's retreats are both relaxing and inspirational.

Friday 10am, 18 April to Sunday 1pm, 20 April

Ararat Lodge

1055 Upper Colo Road, Upper Colo

Comfortable dormitory style accommodation or camp FULL RETREAT dormitory accom Early bird / member discount - \$245.

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

This includes teachings, all meals, refreshments and

Daily Attendance

\$110 per day.

Early bird discount valid until 15 April. Bookings and further information www.drogmi.org or (02) 8005 1757 Please let us know if you require assistance with transportation.

An Extraordinary Upcoming Retreat with Our Most Precious Teacher





8 June 2014

Compassion, Calm Abiding & Vairasattya Retreat lead by Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe

Uluru is one of the most sacred places in Australia, at the countries heart and centre. Aboriginal Australians have known this for generations, and now other Australians are discovering this locations great significance and beauty. Many great Buddhist Masters have visited central Australia. This is an extremely rare opportunity to travel to such a special place with such a special teacher as Khenpo-la and receive teachings and practice meditation.

Retreat program: 2 June: Arrive Alice Springs

3 June: Drive to Uluru

8 June: Depart Uluru.

COST:

Option 1: Shared apartment accommodation - \$1,440 / Membership discount \$1,300

Option 2: Camping at Uluru - \$1,220 / Membership discount

Option 3: Local package - \$520 / Membership discount \$470.

Options 1 & 2 includes: Airport transfer to hotel in Alice Springs, teachings, accommodation, travel within the NT and meals at Uluru. Note: does not include flights too and from NT. Option 3 Includes: Teachings and meals at Uluru only. Note: does not include accommodation or transport.

BOOKINGS:

Non-refundable deposit of \$400 payable by 25 February. The remainder payable by 5 May. Please deposit this amount to Drogmi Buddhist Institute / NAB - BSB: 082 338 Account No: 165741384 / CODE NAME: ULURU. Please book flights arriving Alice Springs 2 June/departing Uluru 8 June.

Information: 0403 779 099 / info@drogmi.org

Upcoming Wesak Celebration Program June 2014



5 June Thursday: Birth Of Buddha 7:30 - 8:30pm Light Offering and Buddha Shakyamuni Practice

13 June Friday:

Saga Dawa Duchen (Full Moon) 6:00 - 7:00am Eight Mahayana Precepts 7:00 - 8:00am

Breakfast offered by Sangha 8:30 - 10:00am

Sixteen Arhat Puja

(Further information regarding the above program will be available soon. This program is suitable for everyone).

31 July Thursday:

Chokhor Duchen 7pm Light Offerings Shedra Class at 7:30 pm

Saga Dawa is the fourth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar and marks the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and parinirvana, each of which occurs during the month of Saga Dawa, thus making it a very special month for practice.

Saga Dawa Duchen is the anniversary of His enlightenment and parinirvana. For seven weeks after Buddha's enlightenment He did not teach until He was finally encouraged by *Indra* and Brahma, that the Buddha then turned the Wheel of Dharma for the first time at Saranath, teaching the 'Four Noble Truths', this event being referred to as Chokhor Duchen.

Please note, that on the two most important practice days of **Saga Dawa** Duchen and Chokhor Duchen the effects Christchurch, NZ of positive or negative actions are multiplied ten million times...

National & New Zealand **Teaching Dates** with **Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe** 2014



Dharmachakra Gompa, Gympie QLD 4 - 6 April; 25 - 27 July; 7 - 9 November Contact: Rob Assink assink1@optusnet.com.au

Nyima Tashi Kaqyu Buddhist Centre, **Auckland NZ**

11 - 13 April; 1 - 3 August Contact: Ani Jangchub nyimatashi.nz@gmail.com

Manjushri Buddhist Centre, Milton NSW

25 - 27 April

Contact: Lael Evans-Morrissey gyanchitta@internode.on.net

Sakya Choekhor Lhunpo Buddhist Centre, Melbourne VIC

2 - 4 May

Contact: Penny Moody penny-moody@netspace.net.au

Khacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre, **Cairns QLD**

9 - 11 May; 5 - 7 September Contact: Ani Rinchen info@yuloling.com

Samadhi Buddhist Centre, Bermagui NSW

30 May - 1 June; 14 - 16 November

Contact: Annie Ray annieray77@hotmail.com

Ananda Buddhist Centre, **Rockhampton QLD**

20 - 22 June

Contact: Dan Waterhouse dan.waterhouse@me.com

Marpa Buddhist Centre, Foster NSW

18 - 20 July

Contact: Peter Morgan pandimorgan@ozemail.com.au

NEW ZEALAND TOUR Nyima Tashi Kagyu Buddhist Centre, **Auckland NZ**

1 - 3 August

Contact: Ani Jangchub nyimatashi.nz@gmail.com

8 - 10 August

Contact: Frank Sharpe slovakiwi@yahoo.com

Canberra, ACT

15 - 16 August Contact: Ann Kelly info@drogmi.org

Dubbo NSW

22 - 23 August Contact: Diedre Niar diedre.niar@bigpond.com.au

Rongton Buddhist Centre, Brisbane QLD

29 - 31 August

Contact: Venerable Lekshe Tsultim rongtonbrisbane@gmail.com

Alice Springs, NT

17 - 19 October Contact: Zara Kaye kayezara@yahoo.com

Bau Sen Buddha Runs Yi Temple, Melbourne VIC

31 October - 2 November

Contact: 210 Burtons Road Kinglake West

Reminder the Shedra Program is recommencing for 2014

Richmond: 31 March

Lawson, Blue Mountains: 2 April

Ashfield, Sydney: 3 April

Tibetan Language Course Not too late to join in!

Commences Wednesdays 26 February - 2 April \$50 Full Course /

\$10 per class. Bookings available on line at www.drogmi.org or at the door. Lama Kalsang has regularly taught the Tibetan language to westerners in India and Sydney, having a natural love of teaching.

> Regular Shamatha Meditation Practice each Sunday 10 - 11am at DBI Ashfield Centre please come and join us anytime



Committee Corner News

As I sit here playing with my bucket and spade in the sandpit that is Bahrain some 12,000 km from Sydney, often my only source of information about what Khenpo has been doing, where he has been and where he is going next, is the invoices I pay. From time to time, the other source of information I have is this very newsletter (not being a Facebook follower...) which I much prefer and really appreciate, because I get pictures to look at, stories to read and I can relate those to the invoices I've paid! When I browse through the photos of Khenpo with students at this teaching, Khenpo with students at that retreat, and I read the stories students have written about how inspirational they find Khenpo and his teachings to be, I am continually reminded of the qualities of this living treasure whom we call our Teacher and under whom we have the unparalleled privilege and opportunity to study and learn the Dharma.

There are many Teachers who have bigger followings, bigger centres and bigger bank accounts, but few have the morality, the integrity, the discipline and the humble, dignified modesty (and demonstrated same over time...) of our own precious Khenpo la.

So I find it extremely satisfying to see, with every new edition of the newsletter, more people coming to recognise in Khenpo the personification of the qualities the Buddha urged practitioners to look for when seeking a Teacher.

As a committee, we see this recognition reflected in Khenpo's increasingly busy schedule as we strive to support his tireless efforts in spreading the Dharma - be it in New Zealand, any number of locations now across Australia, from time to time in Malaysia and Singapore or just by simply taking a stray dog under his arm in India and giving it a bit of TLC.

And given that most of the DBI Committee live and or work outside of Sydney, supporting Khenpo to the degree he needs and deserves continually presents some very interesting challenges for us, and will continue to do so going forward. Online banking, video conferencing and the internet in general do make a lot of tasks much easier. But at the end of the day there are still many times when a physical presence is needed on the ground to do the essential tasks - a lift to the airport, preparing the shrine room for a teaching or equally important, cleaning it up afterwards.

Here, the Committee continues to rely on the generosity of members and friends to assist and again, on behalf of the Committee of Management of DBI, to you all, please accept the Committee's sincere thanks for your continuing support and efforts on Khenpo's behalf.

Speaking for myself I can only say that I've always found an unexpected and extraordinary satisfaction and sense of purpose in life in helping Khenpo to spread the Dharma and I would hope that everyone who has ever contributed their support to Khenpo feels the same. And to those who might be hesitant about offering their support to Khenpo I would simply say - go ahead and just jump right in! There's no right or wrong, no minimum requirement or obligation, and you couldn't ask for a better

Or - at the very least - I would also strongly recommend and encourage everyone just to avail themselves of any and every possible opportunity to study with our precious Khenpo la, now more than ever since he is only becoming busier and busier by the day, and these opportunities will become more and more scarce...

On a more mundane level, we've just upgraded the Centre's computer to a new (new for us, but actually a second-hand fully reconditioned and guaranteed) Apple, and in moving away from our previous Microsoft/Windows based platform we expect this will simplify and ease, amongst other requirements, the multimedia tasks of putting Khenpo's teachings up on YouTube. Along with this initiative, Lama Kalsang will also benefit from being able to attend various Apple training courses.

We've initiated a process to upgrade the DBI website and have engaged "Seek Digital" to assist us to do that. We are migrating the website to a more modern software platform that facilitates quicker and easier updating of details on the site without the need for specialist programming skills on the part of those individuals doing the updating. Seek Digital come highly recommended in the not-for-profit sector.

Coincident with that is also a review of how we do e-commerce through the website, with a view to moving away from PayPal and dealing directly with our bank and in this process we also took into consideration just who our financial institution should be, given the emphasis and significance we place on having efficient and effective online financial services.

Our application for permanent residency for

Lama Kalsang currently sees all the necessary paperwork with our solicitor Lewis Bollard Migration Solicitors ready for lodging. LB were just waiting for Lama to return to Sydney to start the formal process on our behalf. Lama needed to be in Sydney for the requisite medical / criminal checks that are formalities in the application process. Now that he is once more, the application process can move forward to the next stage. Also a part of the necessary paperwork for Lama's application was a review of DBIs financial affairs by an accredited accountant. Roy Sanderson of R. J. Sanderson and Associates in Melbourne undertook that review for us and after examining our financial records for the past three years, no issues were flagged and Roy provided us with the necessary documentation - which was personally very satisfying.

Planning continues for Khenpo's retreat at Uluru in June and places are still available. I'm given to understand that H. H. the Dalai Lama is planning a visit to Uluru in 2015, so here's a great chance to say you did it first!

Finally, on behalf of Khenpo Ngawang Dhamchoe, Lama Kalsang and the Committee of Management of Drogmi Buddhist Institute, a very happy Losar to one and all. And on that note - it has just gone midnight here. "Midnight at the Oasis." (Maria Muldaur and I have to send our camels to bed...).

Peter Green on behalf of the Committee.

