

Transliterations of Chinese Characters

Typically in the past in New Chan Forum and newsletters we have used 'Wades Giles' transliteration for Chinese characters. However the modern standard is to use Pinyin, as the Chan Center in New York have been doing for some time, and so we have decided to standardise on Pinyin. Some words will not change much, but some will seem very different. The first change is that *Ch'an* becomes *Chan*. By way of a mini-glossary here are a few more changes you may notice: *Shih-fu* becomes *Shifu*, *Lin Chi* becomes *Linji*, *Tsao Tung* becomes *Caodong*, *hua t'ou* becomes *huatou*, *kung-an* becomes *gongan*, and *Chi* (energy) becomes *Qi*.

Email Announcement List. We are making more use of electronic distribution of updates to reduce printing and postage costs. We shall continue to send newsletters and retreat programmes by post to all who prefer that, but shall issue occasional updates by email only a few times per year between postal mailings. Please sign up for this service by entering your email address in the "subscribe" box at the bottom of the menu on the website *WesternChanFellowship.org*. You may unsubscribe from this emailing list at any time. Once you feel confident with the service please contact the Membership Secretary and ask to be removed from the postal mailing list.

Letters. The newsletter doesn't always have room for correspondence, but you are welcome to write/email and your letter may be used in a future issue.

Please Book Early. Sometimes retreats fill up quickly and we have to turn people away. Sometimes retreats book up slowly and at the time that we send out booking confirmation letters (about a month beforehand) we have to decide whether to cancel an under-booked retreat. Please try to book retreat places well in advance, so as to secure a place for yourself and to help us with the planning and organisation.

LOCAL GROUP NEWS

Swindon Chan Group We're happy to announce that the 'Swindon Buddhist Meditation Group' has now been accepted as an 'affiliated' member of the Fellowship rather than 'associated'. Thank you to the committee!

Our name is now the 'Swindon Chan Group' and our brand new domain name is *www.swindonchan.org* - please update any bookmarks, favourites, links etc.

It's good to feel the support of the lineage and to know that we don't practice alone.

The Reverend Olwen from the Reading Priory of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives will give a talk to the Swindon Group - date to be confirmed.

Hampstead/London Group Over the Summer both of the groups that used to meet in London were inactive. Will Turner is planning to restart a group, possibly at his home in Hampstead, or possibly at another venue if the numbers and locations of those interested makes that more appropriate. If you would be interested in attending a meditation group in London please contact Will on 020 8340 7278.

Bristol: On March 1st - 2nd 2003, Michael Kewley, a Theravadan monk of more than 20 years standing, will lead a short retreat. He was teaching in Bodh Gaya last January in company with Christopher Titmuss. Check for updates at: *www.bristol-chan.co.uk*

Bury Listed on the WCF website at *www.WesternChanFellowship.org/bury* you can see dates of day retreats held on Sundays about once every 6 – 8 weeks.

AGM. The next WCF Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday 23rd March 2003. There will be elections for the posts of secretary and also another elected committee member. There will be a committee meeting after the AGM. If you have any matters that you wish the committee to consider then please contact a committee member before then.

Improvements to the Bursary Scheme

The WCF is a registered charity and maintains a Bursary Fund to provide discounts (concessions) on retreat fees for low/unwaged persons. However feedback has suggested that the bursaries provided need to be larger to provide a real help.

- The WCF committee has decided to increase the standard bursary to up to 50% of the retreat fee (for up to two participants per retreat). As before, bursaries must be requested in writing to the membership secretary at the time of booking.
- We have decided not to increase the standard retreat fees in order to recoup the extra funds laid out on bursaries, but instead to leave it to individuals who feel that they can afford to do so to make donations to support the Bursary Fund.
- We therefore need to appeal once more for funds to maintain the bursary fund. To fund two 50% bursaries per retreat will cost about £1,500 per year.
- If you feel able to make a donation to the Bursary Fund then please send your donation to the Treasurer, or make out a standing order to The Western Chan Fellowship, Sort Code 08-60-01 (Unity Trust Bank plc), Account Number 20047302, Swift Code CPBK22, or fill out the form below and send it to the Treasurer.
- For tax efficiency we are able to accept donations using Charity Cards, Gift Aid, etc.
- If you are a taxpayer and wish to use Gift Aid then ask the Treasurer to send you a declaration to sign, or you may download the form from the website www.westernchanfellowship.org/giftaid.rtf

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Form for Donation by Standing Order – Please complete and send to WCF Treasurer:

Jake Lyne, 13 Belle Vue Terrace, YORK, YO10 5AZ

To:.....
.....
.....(name/address of your bank)

Please pay to:

The Western Chan Fellowship Registered Charity No. 1068637, Account Number 20047302, Sort Code 08-60-01, Swift Code CPBK22, Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB,

The sum of £ , the first payment to be made on / / and annually/monthly thereafter until further notice.

Name.....

Signature.....Account Number.....

Address.....
.....

Forthcoming Retreats



Five Day Chan Retreat July 24th – 29th 2003

Alone with others, just sitting, this retreat will be about the practice of meditation. Whether you are already on the journey or are just beginning, a period of dedicated practice can give you a taste or a deepening of Chan insight. The format will be as in a full Chan retreat, rising early with meditation and exercise periods throughout the day. The schedule is rigorous requiring both gentle persistence and great determination. Basic meditation instruction and guidance will be offered, supporting each individual through short talks, discussion and interviews. The retreat is suitable for both beginners and more experienced practitioners.

Led by Hilary Richards

Retreat Programme

January 9th - 14th 2003	Western Zen Retreat (FULLY BOOKED)
February 15th - 22nd 2003	Shining Silence: Silent Illumination Retreat
March 13th - 19th 2003	Koan Retreat
March 19th – 22nd 2003	Leaders Retreat and WCF AGM (March 23rd)
May 29th - June 3rd 2003	Western Zen Retreat
July 24th – 29th 2003	Five Day Chan Retreat

For details of these retreats, and booking instructions, please refer to the retreat programme distributed previously, or see the programme on the website www.westernchanfellowship.org.

**Data Protection Notice – NEW ARRANGEMENTS –
Please Read**

On most retreats some people are travelling without their own transport and either require or appreciate lifts from those with cars. To facilitate this, when you book a place on a retreat, we will give your contact details to others travelling from or through your area. If you prefer your details not be released then please state this clearly when you make your retreat booking.

The WCF maintains a computer database, which is used for keeping you informed of Western Chan Fellowship activities. Please notify the Membership Secretary if you do not wish your details to be kept on a computer database or if you do not want to receive any further mailings.

Notes from the Network of Buddhist Organisations - September 2002

Last time I wrote about NBO matters I mentioned that we have been putting a lot of effort into a re-working of the Constitution, which was rewarded when the new Constitution was adopted with only minor changes last March. The months since then have been a time of transition, not entirely smooth and trouble-free as it happens. The upshot of it all is that we have a new Chairperson, Caroline Brazier from the Amida Trust, and I have been elected to the post of Secretary. I should stress that many of the jobs formerly done by the Secretary have now been shared out among a number of people, so it is not the huge unwieldy task that it once was, but I think it will be every bit as much as I can cope with all the same.

I have not yet received all the paperwork that will inevitably go with the job, nor have we sorted out the 10 storage crates of old documents which require attention, so I shall be somewhat pre-occupied for a while.

Golden Jubilee

As part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations, a Reception was held at Buckingham Palace for 700 representatives of the different 'Faith communities', in which the Queen expressed her appreciation of the work of those communities to life in the UK. Along with about 15 others from the NBO, I was invited to attend, and it was a memorable occasion.

The Future

The NBO now has an expanded 'Activities Committee' and people are setting about re-working the website and improving the communication links between representatives. We also plan to get our finances on a more secure footing. Next year sees the tenth anniversary of the NBO and we are hoping to be able to hold a conference to celebrate the occasion. Watch this space!

My Details

If you wish to contact me, my home address is Sally Masheder, 6 Tyne Rd, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8EE, Tel 0117 924 8819 sally.masheder@physics.bristol.ac.uk

Old Book

Republication of "Space in Mind"

Chrysalis books are republishing a number of books originally produced by the now defunct Element Press as part of their new "print on demand" scheme. Titles include: Crook J.H. and D. Fontana (Eds) *Space In Mind: East-West Psychology And Contemporary Buddhism*. (Originally published in 1990 and unavailable recently)

This book contains a number of valuable essays including two chapters by John concerning the Western Zen Retreat. Other chapters are by James Low, Sue Blackmore, Guy Claxton, David Fontana, Lynn Goswell and others perhaps less well known to readers. The book has not dated with time and the essays still make sound reflective reading for all Dharma practitioners as well as interested others.

Cost: £12.99. Order from Carole Crampton of the sales department of Chrysalis Books, 64 Brewery Rd London N7 9NT (Tel 020 7697 3000 or fax 020 7697 3001), or from westernchanfellowship.org/books.html

New Book

Illuminating Silence

Master Sheng Yen

Introductions and commentaries by John Crook

This comprehensive work provides an introduction to the practice of Chinese Zen (Chan) by a great contemporary Chan master based on talks given during two intensive retreats at the Maenllwyd - the meditation centre of the Western Chan Fellowship in Wales. It provides a basic handbook for all concerned with an effective training in Zen for the West.

In his foreword Stephen Batchelor writes: "The discourses are lucid and direct, drawn widely on the sources of Chinese Buddhism, and speak in a refreshingly modern idiom. Perhaps because the setting was relatively small and intimate, the gentleness, warmth and humour of Master Sheng Yen radiate throughout the text."

Part One provides full details of the unfolding of a Chan retreat with details of schedule, liturgy and all talks by the Master thereby enabling the reader to sit in on the retreat as it developed.

Part Two contains a careful presentation of the meditation method of Silent Illumination (mo chao) which, taken later to Japan, there became the sitting style called "shikantaza" The talks here are based in the original presentations of Master Hongzhi Zhenjue (1090-1157).

Part Three comprises retreat reports written by the editor during his training with Master Sheng yen and which thus provide the reader with an experience of what it is like to "sit" a training retreat with a Chan master.

John Crook, the Teacher of the Western Chan Fellowship and the first European Dharma Heir of the Master in the Linchi and Caodong traditions of Chinese Zen, has constructed the text from the taped English interpretations by Ming Yee Wang of the spoken mandarin. He writes: "I was engaging in an exercise in hermeneutics, an interpretation of the teaching in which my own subjectivity was highly engaged. I thus received the teachings many times over." John also provides commentarial introductions to each part of the text and an edited autobiography of the master.

Publisher Watkins. 20 Bloomsbury St. London. 2002.

Available from Watkins Books, 19 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4EZ. Fax 0207 836 6700 Tel 0207 836 2182, and all bookshops, or from westernchanfellowship.org/books.html Price: £9.99 US\$ 14.95

Buddhist Journeys In The Himalayas 2003

1) Ladakh: Mountains, Monasteries And Space

Dr John Crook, Vice President of the International Association of Ladakh Studies, will almost certainly be attending the biennial conference of this society in Leh, Ladakh between July 21st-27th, 2003. Following the conference he may be prepared to lead a small group on a tour of the remarkable monasteries, art treasures, landscapes and villages of this Buddhist land. Apart from the main Gompas, we will probably visit a remote monastery where yogins practice, some mountain-ringed lakes only recently open to tourism, and penetrate north into the little visited territory of Nubra where we may do a short trek.

The tour is open to fellows of the WCF and others interested in Himalayan culture. The logistics of the tour will be organised by our old friends Tanu and Zorab Rigdzin of Highland Adventures, Delhi.

Approx dates: July 30th - August 12th. Guestimate price around £2000

2) Trek To Mustang

In a remote corner of northern Nepal a highland valley extends into Tibetan territory. Although politically part of Nepal, it remains largely under the jurisdiction of its own monarch of ancient lineage who lives in the little walled capital of Mustang known as Lo.

Unlike our tours to ancient cities in China, where most traces of anything older than thirty years is fast disappearing, Mustang remains totally medieval: no roads, no airport, no sewerage, no Western comforts-- starkly original and almost "untouched" by the crudity of the modern world. To go there is to go back many centuries into the cultural world of ancient Tibet.

The only access is by a long, quite strenuous five-day trek up the gorge of the Kali Gandaki river.

Although this is a demanding journey even at moderate altitudes by Himalayan standards (10-13,000 feet), it offers a quite unique experience which will probably not be possible within a few years as "development" moves ever onwards.

John and Elizabeth Crook plan to attempt this journey in the Autumn, approximate dates: 21 Sept - Oct 12th. London-London 22days. Trekking 15 days. Strenuous. Max altitude about 13,000 feet. They will be using ponies for part of the trek.

The trek will be organised by Himalayan Kingdoms and led by a Sherpa team. If sufficient persons apply the tour will be restricted to our own members.

The cost will depend on whether one is sharing tents or going as a singleton and on whether a pony is requested.

Minimum participation 4. maximum 12.

Basic trek: approx £2850

Pony hire on trek: £20 per day. £300

Single room/tent supplements available. Approx £70.

Please note: if you wish to travel with John to these lands on which he is a cultural expert you should apply this year. 2003 may be the last year he will lead visits to these altitudes.

If seriously interested please put your name forward IMMEDIATELY so John can get an idea of numbers. Write to John at Winterhead Hill Farm, Shipham, Somerset, BS25 1RS

Western Chan Fellowship Contacts

Teacher Dr John Crook, Winterhead Hill Farm, Winscombe, N. Somerset, BS25 1RS

Tel/Fax 01934 842231 *Teacher@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Chair Hilary Richards, 8 Park Terrace The Park Nottingham, NG1 5DN

Tel 0115 924 2075 *Chair@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Secretary Simon Child, 24 Woodgate Ave, Bury, Lancs, BL9 7RU

Tel 0161 761 1945 Fax 0161 763 3221 *Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Treasurer Jake Lyne, 13 Belle Vue Terrace, York, YO10 5AZ *Treasurer@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Membership Secretary, Retreat Bookings Peter Howard 22 Butts Road, Chiseldon, Wiltshire, SN4

0NW, Tel 01793 740659 *Membership@WesternChanFellowship.org*

New Chan Forum Submissions: *Editorial@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Western Chan Fellowship Webpages *www.WesternChanFellowship.org*

(include past issues of New Chan Forum, retreat programme updates, etc)

WCF-L Chan Email List Email *Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org* and ask to be added to the list

WCF Announcements Email list Subscribe using the box on the website (bottom left of menu), or email

Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org and ask to be added to the list

Retreats in New York with Master Sheng-yen contact: Chan Meditation Center, Institute of Chung Hwa

Buddhist Culture, 90-56 Corona Ave., Elmhurst, New York 11373, USA,

Tel: 00 1 718 592 6593, Fax: 00 1 718 592 0717 *ddmbaus@yahoo.com* *www.chancenter.org*

Local Groups Contacts *Affiliated groups* are groups which principally practice Chan and are closely associated with the WCF. *Associated groups* are groups which include friends and practitioners of the WCF, but may follow other traditions in addition to Chan.

Affiliated Groups

Bristol Sally Mashedor 0117 924 8819

Bury N Manchester Simon Child 0161 761 1945

Cheadle S Manchester Ron Henshall 0161 491 0612

Gillingham Stuart McLeod 01634 571659

Glastonbury Ned Reiter 01458 833663

London Will Turner 020 8340 7278

Swindon Hughie Carroll 01793 343447

York James McCarthy 01904 330977

or Jannie Mead 01904 628536

Associated Groups

Aberystwyth Ken Jones 01970 880603

Cardiff Eddy Street 029 2069 1146

Guildford Roger Taylor 01483 202422

Newbury Dave/Aurie McKay 0163546139

Subscriptions to New Chan Forum: WCF Fellows receive NCF as a benefit of Fellowship. Others may subscribe by writing with payment enclosed as below.

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New Chan Forum subscription: Send a £10.50 cheque, payable to: Western Chan Fellowship, to: Peter Howard 22 Butts Road, Chiseldon, Wiltshire, SN4 0NW

This will pay for three issues, which are published approximately two to three times per year (variable). Back issues can be obtained for £4 per issue from Jake Lyne, 13 Belle Vue Terrace, York, YO10 5AZ.

Details may be kept on a computer database, which will be used for subscription administration and for keeping you informed of Western Chan Fellowship activities. Please indicate if you do not wish your details to be kept on a computer database.

Name	Tel	Fax	e-mail
Address			

Silence And Illumination

An intensive training retreat in Chinese Zen

Haus der Stille, Hamburg

July 4th-12th 2003

Led by John Crook with assistance from Simon Child and Max Kalin

Our retreat will endeavour to recapture the inspiration of two periods of traditional Chan training led in recent years by the Venerable Chan Master Sheng yen in Berlin (1999) and in Gaia House, UK, (2000) and will be led by his senior Western disciples each of whom has received transmission from him to teach as Dharma heirs in the Linchi (Rinzai) and Caodong (Soto) lineages of China.

The retreat will take place in the beautiful retreat centre of the Haus der Stille in wooded country south of Hamburg. The setting and the accommodation are exceptionally attractive and comfortable. We hope for an international gathering of Shifu's Dharma followers yet all meditators are welcome.

Silent illumination is a key to understanding the deeper reaches of the self. In a gentle process of calming the mind and watching one's illusions at play the participant gradually enters a world of clarity and insight leading to the development of compassionate wisdom. Needless to say this is no easy matter. Practitioners need to be strongly motivated and willing to experience both physical and mental confrontation with their engrained self-concern. In our strife-torn world Silent illumination opens a way to personal peace that does not avoid the problems of modern life.

The retreat is silent but includes interviews with the teachers. The programme begins in the early morning and continues till ten p.m. The method of practice will be carefully presented for beginners and adepts alike and will be supported by physical exercise, work periods, ritual and chanting.

Each day will include a Dharma talk. Food is vegetarian. Languages: English and German

The retreat will be led by John Crook who is Master Sheng yen's first European Dharma heir. He is the Teacher of the Western Chan Fellowship in the UK and leads Chan retreats regularly in the UK, in Warsaw, Berlin, Zagreb etc. He is the creator of Western Zen Retreats and Koan Retreats designed for Western practitioners. Together with Simon Child he recently led a Western Zen Retreat at Master Sheng yen's centre in upstate New York.

Simon Child is secretary of the Western Chan Fellowship and co-leads with John as well as presenting his own retreats.

Max Kalin is the teacher of the Chan Group in Zurich and edits the Chan Zeitung. He will be the main interpreter (English-German) on this retreat.

Interpretation into Polish may also be provided if required. Interviews can be in English, French or German.

Applications direct to Frank Wesendahl at the Haus der Stille, e.V.:Muhlenweg.20, 21514 Roseburg, Hamburg, Germany.

Inclusive costs: Conference fee €120. (i.e. about £100). Accommodation €288. (i.e. about £260).

People who wish to apply for a reduction may request it from Frank Wesendahl on info@hausderstille.org. Reductions are available.