

Simon Child receives Dharma Transmission. We are pleased to announce that during the Thanksgiving Ch'an retreat in New York, on 1st December 2000, Simon Child received Dharma transmission from Master Sheng-yen. Master Sheng-yen explained that he himself received transmissions in both Lin Chi and Tsao Tung Ch'an, and that he has merged the two lineages into one line and now transmits them both together. Thus in John Crook and Simon Child the WCF now has two fully authorised teachers who are Dharma Heirs in the lineages of Lin Chi and Tsao Tung Ch'an. Our congratulations also go to Max Kalin of Switzerland who also received Dharma Transmission at the same ceremony.

John's Birthday Party. On Sunday 19th November at Maenllwyd we held a party at Maenllwyd to celebrate John Crook's 70th birthday (on 27th November). Nearly fifty people attended, and a good time was had by all. Several people gave personal presents and cards, and we also gave John two presents paid for by subscription by over 60 people: a statue of Kuan Yin, and a new bed for his room at Maenllwyd. Several people, whilst giving a donation to the present fund, gave parallel donations to WCF funds in particular the bursary fund, reaching a total of almost £400.

Fourteen Day Ch'an Retreats in New York. The Ch'an Center in New York is to hold a fourteen day Silent Illumination retreat from 19th May - 2nd June 2001, and a fourteen day Hua Tou retreat from 20th June - 4th July 2001. Make any bookings or enquiries directly with the Ch'an Center or see their website.

Pamela Hopkinson, committee member, past editor of New Ch'an Forum, and Maenllwyd cook, has married recently and is now **Pamela Butler**. Congratulations and best wishes from us all.

Retreat Cooks - more needed. For many years Tim Blanc was the main retreat cook. Pamela Hopkinson (now Butler) took this role in several retreats but now has a full time job, and over the last year Pete Lowry has been the regular cook. We cannot expect Pete to continue to be available for every retreat, particularly as we are expanding the retreat programme. We need others to train and to be available for cooking on retreats. You must already be an accomplished cook - the training is not in how to cook in general but in how to cook for a retreat and under retreat conditions. Because of the heavy workload involved, and the lack of opportunity to fully participate in the teaching and meditation of a retreat, this is a paid role, but you would be undertaking this not just for the fee but also to support the work of the Fellowship. *If you want to dip a toe in the water without committing to becoming a retreat cook you could attend a retreat as an assistant cook to get a better feel for how it all works at Maenllwyd.* If anyone would like to train in retreat cooking or attend as assistant cook then please contact Tim Blanc.

Monitors and guestmasters. Originally John ran all retreats single-handed, but at most retreats for the last few years there have been more experienced practitioners taking roles of monitors and guestmaster. This is both an assistance for the retreat leader and also a training for the assistant. The monitor role is the first step, and s/he particularly assists with timekeeping and the monitoring of the communication exercises. The guestmaster role extends beyond this and includes more involvement with the general running of the retreat schedule and process. When a person is experienced in these roles they may be invited to train in further aspects of retreat leadership such as giving instruction and taking interviews. We wish to continue and develop this training programme so as to build up a pool of people who can assist in leading retreats, and later on may lead retreats themselves, and anyone who wishes to be considered for these roles should contact John or Simon.

WHO CARES ABOUT THE NETWORK OF BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS?

The committee of the WCF wants to support the work of the "Network of Buddhist Organisations". We have agreed with a scheme which has been proposed to try to save the NBO, since it is facing financial collapse but could be saved if most people who consider themselves to be Buddhist were to contribute only £1 per year. We shall pay now from WCF funds £1 per fellow for the current year, and fellows may wish to make a donation when renewing their subscription each year. There are many readers of this newsletter who are not fellows who may also wish to support the NBO, and we invite all those who wish to do so to send contributions to Sally Masheder.

The NBO aims to promote fellowship and dialogue between Buddhist Organisations and to facilitate co-operation in matter of common interest, as well as to work in harmony with Buddhist Organisations around the world. I attend meetings on behalf of the WCF, and I try to pass news and items of interest back to WCF members. The committee of the WCF have given this work their full support.

Unfortunately, the NBO faces probable closure because its income is insufficient to meet its running costs, which are considerable. The Secretary is in regular contact with over 200 different groups, we have quarterly meetings in different parts of the country, and there are expenses in connection with the InterFaith Network etc. The NBO needs in excess of £10,000 per year to keep going.

The WCF committee have agreed to pay a voluntary contribution of £1 per member per year. Fellows may also wish to offer a donation when they pay their WCF subscription. However, many groups have attenders who are not WCF members, but who would describe themselves as Buddhists, and who would be happy to make a donation of £1 per year to support this work. If you would like to help in this way, please send your offering to Sally Masheder at 6, Tyne Rd., Bishopston, BRISTOL BS7 8EE, or, better still, ask your local group leader to collect and send a joint contribution. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Sally Masheder

NOTES FROM THE NETWORK OF BUDDHIST ORGANIZATIONS

1. **The NBO** continues to grow with a steady trickle of applications for membership from a variety of different organisations. Unfortunately, this does not in itself guarantee the future existence of the NBO, because of the on-going financial problems I outline above.
2. **Divorce Counselling** – an organisation called 'Unique U' has asked for material which might be of help when Buddhist couples are going through a divorce. If you know of anything useful, please contact David Black on 020 7486 1006.
3. **Derby Interfaith Centre** - The University of Derby is in the process of setting up an Interfaith Centre, a project which was initiated in 1992. They propose to build a two-storey building with a variety of spaces which could be used in different ways by any of the 8 major world religions represented in the UK. Inevitably there is a financial cost, and they have so far raised less than half of the estimated £2million that is needed. Further involvement is invited from anyone who can be active in either the planning or the fundraising for this project. It seems to me that, as a small organisation with few material resources, we might well wish to avail ourselves of this facility at some time in the future, especially as it is well placed geographically. Any ideas or offers of help to Robert Astick, 01332 622 222, or email: campaign@derby.ac.uk
4. **National Church Watch** – in common with all places of worship, The Peace Pagoda in central London (near the Imperial War Museum) is vulnerable to vandalism. This pagoda was inaugurated last year by H.H. Dalai Lama on his visit to London. It has been suggested that the Buddhist community in London might try to ensure that this sacred space is respected by being prepared to be there, possibly meditating, at the times when incidents usually occur, namely in the evenings. If you live in London and feel you could offer this as part of your practice, please contact Paul Seto on 020 8682 3442.
5. **Educational Material** – for use in schools is available from Clear Vision Trust, a subsidiary organisation of the FWBO. Alysun Jones has written on this topic in the recent copy of the New Ch'an Forum. Buddhism is a compulsory part of the Religious Studies component of the National Curriculum, but few teachers have had direct experience of Buddhist teaching or practice, so course material like this can be very helpful. Contact Padmasri, Clear Vision Trust, c/o The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, Manchester.

Sally Masheder 11.10.00

LOCAL GROUP EVENTS

BRISTOL New website at: www.bristol-chan.co.uk - check for updates there.

"**Faith Within Soto Zen Buddhism**". The **Reverend Master Daishin Morgan**, Abbott of Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey, and Dharma Heir of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, will lead a weekend retreat on Saturday 24th March 2001, 10am - 6pm and Sunday 25th March, 10am - 4pm (times provisional) at the Unitarian Meeting House, Brunswick Square, Bristol. The retreat will include an introduction to Serene Reflection meditation, or zazen, and go on to focus on how the traditional Soto teachings have acclimatised to a western setting within the lineage of Rev. Master Jiyu. The emphasis will be on the transforming power of gratitude, faith and practice in a context where compassion for oneself and others is more important than ascetic effort. Contact Caroline Paine 0117 924 5332.

PROVISIONAL FORTHCOMING SHORT RETREATS IN BRISTOL

Martine Batchelor, 7th - 8th July.

Sue Blackmore, 'Memes and Meditation', dates to be announced.

BURY The next day retreats are on Sundays 20th January and 25th February. Check www.w-c-f.org.uk/bury.html for updates.

LOCAL GROUPS CONTACTS

Affiliated groups are groups which principally practice Ch'an 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 Ch'an.

Affiliated Groups

Bristol Caroline Paine 0117 9245332
Bury N Manchester Simon Child 0161 7611945
Cheadle S Manchester Ron Henshall 0161 491 0612
E Midlands Hilary Richards 0115 9242075
Edinburgh Frank Tait 01721 721146
Gillingham Stuart McLeod 01634 571659
Glastonbury Ned Reiter 01458 833663
Hampstead Will Turner 020 8340 7278
London Bruce Stevenson 020 8961 7802
York James McCarthy 01904 330977

Associated Groups

Aberystwyth Ken Jones 01970 880603
Brighton John Mitchell 01273 846261
Cardiff Eddy Street 029 2069 1146
Guildford Roger Taylor 01483 202422
Mid-Wales John Senior 01885 488323
Swindon Hughie Carroll 01793 343447

BOUND VOLUMES OF THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF NEW CH'AN FORUM

containing issues 1 - 21, are now available. These are fine volumes, with probably better quality printing than the original issues, and with some of the pictures in colour. These are made to order and so must be paid for in advance, £65 per copy including p&p, payable to WCF and sent to Tim Blanc. You can see an example of these bound editions in the Maenllwyd library.

MASTER SHENG-YEN'S BOOKS Some, including the most recent, and also advance orders for the next, are available at discounted prices at :

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/Author=Sheng-Yen>

Data Protection Act The Western Ch'an Fellowship has taken over responsibility for John Crook's Maenllwyd Retreat and the New Ch'an Forum (previously held by the Bristol Ch'an Group) mailing lists. Your details are kept on a computer database, which will be used for keeping you informed of Western Ch'an Fellowship activities. Please notify me 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. Thank You.

Tim Blanc (Membership Secretary).

Western Ch'an Fellowship Contacts

Teacher Dr John Crook, Winterhead Hill Farm, Winscombe, N. Somerset, BS25 1RS
Tel/Fax 01934 842231 *teacher@w-c-f.org.uk*

Chair Hilary Richards, 8 Park Terrace The Park Nottingham, NG1 5DN, Tel 0115 924 2075
chair@w-c-f.org.uk

Secretary Simon Child, 24 Woodgate Ave, Bury, Lancs, BL9 7RU, Tel 0161 761 1945 Fax 0161 763 3221
secretary@w-c-f.org.uk

Treasurer and Membership Secretary *NOTE NEW ADDRESS* Tim Blanc, 29 Gwilliam Street, Windmill Hill, Bristol, BS3 4LT *treasurer@w-c-f.org.uk*

New Ch'an Forum Editor - vacant. Send material for consideration for publication to John Crook. Send illustrations to Simon Child.

Western Ch'an Fellowship Webpages *www.w-c-f.org.uk*
(includes past issues of New Ch'an Forum, retreat programme updates, etc)

WCF-L Ch'an Email List Email *secretary@w-c-f.org.uk* and ask to be added to the list

For information about **retreats in New York with Master Sheng-yen** contact: **Ch'an 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 *ddmbany@aol.com www.chancenter.org*

NEW CH'AN FORUM

New Ch'an Forum includes retreat reports written by participants of retreats at Maenllwyd, Dharma talks by John Crook and Master Sheng-yen, social commentary, articles on lay practice, poetry photos and artwork, etc. Submissions welcome.

Subscriptions to New Ch'an 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 Ch'an Forum subscription: Send a £7.50 cheque, payable to: **Western Ch'an Fellowship**,
to: Tim Blanc, 29 Gwilliam Street, Windmill Hill, Bristol, BS3 4LT

This will pay for three issues, which are published approximately three times per year (variable).
Back issues can be obtained for £4 per issue.

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

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