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lotus

**The Lay Review and Newsletter of the
Birmingham Buddhist Vihara**

Winter 2005

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Don't Miss the Boat

by **Bill Strongman**

In times of crisis, when we are worried, ill or frightened, we may feel desperate and want to ask for help from some higher being. If we are Christians then we can ask God to help us but, if we are Buddhist, we have no God to turn to. There may be a temptation to ask for help from the Buddha, but what good would that do? The Buddha was not a god, he was a man called Gotama who died over 2545 years ago. There is no-one out there called Buddha to whom we can pray. Buddha means one who has attained full enlightenment. Buddha nature, the capacity to achieve enlightenment, lies within each of us and it is through the Buddha Dhamma (the teaching) that we can experience freedom from suffering not, sadly, through prayer.

When I first came to Buddhism there were several instances when I experienced great sadness and worry. At these times I felt very much in need of spiritual help and guidance, but for all my fervent pleading no help seemed to be forthcoming. Disillusioned and depressed, I thought it might be nice to be a Christian and have faith in a God to whom I could turn and who would look after me. But my Buddhist practice was teaching me a different way and, in the interim, time was always a great healer.

After a few more years of practice I began to see that answers to our problems do not always appear in the way we expect or, in fact, sometimes want. It sometimes means that we have to rouse ourselves and do something, not hope that a radiant figure will appear and dispel all our fears, answer all of our questions or take away our

suffering. Buddhism is in many ways a Do it Yourself religion and as we practice we begin to see that problems need to be meditated and reflected upon. It requires a good deal of patience as answers rarely arise instantaneously. Help may come from anywhere, at any time, so be alert.

There is a little story which illustrates our desire for the supernatural or magical.

There was once a devout religious man who was trapped in his house by a sudden terrible flood. As the water rose higher and higher he moved, first to an upper floor and, finally, on to the roof where he sat and prayed for deliverance. After several hours a boat appeared heading towards him. 'Jump in' said the boatman. 'No' said the devout man, 'the Lord will answer my prayer and save me.' In the afternoon, when the water was lapping around his ankles, there appeared an helicopter. It hovered over him and the crew shouted, 'Hold on to the rope'. 'No' said the man 'I have always had faith in the Lord. He will save me.' In the morning the body of the devout man floated away on the still rising flood. Soon he was standing before heaven's gate and, in a loud voice, cried: 'Oh Lord, why did you not answer my prayer and save me?' 'Not save you?' cried the radiant being. 'First a boat, then a helicopter. What more do you want!'

Sometimes guidance comes in the form of insight from our meditation and sometimes from an unexpected source. But if you wait for your radiant being you may wait a very long time. This is Samsara where the ordinary is sometimes the extraordinary. So, when the boat comes, jump in. You may not get another chance for a long time. ❖

***We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.***

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Lotus is printed on our equipment at the Vihara and collated by the monks there.

Whilst every effort is made to publish only appropriate material, there may be times when the opinions expressed may be at variance with your own. Comment and criticism is always welcome and should be addressed to the Editor at the address given on p.8.

UPEKKHA (Equanimity)

There were once two towns connected by a very long road along which there were no taverns or rest places for travellers. So one day a rich man in one of the towns decided to have a well dug by the side of the road so that weary travellers could drink and water their animals.

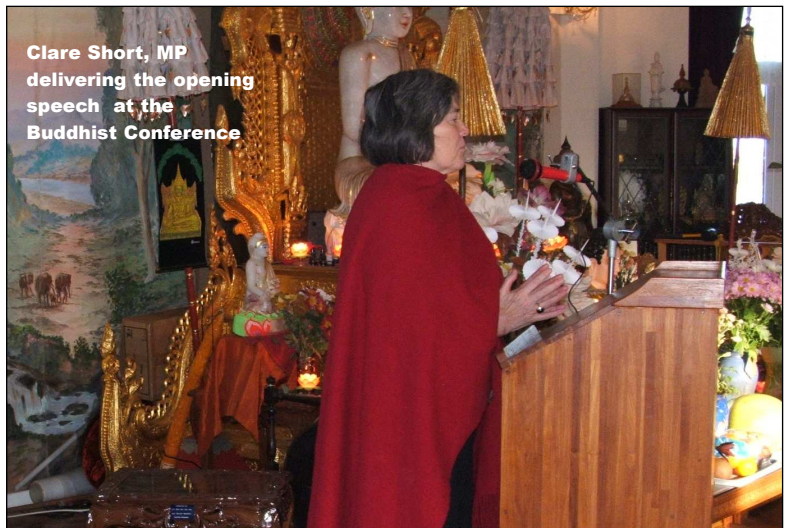
Everyone who travelled along the road stopped at the well and took some water for themselves and their animals. People were so pleased with the well they named it "Travellers Rest".

Then, one day the people heard how a man had fallen down the well and died. After this day nobody went near the well and people renamed it "Travellers Doom".

A short while later it became known that the man who had died was a bandit. It turned out that he had hidden himself just inside the well in order to jump out and rob travellers who came to use the well but had lost his footing and fallen in. From this day on people started using the well again and it was renamed "Travellers Salvation".

One well. Three views.

Only with equanimity can we see things as they truly are.



Clare Short, MP delivering the opening speech at the Buddhist Conference

Photographer: Robert Black

By the time you receive this copy of Lotus we will be moving into the second month of the new year. It is a little late I know, but please find enclosed our programme of teaching, festivals and events for 2006. If you live close enough to Birmingham do try and come to our classes. They are stimulating, popular and increase our knowledge of the Buddha's teachings immeasurably.

Towards the end of 2005 the Chairman of the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust, U Maung Maung Than, retired. His interest and support has been invaluable during his long service, and he assures us that he and his wife, Aye, will continue to be there for us whenever they are needed.



On behalf of the trustees and friends of the Vihara we send our thanks to Sid and Aye and wish them good health and happiness for the future.

Further donations to the Pagoda Repairs Appeal have been made by Kyaw Myint Oo & Than Than Ywe, Mr & Mrs Moret, Ruby Oo, Ly Chen, L. Tanner, Mr Sein Min and Dr Min Min Paik, Mrs D A Than, Dr Thein Win and family., Dr Peter Soe-Win, Martin Walker, Mike Regan, Mg Ag Naing Tun, Dr Christopher Birt, Mrs Ellen Parker, Mr & Mrs Rann, Moira Zeyya, Htein Win family, Dr & Mrs N T Kottegoda, Dr Lay Maung & T A Maung, U Chit Khaing & Daw Khin Myint, U Soe Tint & Daw T Win son (Tint Zin Lett (deceased); Daniel Syn, Aung Thant Syn, U Tin Han & Mrs Liz Han, Dr Hla Soe, Drs Yu Sandar Aung Thandar Aung, Mr D Ramsay, Drs Kyaw Win & Wah Kaing; Dr Thant Syn. The repairs are ongoing and progressing well. I am very happy to report that the fund has now topped £17,000 with an estimated cost to complete in the region of £17,000. How perfect is that?

All dates for coming Festivals are in the Calendar so please record them early in your diaries. ❖

Linda

An Academic Background

by *Upasaka Nyanaloka*



Several monastic universities exist in Myanmar, of course, but it is a new concept in the UK. Nevertheless, our Vihara always has had a background in academicism. Dr Rewata Dhamma arrived in Birmingham with a reputation as a scholar and in fact left a university position in India in order to come here. It was not long, either, before he was seeking some kind of academic involvement again. In later years he lectured on Buddhism at several universities, notably in the US. He also began to think in terms of setting up an institution of his own but this was a dream he had to put aside while he involved himself with planning our pagoda and fundraising to build it. It is true that space for a teaching hall was included in the plans, but I do not remember Bhante referring at that time to the possibility of making it the base for anything other than our own monastic activities.

The idea of setting up a Buddhist academy has therefore taken a long time to come to fruition. Back in the carefree days of the 1980s, Dr Rewata Dhamma used to joke about who would make up the faculty of his phantom university and nominated me its dean of studies. In due course he encountered a real practising Dean in the shape of Dr Ottara Nyana and eventually persuaded him to make a similar leap into the dark (which must have felt more like a leap into a frozen bath) and come to Birmingham. Then indeed Bhante's idea of a Buddhist university began to take shape once again and Dr Ottara Nyana has dedicated himself to bringing it to fruition.

Even before that we had a small planning group that was working with Dr David Cheetham on some plan of co-operation between the Theology Department of Birmingham University and ourselves. Those involved included Ramona Kauth, John Beard for the Trustees, and Ven. Nagasena. The conference we held

in the Pagoda in November is one of the results of their meetings and was originally planned to take place three years ago. Dr Rewata Dhamma thought it too premature then. Indeed, when it finally took place, it was only a matter of weeks after we were at last assured of funding for our teaching hall.

In the meantime, Dr Ottara Nyana and David Cheetham have been discussing practicalities. It is perfectly plain that our Vihara has neither the resources nor the capacity to launch a university of its own. It is our good fortune, however, to have aspired to an academic function at a time when universities are diversifying and the idea of multiple campuses away from the main centre is being encouraged. We are therefore in a position to fill a gap in the Theology Department's function that has existed since the start of the 1980s. Until then they had a part time lecturer in Buddhism named Chris Gudmunson whom I remember speaking to at one of our Buddha Day events. His book on Wittgenstein and Buddha had a profound effect on my generation of Buddhists. It made us realise that not only did Buddhism anticipate many of the findings of modern physics but that some of the most influential developments in modern philosophy - and in Christian theology as well - are only treading where the Buddha and his contemporaries had passed before. Indeed, Dr Rupert Gethin, the lead lecturer at our seminar, was initially inspired to study Buddhism through contact with Chris while an undergraduate.

It is clear that both the University and the Vihara have much to learn from each other and there is a fruitful field of dialogue here for some time to come. The present thinking is that at first we should provide the base for a Postgraduate Centre for Buddhist Studies. Exactly what will be studied, who will teach there and when courses will begin, are still matters to be worked out. Necessarily so,

with the foundations of the teaching hall yet to be laid. There is agreement, however, that we are not looking at a missionary endeavour. This is to be a scholastic institution rather than a finishing school for aspiring monks. But that, in a way, is the more encouraging. Buddhism is not going to flourish in Britain until it engages with national institutions and takes on something of the national culture. It is impressive, too, that an institution like Birmingham University can envisage co-operation with a Buddhist monastery as a practical possibility. Both can benefit from such contact and beyond that so will a new generation of scholars and all those they will influence in their turn. To touch even one life for good is a great blessing; imagine how we must feel envisaging a whole chain reaction of results from what we are setting in motion through this partnership.

Though age and lack of adequate qualifications debar me from being anything other than an enthusiastic onlooker, I have a vision of what might usefully be studied here one day. It seems to me vital that there should be a course in Hermeneutics, that is to say, interpretation of the Buddhist scriptures in the light of present day realities. There has been a tendency, in the Theravadin school at least, not to advance beyond the commentaries and sub-commentaries. These were Asian productions of the early middle ages and, while they have their uses in establishing the precise meaning of certain passages, address themselves to a culture and a way of life rapidly disappearing before the onslaught of a brutal and materialist global culture. It is our duty to establish the usefulness of Buddhism's ancient spiritual practices and insights for the present day. To take a single example, we have to make the Buddha's attack on the caste system relevant to the new social and economic patterns of our own time.

One of the dangers of university courses in Buddhism is that they may intellectualise and deaden what the Buddha taught as a living practice. His ancient followers were well aware of the dangers of a narrow scholastic specialisation and embodied their sense of it in the story of Ananda, the Buddha's attendant and preserver of his discourses. Here was

a pleasant man, almost universally popular, and an effective teacher - but one who failed to apply to himself what he taught others. The Buddha passed away, leaving behind many who had attained enlightenment through his training, but Ananda was not one of them. A Council of realised disciples was called to codify the teaching but Ananda, who had memorised every word he heard the Buddha speak, who had questioned the Enlightened One until he had mastered the sense of the words, Ananda the academic, could not be of their number.

Setting his teeth, he went on retreat but achieved nothing. Too much ambition was there, too much learning, too much past history. On the night before the Council was to take place, he gave up and arose from meditation. And then, as often happens, when his mind was on quite mundane things, enlightenment arose. What occupied him at the time were the simple preparations for going to bed. Simple, do I say? Not for Ananda, who discovered in that process something for which all his learning had not prepared him. There are four basic postures, he used to teach: walking, standing, sitting and lying down, and the mind must maintain awareness as they succeed each other. But what exactly are you doing when you climb into bed? It's neither walking, standing, sitting nor lying - and into that gap in the teaching fell all of Ananda's scholasticism. By the time his head touched the pillow, freed of its burden, he was an enlightened man.

Let this story be the inspiration of our Buddhist academy. Categorisation and rote learning are tools that take you only so far. These days we are challenged to justify what we teach by its use to society, the yardstick by which the Buddha himself measured what he taught. "Go forth," he urged his early disciples, "and teach for the benefit of many." We must never forget this exhortation of the founder of our discipline. If once we lose sight of the benefit of the many, if once we substitute the letter of the teaching for its spirit, we shall betray what the Buddha has entrusted to us.

An enormous opportunity is before us just now. Let us be worthy of it. ♦

Buddhist Conference: 26 Nov. 2005

by **Ann Lovelock**

It was a cold Saturday at the end of November 2005 when about 60 delegates gathered to attend a Buddhist Conference held in the Pagoda. This was a joint venture between Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Birmingham. We were welcomed by Dr Ottara Nyana and John Beard on behalf of the Vihara and by Dr Martin Stringer, Head of the University's Theology Department. Clare Short, M.P. for the Ladywood constituency in which the vihara lies, then opened the conference. She explained that in this constituency there are places of worship for all the major world faiths and expressed the opinion that there could be no peace in the world without dialogue between them. It is important to be tolerant of each other and to understand and act upon the moral ethic contained in the various scriptures.

The first conference presentation was by Dr Rupert Gethin, Director of Buddhist Studies at the University of Bristol, who had chosen "Developing Skilful Qualities" as his topic. He started by saying that the Abrahamic faiths would not use this term in ethical discussions, and indeed a subtle thought process was required to realise that skilful qualities were indeed ethical. To follow the Buddhist path, one needs to develop the nineteen qualities delineated in the *Abhidhamma* as *kusala*; these are very powerful and can lead to Nibbana. However, developing the qualities also leads to immediate happiness and a better rebirth. One translation of *kusala* is healthy; therefore one develops a healthy mind which is also 'beautiful' (another translation of the Pali term). Dr Gethin then went on to illuminate what these skilful qualities are in everyday terms. He concluded by saying that common thinking would conclude that either one had or did not have these qualities, but the

Buddhist way was the middle way. There is something we can do to develop them. The mind is like water flowing down a window pane, it follows a channel but it can be deflected. Likewise the mind is flowing and with mindfulness and concentration we can change it and develop skilful qualities - but it takes time.

Dr Elizabeth Harris gave the second talk after a coffee break. She is an Honorary Lecturer in Buddhist studies at Birmingham University and addressed the question "What can Buddhism offer a violent world?". She opened her talk by recounting two well known Buddhist stories, those of Angulimala and the Buddha's intervention between two States preparing for war in a dispute over the water supply. In the first instance an individual was turned round from violence by the Buddha saying 'I am standing still, you are not'. In the second the Buddha was able to mediate between two warring factions by understanding that there was wounded pride on both sides and then paving the way to a negotiated settlement acceptable to both.

All faiths have gifts to offer, but what particular insights are there in Buddhism? Firstly, Buddhists understand that violence is the norm. When a dreadful deed has been perpetrated, 'How could they?' is the question that is always asked. But Buddhists are aware that violence is a result of greed and hatred which is rooted in ignorance. We are living in a time of greed on a corporate scale, thus violence is bound to arise. Secondly Buddhists cut through symptoms and look for the causes of actions. If craving does not arise there is no greed and hatred. In the political parable taught in the *Cakkavatti Sutta* we learn that people begin committing evil acts because the ruler does not provide for their basic needs. Those who kill are

not absolved from their bad actions, but it is recognised that they have been conditioned by the state's response of escalated violence to the original misdemeanours. Everyone is conditioned by their circumstances and this needs to be understood so that conflict resolution can take place where people are at.

The third insight that Buddhists offer is by offering alternatives when preventing conflict. This is done by living life according to the five precepts and developing skilful qualities. The Dalai Lama is seen by the world to resist violence by practising the Dharma and this is a very powerful lesson. However, one needs to train the mind well so that one does not retaliate violently to provocation. In the East, belief in *kamma* is often seen as fatalism, but this stereotype must be eradicated. Returning to the *Cakkavatti Sutta* again, we also read that those who gave up their evil ways, by training their minds and living an improved moral life, were able to reverse the general decline until a good king ruled once more. Thus Buddhists need to have the wisdom to know when they can change a situation.

After lunch there were two workshops, one on what teaching is taking place at the Vihara now and the other on possible future developments. Following this, Dr Ottara Nyana led a short meditation before the final talk of the day, given by Peter Harvey, Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Sunderland. The title of his talk was "Buddhist Approaches to Cultivating the Mind". He started by saying that Buddhists cultivate practices that nurture and grow the skilful traits. The four Noble Truths are the enabling realities that lead us to practice right effort, mindfulness and concentration and to cultivate the eightfold path. Through these practices we can understand how the mind works and so can take charge of our life and initiate self transformation rather than the passive acceptance against which Elizabeth Harris had warned us. It is hard, but one must be optimistic. The object is to develop a clear mind which, rather than being

an end in itself, we could then put to good use.

Prof. Harvey went on to talk at some length about the practice of chanting. In fact this is the most widely used form of meditation in Buddhism and is practised by monks and lay people alike. He then gave a fine example of Pali chanting himself. Good chanting involves both body and mind: the body as the vibrations of the words pervade it, but also by regulation of posture and the breath; the mind is affected by the emotions expressed by speech and as it engages in the meaning. The practice needs mindfulness and concentration, develops calm and generates mental and bodily space. It is calming and energising and can lead to the first *Jhana*.

The two other types of meditation he talked about were the ways of concentration and insight, which he said were complementary, although a teacher was needed for the latter.

However, Prof. Harvey continued, the teaching on Not-self was not a denial of the self but a means to help overcome attachment to the concept of self. For spiritual growth to develop, one has to let go of attachment not only to unwholesome states but also to the results of wholesome ones while still continuing to practise them. That is, one should not cling to what one has developed but remain aware of how the defilements are working. If there was a permanent self there would be no opportunity to grow and develop.

A lot of the ensuing discussion revolved round whether or not one could teach Buddhism without meditation. It was pointed out that an academic course could provide an opportunity for meditation but one could not make people meditate if they didn't want to. It was hoped that students would see the benefits and want to experience the practice. Everybody was very positive about developing teaching links between the Vihara and Birmingham University.

We owe a vote of thanks to John Beard, Ramona Kauth and David Cheetham for organising what was generally agreed to be a most stimulating event. ❖

**State
Middle
School.
Thamangone,
Myanmar**



The school is a two storey building measuring 150' x 40', which will accommodate 500 children. Project sponsored by Mr Aye Myint

**Opening
Ceremony,

12 December
2005**

In March 2004 Dr. Rewata Dhamma expressed a wish to have a high school built in his village and also to sink tube wells locally as a thank you to everyone who had supported him when he was young. On the 12 December 2005 his wish became a reality with the official opening of the school. However, before going any further it must be said that the success of the project was due to people's continuing generosity in raising the necessary £27,000 and in particular to all who contributed to the Memorial Fund from which £17,000 was allocated; Friends of the Rain Forest for £5,000; to Dr Mar Mar Lwin for £5,000, to Tom Maxwell who gave £1,000 for a pipe well and to an anonymous donor of £1,000 to set up a further scholarship.

The event started the day before, on the 11 December, when Dr. Ottara Nyana, Mar Mar Lwin, 25 supporters and seven other monks left Yangon and drove to the ferry crossing on the Ayeyarwaddy River. On crossing the river they were met by the villagers of Thamangone and the surrounding areas, many of whom were in ceremonial dress.

After the initial greetings most of the invited guests were transferred to oxcarts for their journey

to the village. However, Dr. Ottara Nyana was honoured by travelling on a trailer specially decorated to resemble a Karaweik; a mythical bird with a beautiful song. Then everyone set off for Thamangone village to the sound of traditional music. That evening the welcoming celebrations continued with many speeches being made to a full audience by the various people present. The next morning several guests took the opportunity to look around the site before the official opening ceremony. This started after 9am with introductions and an opening address by Dr. Ottara Nyana. By 10.30am the various speeches had finished and it was time for students, teachers and other dignitaries to be brought before Dr. Ottara Nyana to be presented with their various awards. In particular scholarships for two medical students were presented by Mar Mar Lwin. Once the presentations were completed everyone moved outside for the official opening of the school and the unveiling of the commemorative plaque.

After a short break for lunch the day continued with a religious ceremony for the transfer of merit to Dr. Rewata Dhamma. ❖

During the recent Launch Conference of the new Buddhist Teaching Centre (26th November 2005) it was said that the building of the Dhamma Hall should start in February 2006. Although it is hoped that this building work will start then, unfortunately not all the funds needed to complete the project are available as yet. Consequently, while

congratulating ourselves on the completion of the Thamangone project, let us also make a concerted effort with our fundraising in order to see Dr Rewata Dhamma's Academy become a reality and complete his dream of bringing the Dhamma to the West.

VIHARA NEWS

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara

Spiritual Director: Venerable Dr. Ottara Nyana

During October two new booklets for free distribution have been made available to anyone visiting the Vihara. Both have been designed, illustrated and printed by Dhamma Jotika. The first is a copy of the *Mangala Sutta* and the second is a Children's Dhamma and Colouring Book.

❁ VIHARA

Abhidhamma Day and Ancestors & Parents Commemoration (*Pavara*), 21 May 2005

Approximately 50-60 people attended the evening with many making offerings of flowers, candles and food items before the shrine. A short introduction was given by Yann Lovelock after which an appeal on behalf of the recent earthquake victims in S.E. Asia was made by the Ven. Kassapa (International Buddhist Relief Organisation), with all money raised being passed on to Muslim Hands relief organisation. Everyone was invited to light incense and place it upon the shrine in memory of those near and dear to them, both present and past. This was followed by chanting by the Serene Meditation group (led by Vajira), transfer of merit, Abhidhamma chanting (over blessing threads) and a short discourse by Dr. Ottara Nyana. The evening was brought to a close with the tying of blessing threads and the carrying of trays of lighted candles three times around the Pagoda.

Kathina, 23 October

The morning started with the offering of gifts to the Buddha, decorating of the shrine and a short blessing from the Sangha. Sanghadana and a communal meal followed this before the afternoon service in the pagoda.

There were 12 monks present and about 250 devotees. Following the request for refuges and precepts from Dr. Ottara Nyana, there was Paritta chanting by the monks and the offering of Kathina robes and requisites by the lay people.

The afternoon then continued with Dhamma talks by the Ven. Maha Samboon. and Ven. Kassapa, followed by Ven. Dr. Ottara Nyana who explained why the Buddha allowed this ceremony of giving of gifts to the Sangha.

Linda Tomlinson gave a financial report before the final blessing from Ven. Dr. Ottara Nyana.

The day ended with tea and the offer of a DVD donated by Dr A.K. Myint & family (London), showing the enshrining of relics in the pagoda roof with the late Ven. Dr. Rewata Dhamma.

Kathina day was sponsored by Dr Aung Thein & Daw Than Than family, Daw Yin May and (son) Dr Kyaw Nyein, Dr Hla Myint & Daw Khin Win Nu family, Dr Aung Yi & Dr Yin Yin Myaing family (Burntwood), and Dr Myo Myat Lwin & Daw Yi Yi Aung family (Salisbury).

Buddhist Conference

This was the Launch Conference of a new Buddhist Teaching Centre at the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and Pagoda (Edgbaston) in association with the Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham, UK (see *Lotus article*).

❁ VEN. DR. OTTARA NYANA'S UK ACTIVITIES

On 5th November Dr. Ottara Nyana presented a Dhamma sermon at the Ketumati Buddhist Vihara (Manchester), which was followed the next day by a one day meditation retreat and Dhamma discussion. The topic of the discussion was the purpose of practicing meditation. The event was well received and was sponsored by Dr. Indra Ariyawansa and Dr. Sarath Perera and family.

❁ VEN. DR. OTTARA NYANA'S OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES

From 10-13 November Dr. Ottara Nyana ran a meditation retreat in Dhammaramsi, Belgium. The event comprised of meditation sessions and two

Dhamma talks based on the *Anapanassati Sutta* from the *Majjhima Nikaya*. The event was well received with a request for a follow up visit.

During December Dr. Ottara Nyana visited Myanmar to officially open the new middle school in Thamangone (see *Lotus article*). They were present when Mike Regan was ordained in Yangon as a temporary monk for one month. U Win Sein and daughter and Mar Mar Lwin acted as sponsors.

On 28th December Dr. Ottara Nyana met with the EUBPPA (European Buddhist Promotion & Propagation Association). This group, comprising of 11 members, was set up by Dr. Rewata Dhamma in 1997 with the purpose of promoting and propagating Buddhism in the West. During the meeting the group agreed to help the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara in a variety of ways, in particular:

- to support Myanmar wooden art by providing decorative panels etc for the new teaching hall in Birmingham;
- to produce and oversee the making of a copper statue of Dr. Rewata Dhamma;
- to fund the publishing of Dr. Rewata Dhamma's biography in the Myanmar language, written by Dr Ottara Nyana; and
- to give financial support for the shipment to the UK of the statue, biography and other publications.

❁ VEN. DR. OTTARA NYANA'S FUTURE ENGAGEMENTS

Between 15 February and 8 March Dr. Ottara Nyana will be visiting Brazil to run a 7 day retreat and 2 weekend retreats in conjunction with a series of lectures.

From 15 April to 1 May Dr. Ottara Nyana has been invited to run a series of morning and evening events in Belgium. These will involve *Maha-Satipatthana* meditation in the mornings followed by evening talks on the Abhidhamma.

SANGHARAMA ACTIVITIES

Meditation: *Advanced*, Mondays 7.30pm *Beginners*, Thursday 7.30pm.

Retreats and Teachings Programme enclosed. **Zen Group:** First and third Friday in the month.

Devotees Day: First Sunday of month (*Sanghadana, communal meal, teaching or discussion of Vihara support*).

Full Moon Days: Feb 12, March 13, April 12

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