

# Myōju



Soto Zen Buddhism in Australia

September 2016, Issue 65



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*Cover photograph: Karen Threlfall*

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## Editorial

The usual translation of the Japanese word nin is ‘patience,’ but perhaps ‘constancy’ is a better word. You must force yourself to be patient but in constancy there is no particular effort involved... Nin is the way we cultivate our own spirit. Nin is the way of continuous practice.

—Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind*, p. 86

In this issue we continue the theme of Cultivating Faith with focus on Continuous Practice.

Ekai Osho describes continuing transformations over time in Seasons of Practice while Annie Bolitho’s Ino ryo practice is cultivated in each moment. There are many stories of Zen practice being ‘drinking tea and eating rice’; there is a poem in praise of tea while Soto Kitchen extols the delicious simplicity of rice.

Myoju has the important function of keeping the stories of Jikishoan Sangha and practice over the years. This is my last issue as Myoju Coordinator and Daniel Carter will be taking over the continuing practice. It has been a pleasure to be part of the lineage of Myoju Coordinators and inspiring and informative to read through old editions. Thankyou to all the contributors to the past 6 issues, for the wonderful production and contributions to layout from artists and photographers; without them Myoju would not be nearly so engaging. Thankyou to the Editorial Committee for advice and support and Ekai Osho for carefully guiding the practice of putting out the magazine and keeping it a Bright Pearl.

**Robin Laurie**

On behalf of Ekai Korematsu Osho—Editor and the Jikishoan Publications Committee

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## Myoju

**Editor:** Ekai Korematsu

**Editorial Committee:** Hannah Forsyth, Christine Maingard, Katherine Yeo, Robin Laurie

**Myoju Coordinator:** Robin Laurie

**Production:** Darren Chaitman

**Website Manager:** Lee-Anne Armitage

**IBS Teaching Schedule:** Hannah Forsyth / Shona Innes

**Jikishoan Calendar of Events:** Katherine Yeo

**Contributors:** Hannah Forsyth, Shona Innes, Ekai

Korematsu Osho, Annie Bolitho, Tony Shields, Marisha Rothman, Lorraine Collishaw, Nicky Coles, John Hickey, Karen Threlfall

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## Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted around the Summer Solstice of December 2016.

Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, reviews of books or online materials, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs.

The content deadline is **October 23 2016** and the theme is ‘Cultivating Faith: Letting Go.’

If you would like to contribute or advertise in the next issue of Myoju, email publications @ jikishoan.org.au.

## Abbot's News

In the Gakudo Yojinshu, Dogen Zenji said, 'The buddha way is right under your feet.'

The buddha way is not some special kind of way. It is simply the way in which you live completely.

—Ikko Narasaki Roshi, in his foreword to Dogen's *Pure Standards for the Zen Community (Eihei Shingi)*.

During this wintery time of the year, Ekai Osho has again been paying respects to his spiritual ancestors. The month of July has especial significance as we celebrated the 20th memorial date of Ikko Narasaki Roshi's death on 20th of the month. At Thursday evening Sanzenkai on 17th July Ekai Osho led us in offering incense to his Transmission Teacher, who is the founder of Jikishoan. At the conclusion of the lineage chant, Ekai Osho spoke about the significant contributions to community practice and education made by Ikko Narasaki Roshi, and his electrifying presence in the training hall. 'The Teacher of teachers' is how Osho Sama described him. It is significant that we celebrated the ninth Lay Ordination ceremony, Zaike Tokudo, at Sunday Sanzenkai on 24th July with Jim Shoshin Holden taking the big step of initiation in our tradition of Lay Practice.

During July, Ekai Osho gave four Friday evening lectures at Kagyu E-Vam Institute on Actualisation of Reality (Genjo Koan) from Zen Master Dogen's Shobogenzo. The late Traleg Rinpoche, who requested that Osho should present some teachings on Shobogenzo, initiated this annual series of winter lectures. The classes were well attended in spite of the cold conditions and attracted Kagyu E-Vam members and regular Jikishoan students. The classes were a wonderful and respectful tribute to Traleg Rinpoche, who entered Parinirvana on 24th July 2012.

We also remember 26th July 2002 as the date of the passing of Kobun Chino Otagawa Roshi, by whom Ekai Osho was first ordained as a monk in 1976.

In August Jikishoan held its 52nd Bendoho Retreat with 37 attendees. Attending retreat gives us all a wonderful opportunity to put into practice 'simply the way in which



*A framed picture of Ekai Osho's teacher, Ikko Narasaki Roshi, hangs above the altar at the Footscray zendo. Photograph: Karen Threlfall.*

you live completely.' Students from different parts of the country, both beginners and on-going practitioners, meet and quickly create a community at Adekate Forest Centre. Under the guidance of Ekai Osho, we experience monastic life for a week – Zazen – including zazen meditation, kinhin, chanting, oryoki meals and ryo practice. We experience many seasons and changes of weather – with chosan each morning, formal Teisho delivered by Ekai Osho in the afternoons, and personal interviews with him.

In October, Ekai Osho will again be making his annual trip to teach at Carlton-Antioch's Buddhist Studies Program at Bodh Gaya in India, and will be accompanied by seven students.

As Jikishoan prepares for the warming renewal of spring, Ekai Osho leads us by his example of simply living his life completely – one activity after another.

With deep gassho to the Jikishoan Community and Ekai Osho.

Shudo Hannah Forsyth

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## Committee News

On Sunday evening, 11th September 2016 Jikishoan held its 18th Annual General Meeting at the Australian Shiatsu College. There were 24 members and 5 non-members present.

The new members of the 18th Committee are John Hickey and Marisha Rothman. We welcome them and wish them an enjoyable and fruitful engagement with the practice through their membership of this committee.

We also thank departing members Robin Laurie and Vaughan Behncke for their steady attendance and each in their different ways for the contribution that they have made during this last year.

The newly elected members of the 18th Committee of Management 2016 -2017 are:

Honorary Member: Ekai Korematsu Osho  
President: Shona Innes  
Vice President: Katherine Yeo

Treasurer:  
Secretary:  
Ordinary Members:

Naomi Richards  
Christine Maingard  
Hannah Forsyth  
Isabelle Henry  
Iris Dillow  
John Hickey  
Marisha Rothman

At any meeting during the year the committee welcomes Jikishoan members to visit and observe. We also welcome your comments, feedback and requests at any time. It is hoped that if the lines of communication are open then the relationship between Committee and Community can be active, creative and meaningful.

May this practice continue for the benefit of all.

Gassho,

Shona Innes  
President, 18th Committee of Management



Jikishoan's 18th Committee of Management. Photograph: Vaughan Behncke

## Welcome to Jikishoan

Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community is a growing community of people learning and practising Zen meditation under the guidance of Ekai Korematsu Osho. Ekai Osho has practised and taught Zen Buddhism in Japan, the United States and India for over 30 years.

The name of the community encapsulates its spirit: 'Jiki' means straightforward or direct; 'sho' means proof or satori; and 'an' means hut. The practice is the proof—there is no proof separate from that. The proof, satori or awakening does not come after you've finished—it is direct, here and now.

Jikishoan runs a range of programmes throughout the year, which are conducted in the spirit of Bendoho—the original way of practice prescribed by Dogen Zenji in the 13th century.

More information about courses, one-day workshops, retreats and weekly meditation sessions can be found in the teaching schedule of this magazine and on the website at [jikishoan.org.au](http://jikishoan.org.au). We warmly welcome anyone who would like to know more about Zen Buddhism to attend any of these activities.

### CONTACT US

Post: PO Box 475, Yarraville Vic 3013, Australia.

Phone: (03) 8307 0600

Email: [contact@jikishoan.org.au](mailto:contact@jikishoan.org.au)



## Bright Pearl

A note on the title of this magazine.



Master Gensa Shibi said as an expression of the truth, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl.' One day a monk asked Master Gensa, 'I have heard your words that the whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. How should we understand this?' The Master answered, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?'

Later the Master asked the monk, 'How do you understand this?' The monk replied, 'The whole universe in the ten directions is one bright pearl. What use is understanding?' The Master said, 'I see that you are struggling to get inside a demon's cave in a black mountain ... even surmising and worry is not different from the bright pearl. No action nor any thought has ever been caused by anything other than the bright pearl. Therefore, forward and backward steps in a demon's black-mountain cave are just the one bright pearl itself.'

Excerpted from 'Ikka-no-Myoju' in Dogen Zenji's *Shobogenzo*.

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## Dharma Talk

# Seasons of Practice

EKAI KOREMATSU OSHO

*Talk delivered on day five of Retreat 51, during Chosan.*

*Transcribed and edited by Margaret Kokyo Lynch.*



Along the Maribymong River, Spring 2015. Photograph: Vincent Yuu

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**F**ive days is one complete cycle in the lunar calendar, the old, ancient way. Five days completes one phase of the cycle, first phase, second phase, third phase and then full moon. You can experience what retreat offers in a very fundamental way if you stay five days; you can settle down. There are all kinds of reasons why everyone keeps coming back to retreat but the simple reason is that you like it, or you love it. If you don't love it you don't want to be together. But if you love it, then love and hate starts to come up: 'Why am I here?', 'It's so good!' Dramas.

Arriving here, there is a lot of potential, a lot of feeling – something could happen. It's like arriving at Spring. Spring has a lot of potential, anything could grow; flowers could blossom, weeds could grow. The characteristic of Spring or arriving is purity of the mind, accepting everything as it is, and the potential: purity, everyone as you are – like friends. You love a friend, all kinds, diversity, and you come together because you love it.

*Student:* I guess I sort of love it, and sort of like it, and they're some of the motivations for coming. But I think the real reason I come is because it's almost like I need to come, and that's not the same as liking or loving it. Sometimes I'm extremely ambivalent about coming. But the reason I come is because I know I need to come. And sometimes I like it too.

*Ekai Osho:* It sounds like you're addicted! That's the starting point – you're attracted to that and everyone else is attracted in a similar way. And when you're attracted to something – disappointment, satisfaction, love and hate – all those things happen. Stay in that, push into that, exert yourself, make a full effort as much as possible, that is a different season, it is Summer.

You love Summer, you exert yourself. That's where discipline comes, so practice evolves. The bottom line is you need to love it, you need to love hard work – getting up at

*‘Everyone goes through the seasons, the changes. You need to learn to love every moment of it. Spring is a wonderful thing. In Spring you have a pure heart, that’s the starting point.’*

4 o’clock! And that kind of hard work really helps you appreciate the value that training offers. You can transform yourself to be, somehow, a reliable person. You go through that challenging period, summertime is like that, growth. You need to love that.

*Student:* I appreciate you raising the metaphor of springtime and summertime practice. We talk a lot about progressing from baby to primary school to secondary and tertiary. Would you comment about the Autumn of our practice, moving into the Winter of our practice?

*Ekai Osho:* Autumn and Fall. You need to love Autumn and Fall, it’s the time of harvesting. Harvesting what? It’s a season of deep practice, of reflection. You reflect back to what you have done. It’s harvesting time. You become a thoughtful person because of practice, because of hard work, because of Summer, because of Spring with everyone. If you don’t reflect on that, then there is nothing harvested. Going deeper into your heart then there is poetry, nice expression, you become thoughtful. If you don’t reflect upon how and what you went through with people you don’t become a thoughtful person.

Reflection is very important and you can say reflection, deep reflection or you can say repentance. When you start to reflect you notice how much trouble you cause, how much of a nuisance you are to others, how you speak unnecessarily, not able to shut your mouth. Most speech is useless. Deeply reflect upon that. That is the harvest. That is Autumn. You need to love Autumn and reflection.

Then moving into Winter. You need to love Winter. It includes everything – it’s broad. A person of broad heart, that is the source of everything. A person with a small heart only wants to see the youthful face, a lot of energy. Winter can connect directly to reality as it is, broad. Winter is cold, there is snow, but it shines. Spring will only come after winter. The nature of the practice and the winter is

like your own mother, very inclusive. From mother’s womb, everything appears, even Isis terrorist appears. Good boy appears too, yes. Very inclusive, broad. Everything is made broad, so it makes everything into one. Even frosting snow will melt. The Winter, you need to love Winter, it’s like the great Earth, all melts. You need to love Winter, and then you can say bye bye.

Winter is before the rise of emotions. It’s about you and how you live. Everyone goes through the seasons, the changes. You need to learn to love every moment of it. Spring is a wonderful thing. In Spring you have a pure heart, that’s the starting point. You do something with a pure heart, you exert yourself, you do something you need to do. Not only do, you need to learn to reflect – deep heart. You can transform, you become a kind, considerate person, that is the Autumn harvest. Then all things done, you are back to the original place, the broad place, accepting everything as it is, before the start of emotions. Spring comes after that, full of feeling, full of potential.

Original face, original place is split apart if you start from the emotions, ‘I like this, I don’t like this’. That is why I like Zen Master Dogen’s poem:

Spring has a flower,

Summer the cuckoo bird sings,

Autumn the full moon,

Winter the snow with refreshing coolness.

You need to love each season. You need to love all your life, celebrate your life, that’s what it is. ‘I only love my life when I’m happy, have enough to eat, having fun’. That’s not practice level. You need training to get to that practice level.

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# Practice in the Fukuetsu Role in the Ino Ryo

ANNIE BOLITHO

Talk delivered at Sunday Sanzenkai, 5 June 2016

I'm Annie Bolitho and I'm speaking tonight in my role as a member of the Ino ryo. When I say Ino ryo it is a category to describe the action we're responsible for: tasks like setting up the zendo and tending the altar. Roles range from Jikido, beginning training, to Ino who is the leader; and involve looking after things like the altar, zabutons and zafus, the space, the lights and fans, the wooden equipment, instruments and sutra books. All contribute to the way we establish the overall environment in which we do our formal practice. Other ryo members are Liam, the Ino, Robin and Christine. They're IBS students and their attendance at sanzenkai is very high. I'm enrolled in C-course, with a focus on retreats, and I attend 62% B-course, and a few A-course classes each term.

I'm in the role of Fukuetsu, training as the assistant to the Ino. Reflecting on that, I've chosen quotes from texts we've studied at retreat. The first is from *Bendowa*, one of Zen Master Dogen's foundational texts. The format is a range of questions that people coming to practice may have, and Zen Master Dogen responds to each one.

By leaving home life behind, monks are quickly separated from all their various ties so that they have no impediments to diligently practising seated meditation. But how can those of us involved in the daily pressures of lay life turn to doing training and practice so that we may realize the Way of the Buddhas, which is unconcerned with worldly affairs? (*Bendowa* from *Shobogenzo*, part 4 of 5)

There is a way that under the pressures of daily life someone like me can practice and train. In Ino ryo members are in a good position to nurture the vision of Jikishoan, that is: 'To offer transformative Buddhist learning, experience and cultivation for everyone.'

Ino ryo is responsible for what Ekai Osho has referred to as the stillness aspect of the practice – a stillness that's alive, dynamic and attractive. In contemporary life there are few opportunities for stillness in the company of others. People come to the zendo and talk of 'coming home.' So to

experience this quiet steady 'home' is transformative in itself.

In Zen Master Dogen's *Pure Standards for the Zen Community*, he emphasises the host role of the Ino and that the Ino should be diligent in minimising disturbance for the monks in a training monastery. In our lay context, how does Ino ryo take care of the stillness aspect? The most important thing is our attendance and the roster. The Fukuetsu has responsibility for rostering, and I liaise with Liam and Shona who take care of the overall B-course roster.

Ino ryo has charge of the time and space aspects of practice. At sanzenkai and retreats this involves making sure that everything runs according to a set schedule, the Sajo. We know exactly how long we do kinhin (walking meditation) and zazen (sitting meditation). We indicate beginnings and endings with a sound signal. We try to maintain for our guests a precisely ordered and peaceful environment.

Ino ryo's practice nurtures a Mahayana view in its members; that is to practise for the benefit of all sentient beings, rather than seeking individual enlightenment. It's not a big deal. The Jikido and the Kokyo do not face the wall. New jikidos learn to be ready to help others in the zendo, whether by making an extra place for a latecomer or placing tea stools next to chairs before the tea ceremony. The schedule, sound signals and sutras have great potential to benefit others as well. Training is understood as cultivation, which brings on sprouting of all kinds. Sprouting is an image that comes from the text of the second quote I chose, from *Uji, On the Time Being, Just for a While, for the Whole of Time is the Whole of Existence*. It is the text that has most opened my eyes to the rich training ground of Ino ryo.

When I spoke to Ekai Osho about joining Ino ryo, I admitted that time was not my strong suit and that I was hopeless with precision and formality. I might one day be able

*‘In contemporary life there are few opportunities for stillness in the company of others. People come to the zendo and talk of “coming home.” So to experience this quiet steady ‘home’ is transformative in itself.’*

to chant up front but actually no, as far as I could see it was never likely to happen. *Uji* is explicitly concerned with intention and equally concerned with expression. Zen Master Dogen gives lots of scenarios. He says:

Sometimes the intention is not there yet. The intention may be there, but the expression has not arrived. The intention is only half way there. The expression is only half way there.

I came to the Ino ryo with intention, and what I now see as a strange understanding of how expression would come forth. Time after time the reality of conditions, time and everything else moving on hampered my efforts to do the roles right. Like every single other person who has come into Ino ryo since, I asked, or begged, for the conditions in which we learn the role to be changed. Couldn't I have the conditions for learning be such that I could learn better?

The usual props or enablers that we want aren't there and this is bewildering. There's a lot to learn. You can't get it. You don't get it. You try your best to get it. But the learning in this ryo is experiential, and sometimes painful. I want it right and I want to look good but it's about being open to the circumstances and open to those who offer the training.

Zen Master Dogen says:

Even at a stage where it would seem that you have taken a false step, this condition will be a state of 'being.' Further, should you leave the matter at this, your condition will still constitute a persistence of 'a time being', which will include both a before and an after to this 'having taken a false step.' Dealing with thoughts and things while they persist, like a fish darting about through the water, is indeed what 'being just for the time being' is about. So do not be upset over what is not, and do not be pressured by what is.

Often I've noticed in myself, and in the responses of other ryo members, that it would seem to us that we have tak-



The mokugyo is used by the Ino Ryo's Fukudo to keep time during particular chants. Photograph: Darren Chaitman



The small keso (left) and inkun (right) are used by the Ino Ryo's Jikido to mark beginnings and endings. Photograph: Robin Laurie

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Our Fukuetsu, Annie Bolitho, reading *Mountain Water Sutra* during the entertainment at Foundation Day 2015. Photograph: Vincent Vuu



en a false step. Yet the treasure house that opens through training in the ryo grows from delusion. In *Uji*, Zen Master Dogen highlights that we have a crude understanding of time and change and the tendency to be ‘continually arranging the bits and pieces of what we experience in order to fashion a whole universe.’ The fine grained and rapidly moving moments of Ino ryo action regularly trash the neat universes that we fashion; we are about to begin a meal at retreat, there are not enough places; we’re running behind and it’s time to start sanzenkai; the incense stick won’t stand up; my voice fails in the title of the chant – I’ve run out of breath; the striker of the rin has been left in the altar, and the Doan has just realised, when now is the moment to use it.

Each year at Members’ Day in December ryos disband and re-form. The question is: Are you up for contributing to this ryo again next year? I’ve kept putting my hand up over all these years. It’s been a long training journey to Fukuetsu. Inos who have contributed to my training are Ino Andrew (now Kanzansan), acting Ino Martin, retreat and acting Ino Jim, retreat Ino Tom and Ino Liam. Prior to the introduction of the Integrated Buddhist Studies training program, training in the Jikido role was a lot less methodical. Not having the basics of the role clear in turn affected my development in subsequent roles. Jikido is the cornerstone role in Ino ryo, and one that has to be carefully memorised and enacted until it is embodied. There is no other way.

The Fukuetsu has been in the roles of Jikido, Fukudo, Doan and Kokyo or chant leader. As Fukuetsu I assist in mak-

ing sure equipment gets to retreat, and that we come back with it, based on an inventory. I’ve learned the layout of the zendo, so that Tenzo ryo members and people staying for a short time can leave the hall with least disturbance. One thing that stands out from Zen Master Dogen’s *Pure Standards* is that we should give great care to new people. The Fukuetsu role extends to learning more about Kaan, and at retreats I’ve been helping with Oryoki training.

When I joined Ino ryo in 2008, I spoke to Ekai Osho about establishing more of a place for women in Ino ryo. In every dokusan I have attended at retreat since 2008, Osho-sama has always raised the subject of the gender balance in the ryo, interested in finding out how I’m experiencing it. We have had many humorous conversations about the gender dynamic. I have a vision of there being a woman retreat Ino in future; he says that is great.

The Ino’s role has a very big scope. It is based on intention. Zen Master Dogen describes ‘the Ino’s regarding with love all who arrive and compassionately nourishing them, so that the assembly’s heart becomes the Ino’s own heart and the mindfulness of the Way becomes the Ino’s own mindfulness.’ Regarding with love all who arrive. Not just some. All. Thank you Liam.

I’m grateful for the experience Ino ryo has given me to wake up to what’s possible in the world of action. When being lazy, stubborn and defensive, I’ve caused a huge amount of hassle to a lot of people. I am so sorry.



*All those present at Jim's lay ordination ceremony, after Sunday Sanzenkai on 24 July 2016. Photograph: Vaughan Behncke*

## *Shoshin Jim Holden's Lay Ordination Ceremony (Zaike Tokudo)*



*Lay ordained members of Jikishoan, and special guest Trish Costello, present at the ceremony. Photograph: Vaughan Behncke*

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*OPEN BASKET:  
SANGHA  
NEWS*



*Tony Shields prepared for anything at Tassajara*

## Why Would You Want to Spend Three Months in a Monastery?

BY TONY SHIELDS

Just before Christmas last year, I spent three months in Tassajara Zen Mountain Centre, a monastery run by the San Francisco Zen Centre in a wilderness area of California. Asking me why is a very good question. I am 47 years old. I am pretty happy and have good friends and family. I am in a happy relationship. I am financially secure. I live in a nice house in a sought after street in a sought after suburb in Canberra (according to the real estate agents). Why am I not doing what others would be doing in my position? Travelling around Europe, eating pastries in Paris and drinking Riesling on the Rhine? It wasn't just others asking this question, I often asked that of myself several times a day when I was at Tassajara.

Six years ago, I had spent three months at Tassajara. It wasn't easy that time. It tested me. When I left, there was no way I was going back for at least a couple of years. But looking back I realised that (at the risk of sounding like I am born again), it had moved me noticeably towards the positive end of the spectrum in terms of any character trait I could think of: less fearful, more courageous; more open, less self-centred; less worried, more happy; less likely to avoid things, more likely to accept things; more resilient etc. I knew I should go back and when five years passed, I thought I really should go back but my partner and I decided to buy a house. Once we did that, there was no excuse. I didn't know how Tassajara would be beneficial but I knew it would be.

As the time to depart for Tassajara got closer, I questioned my motives but told myself that it was impossible to spend my life always doing pleasant things, like eating pastries in Paris. Life doesn't work like that. You can't just dial up what you want and get it, after all wherever I go I take myself, so I took myself to Tassajara.



*Summer at Tassajara. Photograph: Tony Shields*

This time around Tassajara was a bit easier, there wasn't the fear of the unknown, but easier doesn't mean easy.

The founder of Tassajara, Shunryu Suzuki, said you should let the schedule be your first teacher at Tassajara. I compare the schedule to a gentle steam roller. It just rolls on and rolls over you regardless. You can't get away from, or get off the schedule. If you think self-centredly, it gently does you in. After a while I realised thinking, 'there is not enough time to do this, I don't want to do this,' was making me miserable and harassed. Doing that just places you on the cycle of like and dislike. I figured out it's simply much easier to get up when the wake-up bell rings rather than trying to squeeze a few more minutes of 'me' time in before you get out of bed. Better to move beyond that and don't think, just do. You don't just intellectually understand the importance of accepting every moment and everything, you embody it. The ego is downsized and often disappears. As Shunryu Suzuki said, 'When the alarm rings, just get up.' When you do that there simply is no "me."

The schedule is the first teacher, but there are plenty of others. Tassajara is in the middle of a wilderness area. For the whole three months your world shrinks to Tassajara, a little monastery in a little valley at the end of a bumpy and potentially treacherous dirt road. On days off, I used to go hiking in the countryside and every time I climbed to the top of a surrounding hill, all I could see was more ridgelines and wilderness. One day after six weeks I climbed to another hill, and way off in the distance, I could see a wide open sunlit plain. 'Wow,' I said to myself, 'there really is an outside world.'

As your world shrinks to Tassajara, everything there grows in importance in your mind, the fifty six people (especial-

ly the fifty six people), the food, the cold, the work, the sitting, the ritual, the chanting, the this, the that. They can all be sources of dislike and complaint to be thrown up into your face and into your mind. And with little escape; no TV, no leaving the place. Tassajara is designed for you to study your reactions to them rather than avoid them. As Dogen says, 'To study Buddhism is to study yourself, to study yourself is to forget yourself.' Once again, you learn that accepting things is a lot easier than complaining about them and trying to avoid them – 'Dave is just Dave' does your head in a lot less than 'Dave is an idiot.' (Actually Dave was a great guy.)

It is the lack of escape that makes Tassajara an intense and long experience for me. When I arrived and was confronted with the whole experience, the thoughts of 'what am I doing here?' surfaced regularly. Over time they dissipated, but at the end, I still counted down the days. When I did leave, I was glad I had come and glad I was leaving. Looking back, Tassajara was once again beneficial, nudging me a little further towards the positive side of the spectrum of character traits, shrinking my sense of self a little more and growing my sense of being part of the flow rather than apart from it.

If you have found Zen practice beneficial I strongly recommend you find the time to go to Tassajara for a three month practice period. It is practice with the dial turned up. Some people don't find it as hard as I do, some take to meditation like a duck takes to water (not me), or they love the simplicity, community and natural surrounds of Tassajara. But if it wasn't so hard it wouldn't be so beneficial. Regardless, if you go to Tassajara with the right attitude, you will benefit.

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# Shikoku Henro: Pilgrimage in Japan

BY MARISHA ROTHMAN

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Shikoku, home of the Shikokuhenro, the 88 temple pilgrimage associated with Kukai, Kobo Daishi, (founder of the Shingon sect in the C9th) is divided into four prefectures; Tokushima-ken, the Dojo of Awakening Faith to the east of the island, holds the first 23 temples. The next 16 are to the south in Kochi prefecture, the Dojo of Disciplining; followed by 26 temples in Ehime-ken, the Dojo of Enlightenment; with the remaining 23 in Kagawa-ken, the Dojo of Nirvana.

I thought I would be fine with the Dojo of Awakening Faith, as I had great faith I would complete the entire circuit of 88 temples, but I missed the point.

This was about reawakening one's faith in the Dharma through practice: starting at the beginning of the circle, with a beginner's mind, open to the journey about to be travelled. Each day was an experience and, if you were present for each moment, this is what the journey as a practice was teaching you.

As far as completing the pilgrimage went, my karma had other ideas. It said, 'No, you have karma to spend,' and stopped me after I climbed to Shosanji, temple 12.

Taking a bus from Tokushima to Ryozenji, the first pilgrimage temple, Irwin and I began our journey. It did not take long to recognise the signs pointing the way to each temple and to get into the flow of the rituals we would perform.

Bowing at the gate we moved from the ordinary world into sacred space. Washing hands and rinsing our mouth, we purified ourselves.

Each temple contained two shrines, the Hondo, dedicated to the Buddha specific to each temple, and the Daishido, dedicated to Kobo Daishi.

Proceeding to the Hondo we offered an osame-fuda (name card), coins, a candle and incense and recited the Gassho Reihai, the Kaigyoge mantra, the Heart Sutra, a Gohozon mantra for the Buddha, the Komyo-Shingon mantra, the Gohogo prayer and the Fueko dedication.

Walking to the Daishido we made the same offerings and, omitting the Gohozon mantra, repeated the prayers.

In exchange for a donation at the temple office, our nokyochō books were stamped and signed. Stepping through the gate and returning to the secular world, we turned back and bowed.

At day's end we stayed at traditional minshuku and ryokan, arriving early enough to have a good scrub and hot bath prior to dinner at 6:00 pm. In bed by 8:30, up at 5:30, breakfast at 6:00, then off to the next temple.

Meals were always plentiful, so much so that we often felt they were too much, but we were grateful for the effort put into their presentation and variety. Breakfast, which usually included rice, miso soup, fish, pickled vegetables, seaweed, egg, tofu and green tea, kept us going until dinner. We rarely ate lunch.

The same pattern at each temple, the same pattern at each lodging, but always different.

A week before we left Melbourne, Ekai Osho said to me, 'It will be a magical experience,' and it was.

On pilgrimage you travel with Kobo Daishi – 'we two together' and I did feel he was walking with me. One time I looked at my shadow on the road in front of me. I knew it was my shadow, but saw it as Kobo Daishi.

I felt happy walking the path of the many before me and

Right: Marisha and Irwin Rothman on pilgrimage.

Left (page 14):  
‘[A] 13th century carving of Yakushi Nyorai (Medicine Buddha) at Fujiidera temple, temple 11 of the Shikokuhenro.

It’s classified as a National Treasure. Older temples, those mostly found in the Tendai and Shingon sects, often have Yakushi as the center of devotion.’ – MR



those who will come afterwards. The path usually took us off the main highways and through the back streets of villages and towns. It was quiet, with few people about. The houses were small, built close to each other. In front yards the residents expressed themselves with sculptured trees, rocks and pots of flowers of all colours: daisies, pigface, tulips, carnations. Lovely surprises to enjoy as we walked. We passed many fields, with farmers out caring for their crops.

The climb from Fujiidera, temple 11, to Shosanji was difficult. The route guidebook indicated the walk would take four to six hours; we needed nine and a half.

As we left our lodging, rain – which would last all day – began to fall. We walked through to the back of Fujiidera and began the climb, the rain softly pattering against our ponchos. Hiking into the mountain, walking through cypress forest, mist drifted across the path. Small Jizo statues, some old, some new, dotted the way, offering their protection. Moss and mushrooms grew on the trees. Some parts of the winding path had steps cut into it, while other sections were covered in scree. Now and then another henro passed us at a determined pace. I wondered what the rush was, not realising we had such a long way to go and more challenges ahead. An overall silence witnessed our journey through the forest.

The climb up the last peak left us exhausted, cold and wet. The sun was going down. Leaving the forest we found ourselves on a winding concrete path which led to the back of Shosanji. Dozens of six foot stone lanterns lit the way, the mist creating a halo of light around each bulb. As we walked along the mist faded and thickened. Suddenly a huge statue would appear on the other side of the path: deities, Buddhas, bodhisattvas. I felt they were greeting us, acknowledging our success in reaching the temple. As I later learned, I had torn two ligaments on my left ankle

during the last part of the climb. I dragged my foot, forcing myself along the path, but feeling supported by the statues. The mist, the lamps, the statues, the silence; it was a truly magical experience.

It was dark when we reached the main gate. The temple was closed with no one about. We were exhausted and couldn’t walk any further. I was in pain. From a public phone near the gate we called the lodging we were supposed to have been at hours earlier. They would pick us up. We waited, shivering from the cold, standing under a single lamp illuminating the temple gate, waiting for our lift. We were overjoyed when the beams of car lights appeared.

In the morning we took a taxi back to the temple to perform our prayers. I realised I could walk no further. The disappointment I felt was somewhat relieved by the knowledge we would come back to Shikoku to finish the pilgrimage. We returned to Tokushima and two days later flew back home.

When I got home, happy to be resting and healing, I picked up Crooked Cucumber, David Chadwick’s book on Shunryu Suzuki Roshi’s life and teachings. I found a passage which changed my perspective on the fate of my pilgrimage:

A person who falls on the earth, stumbling on a stone, will stand up by means of the same earth they fell on. You complained because you think earth is the problem, having caused your fall. Without the earth, you wouldn’t fall, but you wouldn’t stand up either. Falling and standing up are both great aides given to you by earth. Because of mother earth you can continue your practice. You are practicing in the zendo of the great earth, which is the problem. Problems are actually your zendo.

明珠

# My Journey into Buddhism

BY LORRAINE COLLISHAW



*Jikisoan's Ballarat zendo. Photograph taken from the June 2004 issue of Myoju.*

I discovered Buddhism when Ekai Osho introduced Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community to Ballarat in 1999. I had barely heard of Buddhism and I knew nothing about it, beyond seeing fat laughing statues in new age shops. I was fifty-six and so began my journey.

Having been something of a spiritual seeker all my life, I was eager to find the way that would 'give me the answers!' For probably the first five years with Jikishoan I wavered between feeling totally bewildered about the teachings of Ekai Osho and polishing my ego because I was 'doing Buddhist meditation.' I had little idea of what it was all about! We had weekly sessions in Ballarat for ten years with Ekai Osho visiting monthly. We had a nice little sangha and a core group of dedicated people. Ekai Osho's visits were greatly anticipated and a highlight for us. During these years I wobbled along. Retreats were hard work, sitting was hard work and the meaning of it all was vague. Most of the time I kept feeling amazed that I kept going and really didn't know why! Over time, I realised Ekai Osho's teaching was profound and it began to make sense. I'm not sure how the change came about – maybe I just started 'to hear.'

Two trips to Bodhi Gaya with Ekai Osho were profound times for me. The first was a culture shock, never having visited a third world country before. I stepped out of the airport and the smell, the heat and the noise overwhelmed me. I thought, 'How shall I survive three weeks of this?' India won my heart in a way that is difficult to explain. The experiences and feelings ran deeper than I could describe. I felt a realness of life that I had never felt before. Two years later I went back. This time was not so shocking, but nevertheless, hard work. I found the heat depleting and on both trips I coughed incessantly with infection. However, beneath the physical hardships I felt the connection with a reality of life that ran deep within me. It was magic! It is now five years since my last trip – I want to go again but wonder if I'm getting too old to cope with the physical hardship. And yet my soul cries out.

Since the Ballarat Sangha closed in 2010, my Practice has gone through changes, most of them very subtle. I have not remained as physically connected to the Jikishoan community as I would have liked. I rarely travel to Melbourne and one or two retreats a year are my major connection. Myoju is a great connector and exciting when it arrives to read of what people are doing.

My Practice has levelled out. No longer the highs and lows, the expectations, the aspirations, the pressure to 'sit.' All the while over the last fifteen years and especially the last five or so, subtle changes have been occurring beneath the surface. Practice now is more a comfortable acceptance, sometimes a refuge, but mostly just being there. A quiet acceptance of the joy of life. A quiet sit when the time is right. The joy of the sun, the rain, the smiles of people, my friends and of course the gifts of nature. The uplift when I look to the garden and see the crimson rosellas arrive. The horrors of the world are always there – always will be. There are no answers, for there are no questions.

I have been one of the fortunate people to encounter Ekai Osho 'on my doorstep', and receive his way of teaching the dharma. Without that I would still be in the desert looking for an oasis or the answer to 'What is it all about?' My gratitude is deep. Gassho.



# Incense

BY NICKY COLES

Match scratches   flares   and candle blooms

incense stick is lit from candle flame

new flame reduced by rush of air

to glowing tip

thin line of smoke drifts upwards

steadies   wavers

wafting round an abstract vertical

billows in cloudy puffs

steadies again

ash column tilts

falls

like petals from a flower...

I look and see a mound of dust.



# Untitled

BY JOHN HICKEY

fragrant globe bearing

outward warm painted blossom

inward green tea moons

chaju serving the sangha:

sipping wanes – bloom turns – gassho

*Footscray zendo – January 2016*

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# Soto Kitchen

BY KAREN THRELFALL

In this edition of Soto Kitchen we feature two recipes using rice. Rice is one of the most widely consumed staple foods all over the world. In Chinese medicine it has the qualities of having a neutral thermal nature, it soothes the stomach amongst many other healing properties and increases 'Qi' energy.

It also features on Jikishoan retreats, at breakfast as Okayu (brown rice porridge), and at lunch as Gohan (white rice), with many of us who have attended retreats having fond memories of the simplicity and satisfying taste of a steaming bowl of white rice with a little soy sauce and sesame salt. We hope you enjoy the following simple but delicious recipes made with rice.

## RICE PATTIES

Recipe from *The Heart of Zen Cuisine* by Soei Yoneda

Ingredients	Quantity
Cooked short-grain rice	1 1/2 cups
Salt	1/2 teaspoon
Flour	4 tablespoons
Vegetable oil	

### Method

1. Mix cooked rice, salt and flour in a bowl. (Refrigerate overnight in an airtight container for more flavour).
2. Divide into fourths and form into patties. (Add a little water to help bind them together if needed).
3. Pour oil into the frying pan and add patties when hot.
4. Fry each side until golden.
5. Serve hot or at room temperature. Keeps 2—3 days.

## SIMPLE AND DELICIOUS COCONUT RICE PUDDING

Adapted from the original recipe on [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com)

Ingredients	Quantity
Cooked rice	1 cup
Full cream milk	1 cup
Coconut cream	4 tablespoons
Honey	1 tablespoon
Ground cardamom	1 teaspoon
Chopped pistachios (optional)	

### Method

1. Put rice and milk in a saucepan and heat until it starts to bubble.
2. Simmer until the rice and milk start to thicken.
3. Add coconut cream, honey and cardamom and simmer until mixture thickens to porridge consistency.
4. Spoon into the bottom of bowls.
5. Top with pistachio nuts, fruit such as banana, berries or paw paw and serve.



Rice patty. Photograph: Karen Threlfall

# Calendar of Events

October – December 2016

## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
Sunday	Weekly	5:30-7:45 PM	Sanzenkai	Brunswick	Liam/Shona
		7:45-8:30 PM	Supper		James/Karen
Thursday	Weekly	7:00-9:00 PM	Sanzenkai	Footscray	Hannah/Phil

## OCTOBER

Tuesday	11 October 2016	7:00-9:30 PM	Committee of Management Meeting #219	Footscray	President
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## NOVEMBER

Tuesday	10 November 2016	7:00 - 9:30 PM	Committee of Management Meeting #220	Footscray	President
Friday - Sunday	18 - 25 November 2016		Bendoho Retreat #53	Adekate	Hannah/Julie

## DECEMBER

Tuesday	13 December 2016	7:00 - 9:30 PM	Committee of Management Meeting #221	Footscray	President
Sunday	18 December 2016	5:30-7:30 PM	Bansan (exit) Member's Day	Brunswick	Liam/Shona
Saturday	31 December 2016	4:00 - 5:30 PM 8:00 - midnight	Osoji New Year's Eve zazen	Footscray	Hannah

## ADDRESSES

**Brunswick**  
Australian Shiatsu College  
103 Evans St  
Brunswick VIC 3056

**Footscray**  
On application.

**Post**  
JZBC Inc  
PO Box 475  
Yarraville Vic 3013

## CONTACT

**General Enquiries**  
Hannah Forsyth  
03 8307 0600  
contact @ jikishoan.org.au

**Sunday Sanzenkai**  
Liam D'hondt, Zendo  
0497 988 612

Shona Innes,  
IBS MCB coordinator  
0421 285 338

**Kitchen**  
James Watt (Tenzo)  
0425 737 608

Karen Threlfall  
0412 812 708

## 18TH COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2016 - 2017

**President (Tsumu)**  
Shona Innes  
(03) 9391 2757

**Vice President (Kan'in)**  
Katherine Yeo  
0422 407 870

**Finance (Fusu)**  
Naomi Richards  
0407 839 890

**Secretary (Shoji)**  
Christine Maingard  
0430 599 430

**Membership Secretary**  
Shona Innes  
(03) 9391 2757

**Ordinary Committee Members:**

Hannah Forsyth  
(03) 8307 0600

Isabelle Henry  
0423 982 947

Iris Dillow  
(03) 5259 3616

John Hickey  
0435 939 485

Marisha Rothman  
0400 873 698

*Myoju*  
Daniel Carter  
0422 948 902



**JKISHOAN** 直証庵  
zen buddhist community

## Teaching Schedule, October – December 2016

Teachings are given personally by Ekai Korematsu Osho. Brochures providing more information are available. Please check the website or contact one of the IBS coordinators listed below.

### SANZENKAI

#### Brunswick (5.30–7.45pm Sundays)

Zazen (sitting meditation), kinhin (walking meditation), tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk (by the teacher or an experienced member). For beginners, members and friends.

Newcomers, please arrive by 5.15pm. Attendance by donation. Participants are welcome to stay for an informal supper.

Bansan (Entering): commencement Main Course B Semester 2, July 10. There is no Sanzenkai on November 24. Bansan Exit Day and Members Day is December 18.

#### Footscray (7–9pm Thursdays)

Zazen and kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. Attendance by donation.

### INTEGRATED BUDDHIST STUDIES

#### Main Course A1 - Jikishoan Zendo Footscray

Ten classes 9 - 11 AM Saturdays

- Term 4, October 1 - December 10

#### Main Course A2 - Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick

Ten classes 5.30 - 7.30 PM Saturdays

- Term 4, October 1 - December 10

#### Main Course A3 - Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick

Ten classes 7 - 9 PM Wednesdays

- Term 4, October 5 - December 14

Cost is \$60 admission fee, \$545 per year (4 terms, 40 classes), \$170 per term (10 classes) or \$90 for 5 classes (casual). Members by donation for casual classes.

#### Main Course B1 (5:30–7.45pm Sundays Brunswick)

Semester 2, 2016: 10 July 2016 to 18 December 2016.

Finishes with Bansan (Exiting Ceremony) on 18 December 2016

Venue: Australian Shiatsu College, Brunswick

#### Main Course B2 (7–9pm Thursdays Footscray)

Semester 2, 2016: 14 July 2016 to 15 December 2016.

Finishes with Bansan (Exiting Ceremony) on 18 December 2016

Venue: Jikishoan Zendo Footscray

Cost is \$240 per year (2 semesters) or \$170 per semester.

#### Main Course C

Retreats and overseas study (see below for Spring Bendocho Retreat). Jikishoan holds three seven-day retreats per year.

For the remainder of 2016: Spring November 18 – 25.

Cost: \$1365 / 3 retreats 2016, or \$3780 / 9 retreats 2016 – 2018

### ONE DAY WORKSHOPS: INTRODUCING ZEN MEDITATION

An orientation workshop for beginners as well as for those who have some experience. All workshops are held at the Footscray zendo. Includes morning and afternoon teas and lunch.

Sunday October 2, December 4, 9am - 4pm.

Non-members \$90, members and IBS students by donation

### SPRING BENDOHO RETREAT

A seven-day intensive residential Zen experience, including daily Chosan (morning tea), Dokusan (interview with the Teacher), Teaching and Teisho (afternoon Dharma talk). Cost depends on the number of days attended and includes meals and accommodation.

6pm Friday November 18 – 2pm Friday November 25.

Venue: Adekate Fellowship Centre

### NEW YEARS EVE OSOJI AND ZAZEN

#### Osoji (Zendo Cleaning Practice)

4pm – 6pm Saturday December 31.

Venue: Jikishoan Zendo, Footscray.

#### New Years Eve Zazen

Zazen from 8:30pm to midnight. 108 bells, chanting and informal supper.

Venue: Jikishoan Zendo, Footscray.

Contact: Hannah Forsyth. (03) 8307 0600

### IBS COORDINATORS

General Enquiry and Main Course C:

Hannah Forsyth: ph. 8307 0600 / contact @ jikishoan.org.au

IBS Student Secretary and Main Course B:

Shona Innes: 0421 285 338 / B-course @ jikishoan.org.au

Main Course A:

Katherine Yeo: 0422 407 870 / A-course @ jikishoan.org.au

GENERAL ENQUIRY, BOOKING and ENROLMENT

Phone 03 8307 0600 or email: contact @ jikishoan.org.au