

Myōju



Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Australia

Summer, Volume 9 Issue 2, December 2009

JIKI038

My Path / My Teachers

San Francisco after Suzuki Roshi

An interview with Ekai Korematsu Osho recorded by Paul Harris on 16 November 2009.

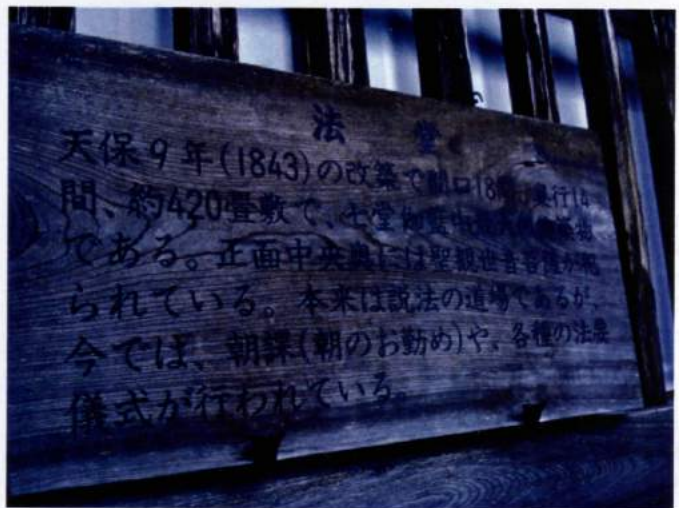
The world was a violent place in the sixties and seventies with war in Indochina, conflict in the Middle East, and terrorist groups involved in bombings and hijackings in Europe. Japan had similar problems with urban guerrilla groups like the Japanese Red Army (Nihon Sekigun). The seemingly acute divisions that existed at this time interested me — east and west, communism and capitalism. This was one of the reasons why I left Japan in 1970 to study humanities at the International People's College in Denmark. In December 1971, and unknown to me then, Shunryu Suzuki Roshi passed away.

Opportunity and circumstance would bring me to the community he'd established in San Francisco a year later.

Back in Japan I'd studied metallurgy and worked as an engineer in Osaka. Because there was so much industry centred in and around Osaka there was a lot of pollution. The job I had was good, but I was concerned about the consequences of the rapid post-war industrialisation, particularly the environmental impact I could see this was having. However, I wanted to do something else, change direction. I felt I couldn't do that in Japan. As the first born son I needed a very good reason to change course so I told my parents I wanted to study horticulture overseas for two or three years. I hadn't seen very much of the world by this stage. The only place I'd travelled outside of Japan was Taiwan, where I spent two weeks cycling around when I was 20 years old in 1968.



With my mind set on studying overseas, and my parent's consent, I applied to three different places in Denmark, France and England. While I was trying to decide which country and what course most interested me, I learnt that Denmark had a large agricultural sector and a college specialising in horticulture. When my applications to the colleges in France and Denmark were accepted I chose the later for this reason.



This particular college followed the English boarding school model, with students and teachers living together. It was a small college with only 100 or so students, but the nationalities were very diverse with people from perhaps up to 30 different countries. One of the purposes of the college was to assist developing countries. The majority of the students were Danish of course, then American, Japanese, with many from Africa and the Middle East too.

The classes were mostly taught in English. I'd studied English at high school but that didn't help with conversational use, so prior to leaving Japan I had to go to a language school. Although I had an interest in horticulture, it was Buddhism that I wanted to study. There was a practicing Buddhist who taught Japanese culture and history at this college in Denmark.

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Aeroplanes, Temples and Trains; Reflections on Bodhi Gaya; Our "Dream Temple"; New Education Courses; Letter from Daijōji, and more...

I also made friends with an American student there who told me about the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) in Berkeley, California. The IBS was founded by Japanese people in the Pure Land tradition. Unfortunately there weren't any openings at the IBS so I instead applied and was accepted to study at Merritt College in Oakland in 1973. Although this was an undergraduate course I thought it would allow me to go on to other studies.

I remember when I arrived in the United States I only had \$100 in my pocket, but I thought I could stay with my friend there. My friend came to the airport to meet me, but he didn't have room for me to stay.

He didn't have a car, he didn't have a job, and he was broke too, so we had to take a taxi to Berkeley.

I paid \$25 for the taxi fare. I'd just arrived in America and all I had left was \$75! I had to find a job very quickly. Fortunately one turned up at the dormitory next to the international house, working as the caretaker maintaining the building. I did this for six or seven months, and then I found another job through a friend that gave me more money and also allowed more time for study. The problem I encountered though was that my English wasn't good enough. Foreign students had to do a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test, and I found I had to do language classes for six months, and retake the test before I was allowed to enrol in my studies at Merritt.

I majored in Comparative Religion at Merritt, and I also did U.S. History and Environmental Studies as minors. I was very impressed with how developed academic thinking was in the area of ecology and the impact of industry on the environment in America. Coming from an engineering background, this interested me.

However, by this time it was clear to me that this was just a step along the way, and that I wanted to study Buddhism further. The Institute of Buddhist Studies, which is where I'd originally wanted to go, was associated with the Buddhist Churches of America. It's the oldest Buddhist organisation in America and they have many temples in California. I used to go to their Sunday service at their temple in Berkeley. The minister at that time was Rev. Toshio Murakami. He impressed me and I thought that one day, after I'd finished my studies, I'd like to be a bit like him.

While I was doing my studies in Comparative Religion, working on a mid-term paper, I went to a bookshop in Berkeley on Telegraph Avenue. I was looking at some of the Japanese Buddhist books there, and among them I came across "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind". The book had a photograph of Suzuki Roshi on the cover, and this caught my attention, so I opened it up and started reading. One thing I noticed was how simple the language was, but I didn't really properly comprehend it. I found a zendo in Berkeley, now called the Berkeley Zen Centre, where I thought I might learn more. It was in a large house, with the zendo in the attic. Sojun Mel Weitsman Roshi also lived there at that time. After going along a few times, doing a one-day sitting, I was drawn deeper in and decided to

focus on my Zen practice. This was really a big shift, and my first steps in a new direction, towards becoming a Buddhist priest.

I'd go to the Berkeley zendo at 5:00am every morning. There were two sitting periods at this time, we'd finish with chanting service around seven o'clock, and then I'd go to college on my motorcycle. I did that every day for six months, and I'd go back for the evening sitting too. Those days are very memorable for me. Zen wasn't as popular back then as it is today. Mel Weitsman was the main person conducting the services, with help from a couple of other people including Norman Fischer. As I recall, Suzuki Roshi founded Berkeley Zen Centre in 1967, and at the same time Mel was ordained by him and assigned as the priest in charge of the centre.

Practising there regularly and attending sesshin wasn't enough for me, so I started attending the San Francisco Zen Centre's sesshin as well. To begin with, the 40-minute sitting periods just killed me. It was so painful. I just couldn't believe how hard it was, but I was impressed by how committed the American students were to this practice. I was also encouraged by Mel to do a seven-day sesshin, and the first one I did was at the city centre in San Francisco, about a year later in 1974. I recall it was the December Rohatsu sesshin. Up to this time I'd only done one and three day sits with oryoki at Berkeley.

That seven-day sesshin in San Francisco was really very interesting. I had dokusan with Richard Baker Roshi, and I also had the opportunity to meet with Suzuki Roshi's wife. Mrs. Suzuki stayed there in San Francisco to help the community after her husband had passed away.

In those days you could feel how much people missed Suzuki Roshi's presence.

The city centre zendo could hold more than 60 people, but they'd also have up to 20 or more people sitting in the hallway. So there would have been around 100 people at the first sesshin I did there at the city centre. You know, once you were in there you couldn't get out. It was hell! But the wonderful thing though was that after it was over, and I was leaving the zendo, Mrs. Suzuki was waiting for me. She did a gassho and bowed, and congratulated me. She lived at the city centre. The building had a basement, which is where the zendo was. On the first floor there was the dining hall and kitchen, offices and Buddha Hall; and on the second floor was the Founders Hall, residents and dokusan rooms. Suzuki Roshi and Mrs. Suzuki lived here on this floor too. There were about 30-40 residents at the centre. I was very fortunate to meet Mrs. Suzuki. Seeing Suzuki Roshi's photograph that day in the bookshop is what had originally attracted me to Zen, and I wanted to know more about him and his teachings.

The San Francisco Zen Centre (SFZC) was founded at Sokoji, the Soto Zen Mission temple in Bush Street. The building was originally an Orthodox Jewish Synagogue. Suzuki Roshi was assigned as an international teacher appointed by the Sotoshu in 1959 and installed as the Abbot.

In 1967 the SFZC became independent and bought a building on Page Street. Suzuki Roshi's time was up, and the students invited him to stay on. When he first arrived in San Francisco very few people were interested in Zen. Then in the early sixties, with the hippies, the influence of the Beat Generation writers, and various movements for social change, people began looking for alternative ways of living in and seeing the world. Richard Baker was one of those people. He'd heard about Suzuki Roshi and moved from Boston in 1960. He was one of his earliest students. Another was Jakusho Bill Kwong Roshi, who is now the Head Abbot of Sonoma Mountain Zen Centre, north of San Francisco.

Suzuki Roshi was very successful at introducing Zen Buddhism to America and attracting American students.

However, some problems arose, particularly with the Japanese members of the community. You know the Japanese people's way of doing things is very different, very neat and clean. And here was Suzuki Roshi accepting hippies and all sorts of people.

The Japanese-American people understandably felt that their temple was being taken over. Some of the new people Suzuki Roshi was attracting were very good at raising funds, and building the community, and Richard Baker was one such person. It was a real turning point for the community when they bought the Page Street City Centre. Around the same time they bought Tassajara, a large property in the Carmel Valley Suzuki Roshi would establish as a training monastery. And not long after that they purchased Green Gulch Farm, a large property north of San Francisco.

Richard Baker was a very capable businessman, and knew how to raise funds for the community. In fact one of the largest donors he found was Xerox Corporation. Richard Baker arranged for Suzuki Roshi to meet with executives from Xerox and other corporations so that the community could purchase these properties. He'd studied at Harvard and was very well connected in the business world. The situation in the United States is very different to what we have here. Australia is a very secular country and religious groups don't receive the sort of support that that do in the United States. Over there, if people think a particular non-profit organisation is worthy they make very substantial donations to it, and these are all tax exempt. For corporations that make these donations there is obviously a benefit, and this can reflect well on their public profile too. So Richard Baker was very good in this respect, and helped the San Francisco community enormously. Without him the SFZC would not be the same. Without him Suzuki Roshi's work would not be the same. Of course none of these things would have happened without Suzuki Roshi, but undoubtedly Richard Baker's business acumen helped to realize that in an extraordinary way.

1967 was a very crucial year for the SFZC and for Zen in America. It was also the year that "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind" was published.

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The calendar accompanying this Myoju is printed on blue paper, representing the summer sky.

The views expressed in Myoju are not necessarily those of the Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community or its Abbot, Ekai Korematsu.

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Next Issue

The next issue of Myoju will be posted at the Autumn Equinox, on 20th March 2010. Contributions that support our practice are most welcome, including articles, book reviews, interviews, personal reflections, artwork and photographs. The content deadline is Friday 26th February. If you would like to contribute or advertise in the Autumn 2010 edition of Myoju email publications@jikishoan.org.au

Bright Pearl (Ikka-no-Myoju)



From Dogen Zenji's Shobogenzo, Book 1, Chapter 4
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 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". - Dogen Zenji

Sangha News

Aeroplanes, Temples and Trains

A business trip to Japan with Ekai Osho

On Sunday 27 September Ekai Osho and I embarked on a whirlwind three-day Jikishoan business trip to Japan. The purpose of the visit was to reconnect and close the circle with Miyashita Roshi at Shumucho (the Administration Office of Soto Zen Buddhism in Tokyo) after his visit to Australia to officiate at Jikishoan's Tenth Anniversary celebrations earlier this year; to visit Daijōji, Toshōji and Zuiōji temples; and also for Ekai Osho to renew his International Teacher certification. After landing at Narita airport early on Monday morning we began our Japan train experience (we were to spend much time on trains over the next three days) with the hour and a half journey into Tokyo and a taxi to the Tokyo Grand Hotel, where the Shumucho occupies several floors.

After a quick and delicious Japanese lunch we meet with Miyashita Roshi and a number of other Kyōka-Bu (Education Department) staff. Ekai Osho gave an overview of Jikishoan's practice, development, activities and plans for the future. We were also introduced to the Secretary General and Chief Auditor of the Soto organisation who were visiting Shumucho at the same time. Then we were immediately off to Shinagawa station to take the five-hour fast train trip to Kanazawa via Kyoto.

We arrived at Kanazawa in the evening so it was too late to travel to Daijōji that night. We checked into the Kanazawa Central Hotel, went out for a meal of soup and noodles and returned to our shared room to catch up on sleep.



After breakfast we took a taxi in the rain to Daijōji where we met with Azuma Roshi and Hojun (Haydn Halse). Hojun was recently ordained at Daijōji and is undertaking three years training there with Azuma Roshi as his teacher. Kaneda Roshi, who attended our tenth anniversary) was also there and we were able to meet briefly with him. Ekai Osho had a formal meeting with Azuma Roshi and I had the opportunity to spend some time with Hojun and talk about his experiences at Daijōji. Azuma Roshi gave us the generous gift of an onsen experience (Japanese spa) including a many course lunch at a wonderful resort close to the temple.

As it was the monks "day-off" Hojun and one of his fellow monks were able to share the experience with us.

Time was running short, so unfortunately we had to leave the onsen quickly without finishing all the lunch delicacies, to catch our next train connection from Kanazawa to Shin-Kurashiki via Okayama – a five-hour journey. Here we were met by the Abbott of Chosenji's wife, Mrs. Shinohara who drove us to the temple. After being warmly greeted by Seido Suzuki, Hokan Saito Roshi and others at the temple, including Genmyo Georgia Nichols and Senryu Paul Nichols from Dromana who were undertaking three months post-novice ordination training at the temple, Ekai Osho had discussions and meetings and I had the opportunity to speak with Georgia and Paul.



It was wonderful at the close of the day to sit zazen together with the group of Zen monastics in the monk's hall (Sodo) – with the packed earth floor of the original training monastery – before retiring for the night and a deep sleep.

We were woken at 4:00am to go to the Sodo for morning zazen accompanied by the sound of steady rain and the dawn birds. It was wonderful. Zazen was followed by the morning chanting service before an oryōki breakfast. After our farewells at the temple gate with Seido Suzuki Docho, Hokan Saito Roshi, Genmyo, Senryu and others from the community we recommenced our travels by train from Shin-Kurashiki via Okayama to Niihama.

From Niihama we went by taxi to Zuiōji Temple where we were received by and met with Tsugen Narasaki Roshi. At this meeting Ekai Osho received his teaching certification renewal endorsement. At the conclusion of this meeting, before leaving Zuiōji, Ekai Osho was able to have informal meetings with a number of other people he knew including the late Ikko Narasaki Roshi's sister, who is more than ninety years of age and still teaching traditional tea ceremony to her lay students and monks. He also met with his dharma brother Genyu Mori, who is Fusu Roshi at the temple.

With the formal business of the trip concluded it was time to kick up our heels with another train trip – this

time back to Okayama where we were met by Ekai Osho's mother and niece who drove us to Ekai's hometown of Yanahara – about an hour from Okayama. Ekai Osho had wanted to visit his father's grave but unfortunately it was raining too steadily and heavily to do so. Instead the four of us visited a simple onsen to soak our travel weary bodies. That evening I was very fortunate to share a family meal with Ekai's family, mother, brother, sister, nieces and nephews and their children. They were very welcoming and kind to me, and it was wonderful to see Ekai briefly reunited with his mother and family who were very happy to see him.

The family visit could only be a short sojourn and we were itching to just hit the road again and took the overnight bus to Tokyo, arriving at 6:40am to catch the train to Narita airport for an 11:30 departure to Singapore, a seven hour lay-over at Changi airport and arriving back in Melbourne at 9:00am on Friday 2 October. Not having had enough travel I took the short flight back to Canberra and Ekai left for his annual teaching in Bodh Gaya the next evening.

It was a privilege for me, in the role of President (Tsu) of Jikishoan to accompany Ekai Osho on the business trip and to gain a broader perspective and understanding of Jikishoan's Soto connections and relationships in Japan.

Vaughan Behncke
President (Tsu)

Our "Dream Temple"

Since our AGM in August there have been some significant changes to the way our finances are organised, changes which will allow Jikishoan to develop in a couple of important areas over the next 10 years. The Fusu Ryo, previously managed by one person who coordinated all Jikishoan's financial activities, has been expanded into distinct areas, each coordinated by a different person.

The first area, coordinated by Julie Martindale, is the day-to-day general activity account, which maintains the finances of all our ongoing regular activities. The Ballarat and Canberra groups (Patrick McCabe and Adrian Olley) also come under this umbrella.

The second area, coordinated by Luke Menzel, is the Chiko Ryo, which will focus on fundraising. Whilst we have always done some kind of fundraising in the past, this will become much more important in the future.

The third area, coordinated by Hannah Forsyth, is a new Special Purpose and Training account. This will be used to fund events such as our 10th anniversary celebration and for new training programs.

And last but not least, is the Jikishoan Building Fund account, coordinated by Naomi Richards. We are very pleased to announce that the Jikishoan Building Fund is now registered as a Deductible Gift Recipient with the Australian Taxation Office. This means that donations of \$2 or more specifically to the Building Fund can be tax deductible for the donors. Having this DGR registration is a huge step forward for us, made possible by the combined efforts (great and small) of

many members and friends over a number of years. It means we can begin the search for a building of our own in earnest. The current thinking around this is that a 3-bedroom house somewhere in the Melbourne metropolitan area, with room for a zendo inside and a bungalow out the back would be a good place to start. Imagine a slightly bigger version of the Footscray zendo.



So let's be inspired by the beautiful drawing of our "Dream Temple" and envisage the day when it becomes a reality. For more information about donating to the Jikishoan Building Fund please contact Julie Martindale or Naomi Richards.

Julie Martindale

Reflecting on Bodh Gaya

[*Editor: This year five people from our community accompanied Ekai Osho on his annual teaching trip to India.]*

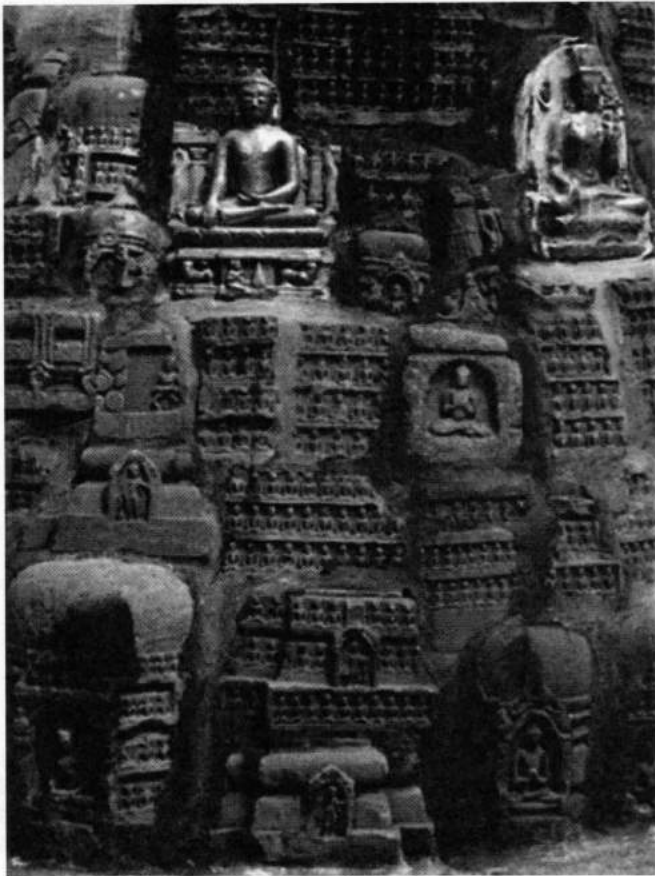
Very early on in our stay at the Burmese Vihar, an American man decided he would like to get to know us. Although he did not stay at the Vihar, he did come for breakfast and lunch and would spend the morning chatting with whomever from our group was around. Our group being Jim Holden, Patricia Costello (Trish), Katherine Yeo, John Chadderton, Jeremy Maher and Andrew Cawthorn.

His name is not important. It cannot be used, nor his picture, without his permission, and at this moment we are not in contact. But what is important enough to want to share is what he told us about ourselves.

Although he has returned to Bodh Gaya nearly every year, around October, for quite a number of years, he does not know Ekai Osho-san, and claims to have never met him. But from his encounter with us, he claims to know what kind of teacher Ekai Osho-san is.

He said that there is a saying: if you want to find out about the teacher, you look at the students. So he "looked" at us. He liked that we lived, related to each other and worked as a community; and that our community was confident and able to encompass all the Americans and Indians. He thought that this Zen monk, our teacher, had the skillful means and compassion to engender such a community.

Katherine Yeo



Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya, Bihar State

A Sri Lankan monk approaches me, a suggestion of smile at his mouth. He holds out his right hand and I see he holds a leaf in offering. I take it. He nods toward the tree behind me. The Bodhi Tree. I bow to him and him to me. We sit together in meditation under the tree. Connected by the leaf to our faith and joy in the practice.

Vulture Peak

Up a paved path constantly swept
The devotees climb.

Rising above the chai wallahs, the trinket sellers, the camera clickers,

To reach

Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha!

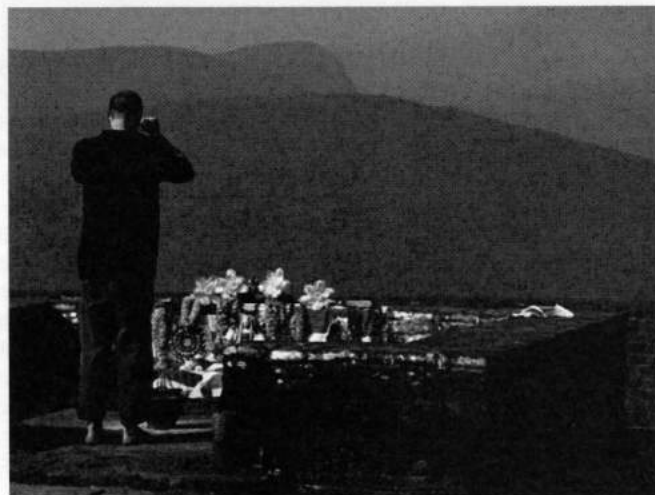
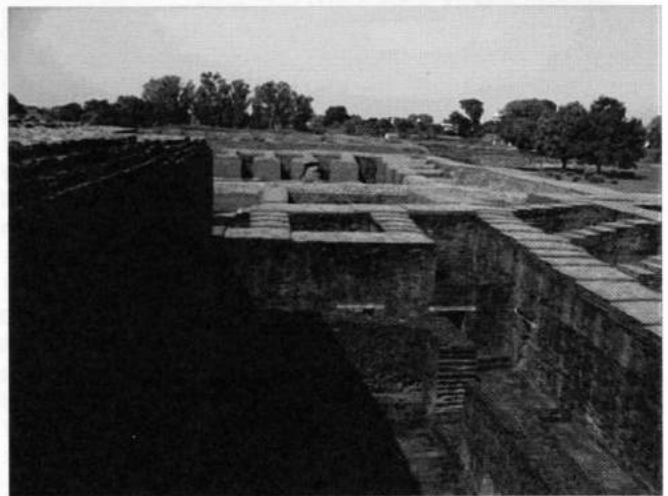
The Bridge

Crossing the Japanese sponsored bridge that links Bodhgaya with Sujata village on the other side of the River Phalgu a saddhu is observed sitting in the sandy riverbed in deep meditation. A piece of yellow-white cotton cloth covers his loins while a large umbrella holds off the heating sun. A begging bowl lies against his knee. A collection of logs burns on the sand in the 35-degree day. A small group circumambulate clockwise around it, chanting their farewells to a loved one almost gone now in the coals. Reaching a Thai monastery on the other side we find sanctuary from another day in India. A cup of cold water is given to us by a monk.

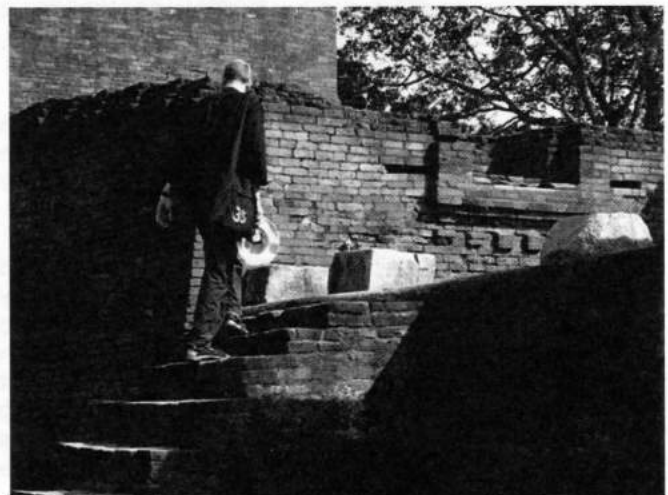
Jim Holden



[American Students and Locals]



[Offering Incense at Vulture Peak]



[Ruins of Nalanda University]

Welcome to Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community

Jikishoan is a growing community of people learning and practicing Zen meditation under the guidance of Ekai Korematsu Osho. Ekai has practiced and taught Zen Buddhism in Japan, the USA and India for over 30 years.

The name of the community encapsulates it's spirit: "Jiki" means straight forward or direct; "sho" means proof or satori; and "an" means hut. The practice is the proof – there is no other proof separate from that. The proof, satori or awakening does not come after you have finished – it is direct, here and now.

Jikishoan runs a range of programs 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 or on the website at www.jikishoan.org.au. We warmly welcome anyone who would like to know more about Zen Buddhism to attend any of these activities.



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Is Zen Dead in Japan Today? A Letter from Daijoji

Two weeks before my ordination in July this year (2009) I was going about my late morning duty, cleaning all the ash in the various incense bowls scattered throughout Daijoji. As I was walking by the Dharma Hall a young Japanese woman stopped me and asked the usual questions – where was I from, how long have I been / will be here, and what was I doing at Daijoji? These questions are so often asked that the answers come back by rote.

However this young woman took me by surprise. She was shocked and almost horrified to learn that I was at Daijoji to become a Buddhist monk. Tears started to roll down her face as she animatedly asked why was I in Japan when I should be in China, for samadhi no longer existed in Japan. True Buddhism was dead in Japan, she said. I told her as best as I could that true Buddhism lies within ones own heart no matter in what country you trained. She seemed happy with this response, wished me well and went on her way.

Considering that only a small fraction of the thousands of temples actually offer sanzenkai to their communities, it's easy to understand why people might believe this. In some ways Zen has become more a religion of ceremonies than a practice of meditation here in Japan. It has been said that Zen is being reborn in America, Europe, and now Australia, and some time in the future foreign monks will return to Japan to teach true Zen back to the Japanese. I don't agree with this. There are still strong practice monasteries here that foreigners can visit and experience. Daijoji is one; Hosshinji, Bukkokuji, Antaiji are others.

I've also recently met Itabashi Zenji, the abbot of Sojiji, and he was amazing. He truly personifies what we westerners sometimes think a Zen master should be like. I also think it is important for members of Jikishoan to practice in Japan, even if only for a week or two, so that they can gain an understanding of what monastic, or temple, life is really like. One of the things I think you'll find is how great the quality of our practice and our teacher's understanding truly is. It is also clear to me now that Jikishoan practices are completely in accord with Lord Buddha's and Dogen Zenji's spirit and teachings.

The great thing about monastic life in Japan is that you have the ability to really focus on your training and practice in every waking moment. A temple, probably more so than any other place, gives you that space to be aware of what is going on inside your own head without distractions from the outside world. You will also have the opportunity to raise the mind that seeks enlightenment (hotsu bodai shin) over and over during the course of the day. In essence the whole of Lord Buddha and Dogen Zenji's teaching come alive in a temple and present themselves in plain every day occurrences.

Zen is not dead in Japan. But don't take my word for it. Come and experience it for yourself. I'll be here waiting to help you.

Haydn Halse

New Education Programme for 2010

Over the last ten years Ekai Osho has been conducting classes every week. Hundreds of people have taken part in the Orientation classes, Deepening classes, One Day Workshops, Retreats and Sanzenkai. As 2010 approaches Ekai Osho feels that it is now time to change the emphasis of the courses from learning as a casual interest to a more formal program of Zen education.

The Japanese word for education is Kyoiku – Kyo meaning teaching and Iku meaning nurturing. For Ekai Osho, Zen education is concerned with spirituality and the nurturing of the community. He also feels that the teaching program should reflect Jikishoan's first aim -

To promote the teachings, practice and realisation of Shakyamuni Buddha in Australia for the welfare and peace of all.

The new program will offer Zen meditation training as well as a basic grounding in Buddhist education. The overall program has been organised more formally and a certificate of attainment will be issued for students who complete a unit of the course. The program will run in line with the state government school terms i.e. 4 ten-week terms.

While there are some new elements in the 2010 courses, the program is a development of existing course structures and builds on formats that have been so successful in the past.

The program structure will be based on three activity areas:

- A. Formal Classes - Entry -1
Deepening Practice - 2 & 3
One-Day Workshops
- B. Sanzenkai - Melbourne, Canberra and Ballarat Zendos.
- C. Retreats.

The course curriculum structure also falls into 3 main areas:

- o Practice (including posture, meditation, the mudras)
- o Zen Perspectives (including, Right Practice, Buddhism as Philosophy, The Three Treasures)
- o Integrated Practice and Study (including Sutra chanting, Tea ceremony, & retreat practice)

In Zen training, what you do is primary. Therefore, the basic criteria for certification will be attendance. The training also involves various evaluations such as interviews with the teacher and the creation of a logbook to record practice activities. Attendance by students in other areas of Jikishoan life at ryo level, Sanzenkai activities and retreats will also be included in the training.

Informal Attendance.

It is still possible to attend courses on an informal basis if that is your preference. If you are a Jikishoan

member you can offer dana for your attendance and if you are a non-member you can pay by half term (5 weeks - \$80) or full term (10 weeks - \$160)

Courses begin in the last week of January 2010. A brochure with detail of dates, times, costs, curriculum and recommended texts will be available in the early weeks of January. For enquiries please contact Hannah Forsyth on 9687 6981.

It is clear that in Zen education, receiving more information or merely conventional learning is not regarded as a good form of education... Reading, writing, and conventional knowledge are necessary, but so are "Drawing water and carrying firewood," as Pang Yun claimed.

Masato Mitsuda, San Francisco State University

Hannah Forsyth

Millipedes and Rain

Retreat no 32 - November 2009

When the rain fell on Wednesday, it just fell straight down. And we enjoyed it very much. Rain is a special thing these days. As we sat in the zendo, or stood underneath the zendo awning, the sight and sound of this steady penetrating rain was a great pleasure and somehow very supportive to the zazen practice.

When millipedes travel they go in straight lines. Where are they going? There seemed to be many hundreds of shiny black millipedes making their way here and there all over the retreat centre - along and across the paths, up between the planks in the verandah floor.

At one point during Chosan, a millipede was making its way across the centre of the zendo floor. Its trajectory was a straight line directly towards our president, sitting on his cushion.

Suddenly its course was altered by a quick flick of a hand and the creature was sliding off at right angles and disappeared under a zabuton.

*"A sense of direction is very important!"
- Ekai Osho*



Shona Innes

Changing Faces in Ballarat

Spring arrived in Ballarat with it came a heavy downpour of rain. The town turned green and flowers burst into bloom. Our Lake Wendouree began to fill. Then in mid-November we experienced a heat wave, quickly drying everything out, so we began to turn brown again. However, now in late November, we have rain again. Spring is a time of change and new beginnings.



Our Ballarat Sangha is also experiencing a time of change and new beginnings. With Millicent and Lorraine both expressing a desire to hand over to "new blood", we now have Gareth Jones and Peter Blackman taking over leadership and Patrick McCabe taking on the Treasurer's duties. Patrick has spent a number of hours with Millicent learning his new role. We wish them all well in their roles.

Lorraine will continue in her role of Teacher's Assistant in Ballarat. We are all very pleased to see Millicent making a steady recovery from her recent surgery. Another proposed change is to return to conducting sanzenkai on a weeknight, three weeks of the month, with the fourth week remaining on Sundays when Ekai Osho visits us. A number of people and some past attendees have expressed a desire for this, as Sunday proves difficult or impossible for some. We in Ballarat wish all of Jikishoan people a very peaceful and happy holiday season and look forward to 2010 with great anticipation.

"As my eyes search the prairie I feel the summer in the spring"

(Anonymous, Chippewa - Native American)

Lorraine Collishaw

A New Altar and Jukai in Canberra

September brought a busy weekend of activities for Jikishoan in Canberra. A large and attentive group heard Ekai Osho Public Lecture at Ainslie's Corroboree Park hall on the night of Friday 18 September. The next day forty-two people participated in a One Day Workshop at the same venue conducted by Ekai Osho. That night Ekai Osho, Shundo Denovan and members of the Canberra committee enjoyed dinner at the home of President Rob Beasley.

On the morning of Sunday 19 September the first group of Canberra-based members of Jikishoan took their Precepts from Ekai Osho. Adrian Olley, Karen Dahl and Ferro Fabbri made their bows before the newly completed Canberra zendo altar. Adrian Olley applied the finishing touches to the new altar only hours before the weekend's activities began. In addition, Adrian completed a beautiful incense-burner table and Buddha box in time for the precepts ceremony. Jikishoan Canberra President Rob Beasley had also been busy in the workshop, and Ekai Osho used a table he had made for the Zendo during the service.



After the ceremony, Jikishoan Zen Buddhist Community Canberra held its first AGM. Gratitude was expressed to the inaugural committee for its assistance in establishing Jikishoan in Canberra. A new committee was elected for the 2009-10 year, consisting of:

Martha Sear (President)
Ferro Fabbri (Vice President)
Vaughan Behncke (Secretary/Public Officer)
Adrian Olley (Treasurer)
David Jones (Ordinary Member)
Rob Beasley (Ordinary Member)
Nora Carne (Ordinary Member)
Takako Mizogami (Ordinary Member)
Kathy Kituai (Ordinary Member)

Martha Sear



The People of Jikishoan

I'm Annie Bolitho and I've been a member of Jikishoan for about four years. At the AGM I was encouraged to stand for the committee, but didn't get quite enough votes to be elected. Then Hannah Forsyth decided to stand down, and in November I filled the casual vacancy her resignation created. The role I'm taking on is almost like HR (Human Resources), called Ninjibu in Japanese I believe. The Jikishoan committee and Ryo coordinators make up the working engine of the organisation.

As a newcomer to the role, I'm looking forward to finding out how everyone's going and what motivates them, what they see as important. In the committee and broader organisation there's a formidable range of skills from media and first aid to finance and management, and it's my job to find out what's there and how Jikishoan's development and these skills may best be aligned.

In order to undertake this role I've resigned a volunteer position as mentor in the Future Sustainability Leaders program. My experience in that role leads me to believe that mentoring in Jikishoan could be more strongly developed in order to create the kind of 'succession', which is required in any voluntary group.

If you've got any insights or views on 'personnel affairs' at Jikishoan, whether positive, neutral or critical, I'd like to speak to you.



Annie Bolitho

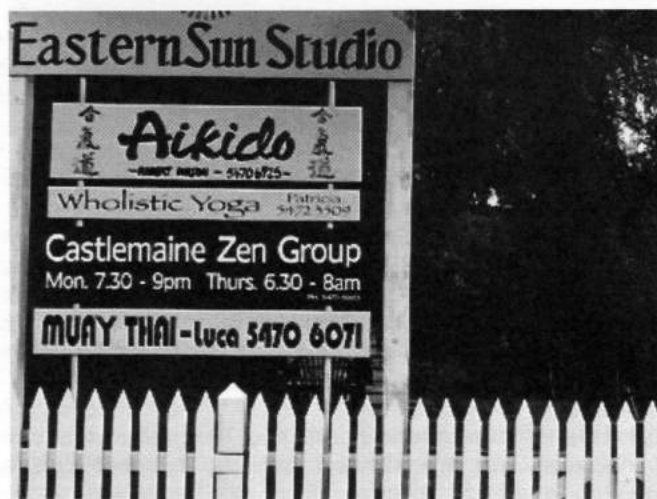
Meditation Practice in Castlemaine

The genesis of the Castlemaine Zen Group began about eight years ago. Having built a Zendo at my home for personal practice, I ran a few notices in a local school newsletter inviting people to meditate during the week. Over the years several people came along, some attended regularly, most came and went. George Duckett has been a regular since May 2006. In July 2007 Cherry Tennent and several others then joined us. George and Cherry have become members of Jikishoan.

A couple of years ago there were four or five of us sitting regularly twice a week. The home Zendo seats six and was becoming quite full. It was decided

amongst ourselves to become more public and find an appropriate practice venue. In May 2008, as a group we attended a Thursday evening Sanzenkai with Jikishoan to experience the practice form offered and seek Ekai Korematsu Osho's advice about becoming an affiliate group of Jikishoan.

At this stage we had located a suitable venue and settled on a trial sitting twice a week for six months. Monday evening at 7.30 and Thursday morning at 6.30 were agreed on as regular meditation times. After six months of continued practice together with a formatted schedule, Cherry then designed a flyer and displayed several in and about Castlemaine. Lots of people made enquiries and many came along to experience meditation, a few continue to sit regularly. We suggest a four-dollar donation to cover our modest costs. On average we now receive about one new enquiry per fortnight. George has been practicing in the role of Doan and Cherry makes and serves tea. My role has been as Kaan. As people continue to attend regularly we make available the opportunity of participating in assisting roles.



Our group gathers four times a year to discuss practice requirements and to meet any changes as they arise. At present our venue and sitting formats remain supportive and there is a high level of mature interest from the people attending each week. The Castlemaine Zen Group continue to meditate together in the Eastern Sun Studio at 133 Duke Street Castlemaine throughout the school year. For further information contact Peter on 5470 5923.

Peter Watts

Membership

We are pleased to welcome the following new members of Jikishoan:

Melbourne: Rebecca Howie

Canberra: Peter Bissaker, Bret Cooper, Tony Shields (resigned from Melbourne and joined Canberra).

Ekai Korematsu Osho and the JZBC Committee

On Being New Buddhists

We are fortunate to be people who had the privilege of choosing their religion, rather than having a religion inflicted on them by family and society. So we have chosen a religion that makes sense to us and which we follow by our own volition. But having chosen Buddhism, we are also confronted by the substantial work involved in establishing it in a country for which it is a new religion. Being new there is very little infrastructure here. We are just now building temples and libraries and bringing out teachers from countries such as Japan and Tibet where Buddhism has been established for over a millennia.

We are also facing new kinds of issues, because, by and large, we are not monks and nuns and we are not living in monasteries. In traditional Buddhist societies the Dharma was preserved in large institutions, and frequently monks were amongst the very few literate people in society. The overwhelming majority of lay people could not read and so the type of Buddhism that they practised was not text based and did not involve a lot of discussion of abstruse philosophy. It was based on devotion and giving material goods to the monastery, receiving blessings and making merit. It involved pilgrimage to holy places and the passing down of oral traditions of legends of saints and miracles. It involved following the lamas' or priests' advice and living ethically and not harming anyone.

By contrast monks, and in some countries also nuns, would memorise, debate and teach scriptures. In Tibet, learned teachers would compose commentaries on texts, cultivate wealthy donors and build more and more large institutions so as to preserve their particular lineages. Benefactors would fund expensive ceremonies to promote their own prosperity or health, or the fortunate future rebirth of a person who died.

In traditional Buddhist societies, the demarcation between ordained and lay people was clear and profound. The ordained understood and could teach the Dharma and perform the rituals and lived in monasteries and temples. Lay people lived outside monasteries, did not read texts, and engaged in non-text based devotional practices. We, on the other hand, occupy some sort of middle ground, in between both of these traditional types. We are literate, we study the Dharma, debate the philosophy, and may write commentaries on texts. We also often have roles as teachers and builders of institutions. On the other hand, few of us live in monasteries, most of us are not celibate monks or nuns, we do not observe 300 vows, we have families, businesses, and lives outside of our Dharma centre. Sometimes there are contradictions between the views of our teachers, based on their traditional values and expectations, and our actual situation.

I became a Buddhist 26 years ago, which is long enough to have some experience of this topic. One of the things that I have observed that can arise as an issue, is the idea of progress or spiritual development beyond what can be reasonably offered by a normal Dharma centre. A normal Dharma centre will offer regular teachings and meditations and retreats, and after some years what can happen is a kind of plateau effect. We have done all this, and where do we go to

from here? The Dharma centres do not provide the full time immersion in textual study that a traditional monastery offers. They often have a largely introductory role because there is a limit to the amount of Buddhism you can learn in one or two classes a week. There is also a demand to accommodate the needs and inexperience of new students. At the same time, the Dharma centre provides an important base for the community and the teachers attached to it.

What I suggest we need to do is to take our own spiritual development in our own hands and while continuing to support and attend the Dharma centre, at the same time undertake other kinds of study or different roles that push one a little. If you want to polish something, use sandpaper. There are a lot of ways in which we can grow and change by engaging with the challenges of putting Buddhism into practice in our community or in advanced research.

This year I completed a PhD, which was a study of a remote temple on the Tibetan border that has a beautiful and famous Avalokiteshvara (Kuan Yin) image that attracts pilgrimage from across the whole Western Himalayan region. A PhD is a four to five year commitment to achieving something that will make an original contribution to knowledge. It pushes you. You have to expand your ideas and grow.

Other ways in which I see Western Buddhists taking on challenges that will push them further include the Jikishoan students who taught meditation to prisoners in Victorian jails for a few years. The Buddhist Council of Victoria also runs programs to teach Buddhism in primary schools. Communicating the Dharma to very small children must also be a challenge.

From my side, having completed the PhD and finally quitting nearly all committees, I am doing performance poetry in pubs. This is a massive challenge as I have to get my insights and images across the footlights to a group of sometimes slightly drunk people. It's also fun and I am getting invitations to different events now, so it even seems to be a little bit successful.

Obviously, everyone has unique qualities and abilities and your challenge may be completely different. Not everyone wants to perform poetry in pubs! But if you can, that's quite big. Not everyone wants to teach meditation to prisoners, but it's a great thing to do. There are many opportunities to contribute to the wider Buddhist community through such things as the Buddhist Council of Victoria and I swear, sitting on committees is also a challenge. It is up to us to take ownership of our spiritual development and get up off that plateau.

Dr Di Cousens

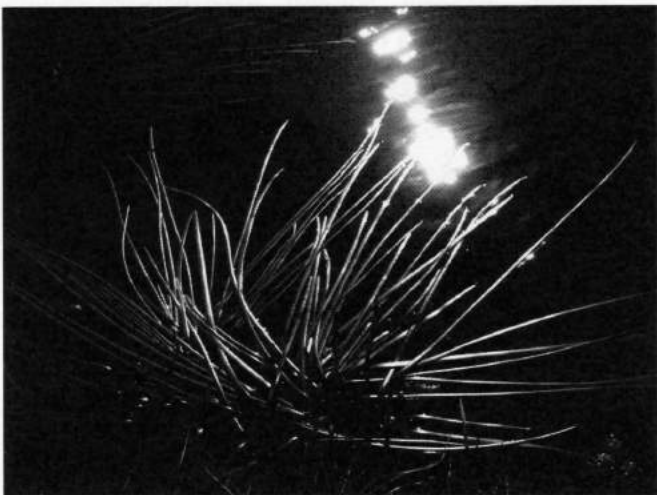
[Di has a PhD in Himalayan Studies from Monash University. She was the Director of the Melbourne Sakya Centre for ten years and is a past Vice Chair of the Buddhist Council of Victoria, committee member of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils and Buddhist representative on the Victorian State Government's Multifaith Advisory Group.]

Ownership

As I awoke in my bus watching the light creep into the sky I became aware that I was surrounded by ants - in my bed, cupboards, ceiling, floor, walls. "Aaargh get out. This is MY space". Resenting this invasion I thought about Bosnia and East Timor, (later — Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Israel). I looked at my sense of violation. "This is MY home these ants have no right to take over MY home." All the ants saw was a guy-rope leading to new territory. Perhaps they needed a new nest and decided to explore. Maybe my boundary markers were not clear to them. As I let go of my irritation and saw us all as having rights to space, I was able to remove them with a towel wash-cloth (they stick to the bobbles lessening the chance of injury). I firmly suggested they would find more food elsewhere. I was unwilling to share my small space with them. They were not welcome!

Summer

The view from the back window of my motor home overlooking the River Murray is idyllic. I am at one of the many river bends, viewing the predawn time of no colour, when the water stillness responds to the merest movement of water, fowl and air. Slowly colours envelop the river. Pelicans, Moor Hens, varied Hybrid Ducks climb the banks foraging for a treat of human junk food. Later the first speedboat-tied skiers stir the water into a daylong dance.



I experience days of this uninterrupted view. Until the afternoon I look out onto children, bicycles, adults peeling in and out of wet suits, sun chairs, blue van oozing water-skiing equipment towing a boat trailer. Babies, baby pools, baby pens, laughter, squeals, yells, baby-fear.

My attitude stuns me. My demanding ego has me by the throat. "I paid extra for this view." "They're using the picnic table I use!" "What right has any holiday maker to impinge on what I've claimed as my piece of river!" I'm face to face with my own embryo war. — See any world conflict flickering across our TV screens. My judging response to these thoughts as totally unreasonable, does nothing to change my attitude. Clearly seeing the effect of my feelings of outrage upon my body surprises me. Observing my feelings. They are feelings. They have no existence outside of my mind! I do not own the embankment, the view, the

River Murray. As I allow my resentment to float away, my energy changes. I am able to see the people in front of my motor home for what they are. Families on holiday having fun with each other. Their presence is a gift in my journey towards self-knowledge.

From my perspective all our thoughts and actions alter our world. As more and more of us become aware of our victim, perpetrator, or, on the fence stance, we can alter it. I look at these two stories on my attitudes towards what I consider to be my property, observing how my insistence on the rights of ownership can lead to varying forms of violence. Whatever the justification for my story is, I can change *my* perception. In this way, lessening my own insipient violence and by association, perhaps the violence of those around me. I find self-responsibility is an empowering challenging way to live, filling me with humility, pain, compassion, joy and immense gratitude for being alive.

17th May 1997 — 19th October 2009
Cherry Tennant ©

November Retreat

Waning days of Spring
rooster heralds
waxing Summer Moon
earth receives
thunder given rain.

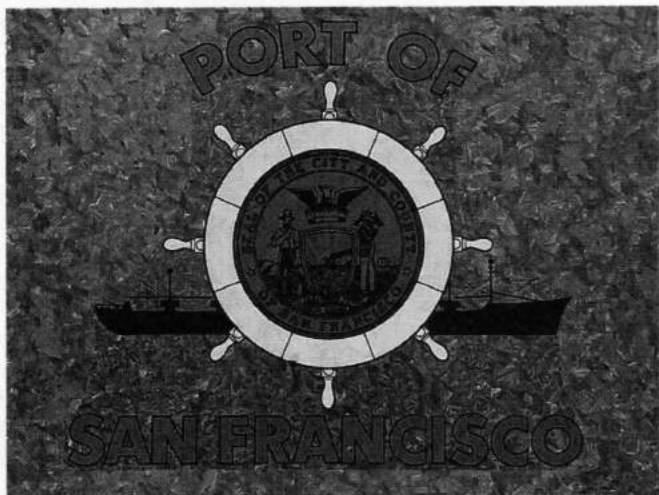
Vaughan Behncke

Oryoki Bowls

Wrapping Oryoki bowls
for years not learning
to tie the bow.
Thought a simple knot
would do.
Sitting beside me
my Teacher
by example taught me.
In perfecting the tying
of the bow letting go of
an inner knot.

Vaughan Behncke





Tassajara was bought with the intention that it would become a training monastery, modelled on traditional forms with three month training periods, with one or two terms a year, and when it was not being used for this purpose it could be used as a resort. That was the original intention. Of course, before it was bought it was a resort where rich people would go to enjoy the natural hot springs. Ed Brown who is well known for the Tassajara cookbooks and bread book was the cook employed there before the community bought it. He was interested in Zen, stayed on after the purchase, and eventually became Suzuki Roshi's student.

Getting back to my path to Zen, I had no doubt about the teachings of Buddhism. They had an impact on me when I was young, but which way should I go. First I began studying Pure Land Buddhism, but the thing that appealed to me about Zen was that you were encouraged to study Buddhism through experience and not in a disconnected, intellectual kind of way. Coming to this realisation was a turning point for me.

Finding Suzuki Roshi's book that day in Telegraph Street in Berkeley and being in San Francisco at that time was critical.

Through meeting and getting to know Mrs. Suzuki and other people in the community I learnt a lot about Suzuki Roshi. I could see in their eyes, through their practice, how they had received his teachings.

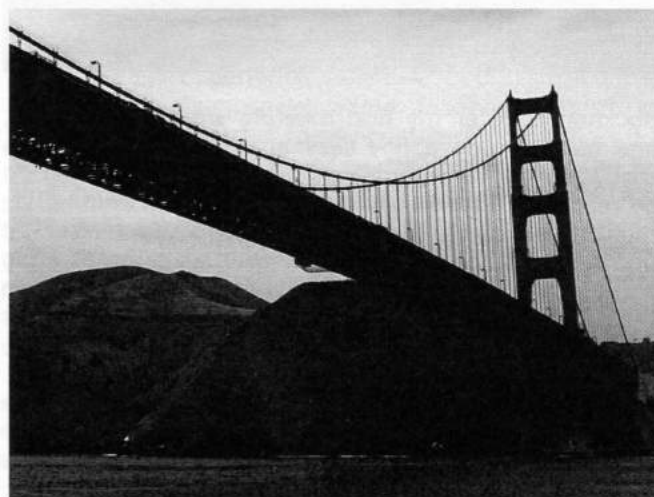
At the first seven day sesshin I went to, when I was listening to Richard Baker's teisho each day, I noticed it was all about psychology and this had little resemblance to "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind" to me. At my first dokusan with Richard Baker, he asked me why I was there. I told him I was drawn to Zen and that when the time was right, after studying, I wanted to be ordained. He asked me if I wanted him to ordain me. It was a very surprising offer. I said, "No, thank you". It didn't feel right some how to me, even though he was Suzuki Roshi's successor. He was very kind, and I think he tried to understand what was best for me, and that is when he recommended me to his new teacher, Kobun Chino Roshi.

Kobun Chino helped Richard Baker a lot after Suzuki Roshi passed away and Richard became Abbot of the

SFZC. Kobun was based in Los Altos, south of San Francisco, at the Haiku Zendo. He originally came to San Francisco in 1967 to help Suzuki Roshi with his plans to turn Tassajara into a training monastery. Suzuki Roshi contacted him through Eiheiiji, based on recommendations he'd received from people who had met him there. Kobun Chino was a teacher in training at Eiheiiji at that time. Suzuki Roshi invited him to San Francisco for just for two years, because it takes at least that long to establish the monastic practice and the structures to support that, including the buildings, such as the zendo which had to be constructed according to certain specifications. He didn't come as the main teacher, but more as an assistant to the main teacher Tatsugami Roshi, who had served for the longest time as Ino at Eiheiiji. In fact I think he was Ino Roshi under Kumazawa Zenji there for more than 25 years. Suzuki Roshi was able to invite him to San Francisco for six months, for the inaugural training period at Tassajara. After two years Kobun Chino went back to Japan. However, Suzuki Roshi couldn't conduct the city centre and Tassajara by himself. He needed other assistant teachers, so Katagiri Roshi and Yoshida Roshi were invited, and Kobun Chino was asked to come back a second time.

Suzuki Roshi opened the Los Altos zendo in 1963 at the invitation of some people at Stanford University. He'd given a public lecture at the university that had attracted a lot of people. So he was invited back to lead the sittings, and that was how the Los Altos zendo started. Suzuki Roshi would go to Haiku zendo every Wednesday evening, and stay at Marianne Derby's house. They would have their first sit on the Wednesday night, and his talks in the living room, or in later years in the zendo, were recorded and became the source for "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind".

Suzuki Roshi kept going to Los Altos from '63 to '67 and then at some point Kobun Chino started helping him by leading the sittings down there. The people in the Los Altos community liked Kobun, because he was young and very kind natured. When Kobun Chino went back to Japan the people in Los Altos really wanted him back. He was keen to return to San Francisco too, but back in Japan his teacher Koei Chino Roshi of Kotaiji was concerned he was losing his successor, so of course he was opposed to this. When Kobun Chino decided to go he did so knowing that he was breaking that tie with his teacher.



On his return to San Francisco Kobun Chino was installed as the Abbot of Haiku Zendo with a mountain seat ceremony conducted by Suzuki Roshi in 1969. My first meeting with him was five years later in 1974 at his house near Haiku Zendo. The zendo was designed and built by Suzuki Roshi and his students in the two-car garage of Marianne Derby's home. After she died Keido Les Kaye, who was also an ordained student of Suzuki Roshi, bought the house for his family and allowed the garage to continue to be used for the zendo. So Kobun Chino lived a couple of blocks away with his first wife Harriet. At that first meeting I explained my intentions to him, and I think he liked me and took me as a student. My intention was to be ordained. He suggested I practice with him, doing the 7-day sesshin he led in a youth hostel on the Hidden villa ranch not far from the Haiku zendo. He also had a group in Santa Cruz that he went to every Wednesday and led 7-day sesshin for. There was also the Spring Mountain sangha in Mendocino Country north of Sacramento that he helped establish at this time. In those days I was still living in Berkeley so I would just do sesshin with those three groups with Kobun Chino.



Six months after my first meeting with Kobun Chino, and having done a few sesshin with him, I told him that I wanted to be ordained but didn't know when I'd be ready for this. He said he'd ordain me in another six months and fixed a date, almost two years after I'd first begun zazen in San Francisco. This came as a big surprise, because I had a certain idea about ordination that you'd need to study for many, many years. I was 26 when I was ordained by Kobun Chino at Haiku Zendo, where "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind" was born. It was Easter Sunday, 1976. Usually you receive a black robe and a black okesa, but he gave me the brown okesa that he wore at Eihei-ji, and that was quite a surprise. When he ordained me he gave me

basically three things — oryoki, rakusu and okesa. The robe he gave me was made of very fine thin silk, and he told me it was his grand master's robe.

At the time I thought the way Kobun Chino had ordained me was not the traditional way. He'd cut the tie with his teacher, and I think he'd also cut his ties with the Sotoshu's traditions in a way. With no real connection to his temple anymore he had to find his own, rather unconventional, way. His teaching was like that too. He had a very magnetic personality, and was good at attracting people to the path. There is something though that I'm particularly grateful to him for. Tokudo is one of the milestones for a monk in training. This is the initial ordination, where you become a novice. The next is Shuso, when you establish a community of practice, then Shiho which is transmission, and the next is Zuisse which is a public ceremony where your monastic rank of Osho or Abbot in the Soto line is formally recognised. I got a sense of these milestones from Kobun Chino, and he also told me that after two or three years in America it was important for me to go back to Japan for proper training. He said there were three temples in Japan where I should continue my studies. The first was Eihei-ji, so I went there for a year. The second was Antai-ji, which is not an official monastery but a temple with a very strong emphasis on zazen practice. The last one was Zui-ji, which is a training monastery in Niihama.

When Kobun Chino was at graduate school in Kyoto he would go to Antai-ji to sit with Kodo Sawaki Roshi, so he had a good appreciation of the importance of zazen. After graduating from Komazawa University he did postgraduate study at Kyoto University. Prior to this he had done monastic study at Eihei-ji. His model was very much the Antai-ji style, Kodo Sawaki Roshi's style, but not the same intensity. For example, he never used the kyosaku. Antai-ji was an interesting model to adopt because it was not monastic, but rather more oriented to the lay community. This is important to consider when taking Zen to western societies, and something I think Kobun Chino understood very clearly.

Kobun Chino's brother was the Abbot of Joko-ji in Kamo. On the other side of the river is his mother temple, Kotai-ji. When Keibun Otagawa Roshi visited the United States with his new wife and to see his brother, Kobun Chino introduced me and asked him to look after me. So Keibun Otagawa Roshi took me in as his student, and I was most grateful for that. This was in 1980, four years after Kobun Chino had ordained me. These two brothers were totally different. Keibun Otagawa Roshi was older and very structured in his approach, very dignified. Everything had to be done the proper way with him. Kobun Chino was very relaxed in comparison.

Keibun Roshi told me once that while he was respected for the formal, traditional ways he adhered to, his brother Kobun Chino was loved.

I thought that really encapsulated the differences between these two brothers very well. I discovered when I got back to Japan that Kobun Chino had not registered my ordination, but in order to have proper training in Japan this had to be done. So in December 1980 I went to Joko-ji to become Keibun Otagawa

Roshi's student, and in March the following year I was re-ordained as a novice by him. Living in the temple and learning from him was essential preparation for entering the monastic education system.

There are two lines or streams in the Sotoshu training system — one is the Eiheiji line and the other is the Soujiji line, representing the two head temples. The problem was that Jokoji belongs to the Sojiji line while Kotaiji, Chino Koei Roshi's line belongs to Eiheiji. Chino Koei Roshi was Kobun Chino's master, and in fact he had adopted Kobun as his son when he was twelve and changed his name from Otogawa. So I was interested in going to Eiheiji but Keibun Hojo wasn't so comfortable with that, not only because it was the Sojiji line but also the Abbot of Sojiji was Keibun Hojo's "dharma uncle", Kinei Otogawa Zenji, who's temple was in Niigata City. My preference for Eiheiji didn't fit with the plan he had in mind for me. Even so, after he ordained me Keibun Hojo introduced me to the Abbot of Sojiji and explained my situation to him — that Kobun Chino originally ordained me, and that Keibun Hojo was just looking after me for him, but that Kobun's intention was for his student to go to Eiheiji where he was trained. In October 1981 I went to Eiheiji. I was there for one year and after that I entered Zuoji for a further year, and then in 1983 I returned to San Francisco. Having completed my novice training with Shuso ceremony at Zuoji, I returned to Japan every year for three months in the summer to continue my training. I also pursued my personal study of Bendoho, Master Dogen's original way.



So that was the path I chose, and certain experiences came with that. A purely monastic path would have given me a different view perhaps, because in a sense it's all mapped out for you. Taking the monastic model and applying it in a lay context is a real challenge. In western society the tendency is to over emphasise the therapeutic or psychological benefits of Zen practice, while in Japan there is almost a total negation of these aspects. People in Japan don't approach Buddhism in terms of what they can get from it so much. "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind" is like that. It doesn't really give people what they think they want. Approaching Buddhism from an academic viewpoint is something that also developed in San Francisco to get people thinking about Buddhism. Suzuki Roshi's teachings went beyond this.

While I was at Eiheiji in 1981 I met Ikko Narasaki Roshi, who had gone there from Zuoji for a three-year term as Godo, responsible for the monastic education. He was leaving just as I arrived. It was a brief encounter, but his influence on me was enormous, and would lead me on my next steps as a young monk.

[To be continued]

Our Practice is Japanese

[An edited extract from a dharma talk given by Zoketsu Norman Fischer on 8 November 2009, at Green Gulch Farm Zen Center. Printed with permission.]

We think of Suzuki Roshi as a very traditional Zen Master, trained in the old fashioned way, and in part maybe that's true. But it's not exactly right because he also studied at a time when some of the great Buddhist and intellectual thinkers in Japan were digesting the massive cultural and political changes undertaken by and affecting their country in the 20th Century. I think when he came here to San Francisco, he wanted to find a way to test out and understand the things he'd studied, differently, in a western culture.

I think this is what he tried to communicate to his young American students who were really in a state of shock and disillusionment with the culture that they'd been brought up to believe was reasonable and good. Who all of a sudden came to feel that it was terrible and shocking. He came and met them at just that moment in their lives, in our lives. He wanted to teach them Dogen's way - the Japanese way of Buddhism. I don't think he did this because he was nationalistic. There were Zen teachers who came here with a very nationalistic spirit, but I don't think he had that spirit, that he was nationalistic in that way. I think he really felt that there was something unique and important about the Japanese dimension of Buddhism. Something that was exactly needed and useful to us and to the world at that particular moment. I don't think he had a plan or knew exactly what it was that he was doing, and if you listen to his lectures they're often extremely ruminative. Like he was figuring it out as he went along.

I came to the Zen Centre a little while before Suzuki Roshi's death, so I didn't really practice with him. I practiced most with Dick Baker who was the Abbot here...and he had lived in Japan for a few years. He lived there because Suzuki Roshi sent him there. Because he thought that all of his senior students should really experience Japanese Buddhism from the inside. Dick often spoke about Japanese culture and how it was in contrast to our culture. I don't know if he actually said it in so many words, but you got the idea that Japanese culture was good, beautiful, sane, true, and real. While our culture was crude, confused, abstract, violent and messed up. We all thought that anyway. Suzuki Roshi was trying to convey a humane and tender Japanese feeling about life, and that feeling pervades our practice, in everything we do.

The full talk can be found at www.sfzc.org.

Other talks by Norman Fischer are also at www.everydayzen.org

Soto Kitchen

Here are some more delicious recipes from the Tenzo Ryo selected by Kiyoko Taylor.
We hope that you enjoy them!

Cold Potato and Onion Soup

Ingredients (serves 4 - 5)

Potato, roughly chopped	400g
Onion, roughly chopped	400g
Garlic, sliced	15g
Olive oil	1 tbsp
Tahini	1 tbsp
Water	500ml
Soy milk	500ml
Salt, plus more to taste	1 tsp
Pepper	
Parsley	

Method:

1. Heat oil in a pot over medium heat. Add garlic and onions and sauté, stirring until the onions are soft.
2. Put the onion one side of the pot. Add potato and put the onion on top.
3. Pour water in and add salt. Put a lid on and cook (or rather steam) vegetables until soft.
4. When they are cooked, put Tahini and work with a blender. Adjust taste.
5. Cool and mix with soymilk.
6. Serve with finely chopped parsley.

Note that this can be served hot. In that case, do not boil after adding soymilk.

Tomato Salad

Ingredients (serves 4)

Tomato, medium, sliced	4
Parsley, finely chopped	2-3 tbsp
Orange juice, freshly squeezed	1
Red wine vinegar	2-3 tsp
Salt	½ tsp
Black pepper	¼ tsp

Method:

1. Mix orange juice with red wine vinegar and mix with tomatoes together with parsley
2. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.



Cucumber in Dill Yoghurt Salad

Cucumber
Yoghurt, plain
Dill
Salt

Method:

1. Slice cucumbers thinly and sprinkle with salt.
2. Leave for 15 - 20 minutes.
3. Gently squeeze water from the cucumber slices.
4. Mix with yoghurt and sprinkle with dill.





Calendar of Events January to March, 2010

Weekly Activities

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Location	Contact
Sundays	Weekly	5:30-7:30pm	Sanzenkai (Except 3 rd January and 21 st March) - Zazen and kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk. For beginners, members and friends.	103 Evans St, Brunswick	Jinesh/Martin
Sundays	Weekly	5:30-7:30pm	Sanzenkai - Ekai Osho present 17 th January, 21 st February and 28 th March	Ballarat	Lorraine
Thursdays	Weekly	7:00-9:00pm	Sanzenkai (Except 7 th January)	Footscray	Mark
January					
Saturday - Sunday	9 th -10 th		Buddhist Summer School	Melbourne	Hannah
Sunday	10 th	5:30-7:30pm	Sunday Sanzenkai resumes	Brunswick	Jinesh/Martin
Tuesday	12 th	7:00-9:30pm	Committee Meeting	Footscray	Mark
February					
Tuesday	16 th	7:00-9:30pm	Committee Meeting	Footscray	Mark
March					
Tuesday	16 th	7:00-9:30pm	Committee Meeting	Brunswick	Mark
Sunday	21 st	12:00-3:00pm	Annual Picnic (No Sanzenkai)	To be confirmed	Mark

Addresses

Ballarat

St Cuthbert's Hall, Ballarat
West Uniting Church,
Cnr Sturt Street and Elliott
Street... Enter via Elliott St

Brunswick

Australian Shiatsu College,
103 Evans Street, Brunswick

Canberra

Corroboree Park Community
Centre, Patterson Street,
Ainslie.

Footscray /Jikishoan Zendo

Address available upon
application for a course or
program.

Dean

Adekate Fellowship Centre,
Dean-Creswick Road, Dean.
Near Ballarat 130 km West of
Melbourne.

Contact Information

Teacher & General Enquiries

Ekai Korematsu Osho
via Hannah Forsyth (*Jisha*)
(03) 96876981

President (*Tsusu*) & Canberra Secretary (*Kanji*)

Vaughan Behncke
0427-319378

Vice-President (*Kannin*) Membership (*Rokuji*)

Naomi Richards
(03) 93804774

Finance (*Fusu*)

Julie Martindale
(03) 94992141

Secretary (*Shoji*) & Annual Picnic

Mark Summers
(03) 54284859

Personnel Affairs (*Ninji*)

Annie Bolitho
(03) 94951412

Welfare (*Fukushi*)

Kiyoko Taylor
(03) 95008544

Education (*Kyoka*)

Jinesh Wilmot
(03) 94804849

Publications (*Shuppan*)

Paul Harris
(03) 94192203
publications@jikishoan.org.au

Zendo Activities (*Ino*)

Martin Landolt
0407-227997

Retreats

Brian Osborne (*Ino Ryo*)
(03) 98532686

Library & Archive

Andrew Holborn
0432-904066

Merchandise

Luke Menzel (*Chiko Ryo*)
0433-237293

Ballarat

Director (*Kansu*)
Gareth Jones
(03) 53344062

Teacher's Assistant (*Jisha*)
Lorraine Collishaw
(03) 53332063

Post

Jikishoan Zen Buddhist
Community
PO Box 475
Yarraville, Victoria, 3013

contact@jikishoan.org.au

Website

www.jikishoan.org.au
webmaster@jikishoan.org.au

Canberra Activities and Contact Information

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Location	Contact
Sundays	Weekly	5:30-7:30pm	Sanzenkai ** Resumes 17 th January 2010 **	Canberra	Vaughan
Saturday	13 th Feb	7:00-9:00pm	Public Lecture by Ekai Osho	Canberra	Vaughan
Sunday	14 th Feb	9:00am	Jikishoan Canberra 1 st Anniversary and Precept Ceremony with Ekai Osho	Canberra	Vaughan
Saturday	13 th Mar	9:00am - 5:00pm	One Day Meditation Workshop with Hannah Forsyth	Canberra	Vaughan

Secretary (*Kanji*), Vaughan Behncke 0427-319378

website: www.jikishoan.org.au (go to the Canberra page)

Teaching Schedule

Teachings are given personally by Ekai Korematsu-Osho. Brochures providing more information are available. For addresses and contact information, please see overleaf.

**Orientation Courses –
Main Course [A-1]**

For beginners and those with some experience. Ten classes 9:00 – 11:00am Saturdays

- January, 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 10

Venue: Footscray Zendo

10 Week Certificate Term \$140.
5 Week Course (casual) \$80.
Members by donation

Deepening: Extension Course

Ten classes for those who have completed the Main Course (above). 5:00 – 7:00pm Saturdays [A-3]

- January 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 10.

Or 7:00 – 9:00pm Wednesdays [A-2]

- January 27, February 3, 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31.

Venue: Footscray Zendo

10 Week Certificate Term \$140.
5 Week Course (casual) \$80.
Members by donation

One-Day Workshop [A-OW]

An intensive orientation workshop for beginners and those with some experience. Cost includes lunch and morning and afternoon tea.

Sunday 7 February, 9:00am – 5:00pm;
and
Sunday 14 March, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Venue: Footscray Zendo.
Non-members \$80
Members by donation.

Bendoho Retreat

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

Maximum places: 40. Priority given to people staying 7 days and registering before the application closing date.

6:00pm Thursday 1st April to 2:00pm Thursday 8th April 2010.

Venue: Adekate Fellowship Centre.

Sanzenkai Melbourne

Zazen and kinhin meditations, Tea ceremony, chanting service and Dharma talk. For beginners, members and friends. 5:30 – 7:30pm Sundays from January 10th.

Newcomers: please arrive by 5.15pm. By Donation. Participants are welcome to stay for an informal supper \$5

Venue : 103 Evans St. Brunswick.

Sanzenkai Footscray Zendo

Zazen and kinhin meditation, Tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. Thursday evenings. 7:00 – 9:00pm from January 14th.

Phone Mark Summers 0411-552072 or Jinesh Wilmot 0411-289679.

Sanzenkai Ballarat

Zazen and kinhin meditation, Tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. For beginners, members and friends. 5:30 – 7:30pm Thursdays from January 14.

Sansenkai with Ekai Osho Sunday February 21, March 28, April 18. 5:30pm

Suggested donation \$7.

Venue : St Cuthbert's Hall. Ballarat West Uniting Church. Cnr Sturt St and Elliot St. Please enter by side door.

Sanzenkai Canberra

Zazen and kinhin meditation, tea ceremony, chanting service and reading. 5:30-7:30pm Sundays

Newcomers please arrive by 5:15pm
Suggested donation of \$8 and \$4 concession

New Years Eve Zazen

8:30pm – Midnight December 31st 2009.
Venue: Footscray Zendo. Phone Hannah Forsyth on (03) 96876981 or Jinesh Wilmot on 0411-289679.

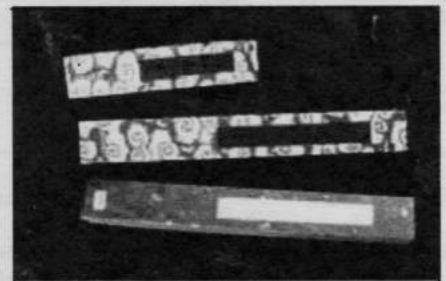
Community Zendo Cleaning 4:00 – 7:00pm December 31.

剣道

Kendo - the Way of the Sword

Nanseikan Kendo Club is a not-for-profit dojo for young people aged 7 and over —parents included!
We train every Saturday morning during school term in Heidelberg West.

contact Ben Sheppard (Jikishoan member) on 0422 146 367 or nanseikan@kendovictoria.asn.au



Uk - Oh

Incense sticks from Eihei-Ji monastery in Japan. 20 and 40 minute sizes. Luke: 0433 237 293 Chiko (stall) Ryo.



**Zafus and Zabutons
Please contact Luke on
0433-237293**

The blue paper of this calendar represents the seaside in summer.

Advertising space now available in Myoju. Minimal rates for the box ads as shown in this edition and for line advertising.

Please contact Paul on (03) 94192203 or email publications@jikishoan.org.au