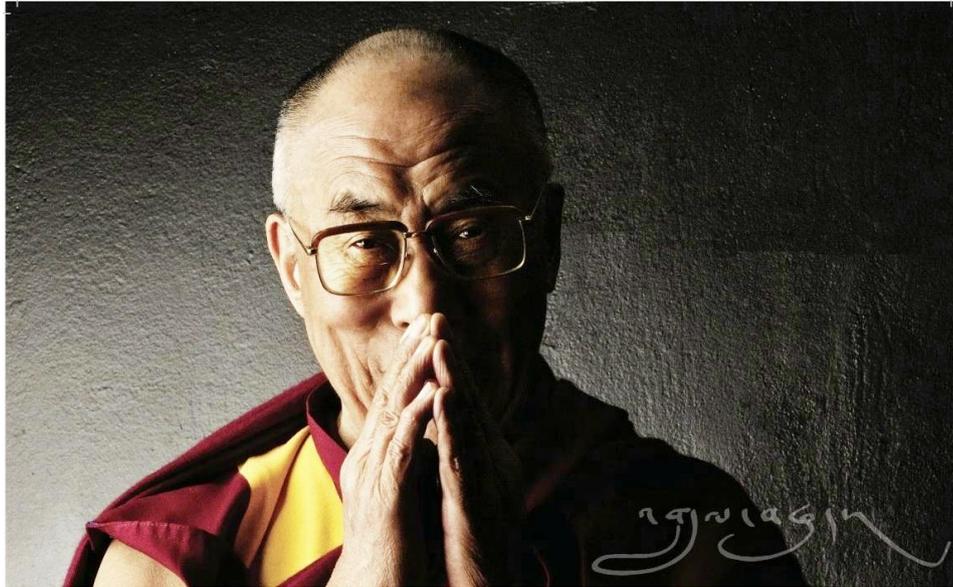


Celebrating 30 Years of the Atisha Centre

ANNUAL REPORT



2011



*Never give up
No matter what is going on
Never give up
Develop the heart
Too much energy in your country is spent
developing the mind instead of the heart
Develop the heart,
Be compassionate
Not just to your friends but to everyone,
be compassionate
Work for peace in your heart and in the world
Work for peace, and I say again
Never give up
No matter what is happening
No matter what is going on around you
Never give up.*

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OCTOBER 2010 TO OCTOBER 2011

DIRECTOR	CHERRY RATTUE
SPIRITUAL PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR	LIAM CHAMBERS
SECRETARY	MARILYN CHAMBERS
TREASURER	ADRIENNE NASH
MEMBERSHIP	KATHY RICE
PUBLIC OFFICER	ADRIENNE NASH
ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER	MICHAEL TOMAN

THANK YOU

Bendigo City Council, Eaglehawk Travel,
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Department of Victorian Multicultural Affairs
Bendigo Bank, Gary Hill, Builder.
The Bead Shop Lyttleton Terrace,
Ron Dixon Excavations.
AASB Accounting and Auditing Solutions Bendigo
Dunston's Plumbing, Maiden Gully
Little Ripper Digger Service, Maiden Gully
Fitzpatrick's Hardware, Eaglehawk Bakery,
CVGT Bendigo, Bendigo Whole Foods Lyttleton Terrace,
Bolton's Office National, Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery
The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion



MISSION STATEMENT

Atisha Centre is a Tibetan Buddhist meditation centre, providing opportunities for study and practice of a spiritual path where people can develop their natural compassion and wisdom.

ATISHA CENTRE

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Atisha Buddhist Centre has been a beneficial part of the local community for over thirty years, providing a venue for meditation, retreats, teachings and access to many highly qualified Tibetan Buddhist teachers. During this past year we have been extremely fortunate to have Geshe Konchok Tsering as our resident teacher, who for eight years has offered spiritual guidance and given the precious Mahayana teachings. Our good fortune has extended to the growing number of Sangha members from Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery, who work unstintingly with the Atisha Centre, for the benefit of students and visitors. Thank you Geshe-la and Venerable Sangha, may you all continue to impart the precious teachings for a very long time.

It was fitting that the highlight of this year, Atisha Centre's thirtieth, was the Lama Zopa Australia Retreat, jointly hosted by Atisha Centre, Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery and the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, when our precious Guru was here in April, teaching the sacred Dharma and blessing all of us with his incredible presence. It was a remarkable opportunity for representatives from the three FPMT organisations, ably co-ordinated by Sally Dudgeon, to work together closely and to develop quality infrastructure to care for more than 300 students during the month of April. In addition, administrative systems, including a new web site, booking procedures and a karma yoga programme were developed. The Monastery augmented a superb spiritual programme to Rinpoche's teachings, held first in a palatial marquee at the Great Stupa and then in the Atisha Centre Gumpa. Preparation, hosting and wash up of this significant event was a major achievement that consumed a small core of people for over a year, some of whom continued to work to deadlines to complete the accommodation at Atisha Centre and the Monastery. Over half of the Atisha membership either attended the retreat or volunteered in some capacity, and so it was an

intensive and superbly rewarding month for all of us. Especially satisfying was the

presence of students from several Dharma centres around Australia, who helped in the final preparations and during the retreat.

Strategic Plan

In accordance with the goals set out in the 2009 Strategic Planning Day Report (available for viewing at the AGM), further progress has been made in several areas since the 2010 AGM, as noted below:



- The major accomplishment is the completion of the accommodation block, 'Shi De Kang Sar.' It comprises short-term accommodation for 24 visitors / retreatants, in four 3-bed rooms, two 4-bed rooms, and two twin rooms with all ability access en-suites.
- Hal Young has undertaken the task of preparing an application to the Australian Taxation Office for Deductible Gift Recipient, which enables a tax deduction for those who make financial donations to the Atisha Centre building fund. We are applying under the School Building Fund category.
- A review of the membership subscription and categories has commenced.
- In May the decision was taken to redevelop the website, and this is now a work in progress, that will enable enrolling in courses and making payments and donations online, and generally keeping informed about events at our Centre.
- Another significant achievement, after several years of being passed from person to person, is the publication of the Volunteers

ATISHA CENTRE

Hand Book, recently completed by Marilyn Chambers. The Hand Book will be available to view at the AGM.

- We have not yet found a satisfactory way to recruit, co-ordinate and care for volunteers. Currently several people: the Director, the Office Manager, the caretaker and whichever members of the committee are on the ground at the time, help to co-ordinate and care for the volunteers; this will need further scrutiny.
- The Executive Committee has been working from the Strategic Planning Day Report since 2009, but has not yet implemented a clear, concise and relevant Strategic Plan.

Volunteers

Between July 2010 and June 2011 we said goodbye and thank you to John O'Neil who worked in the role of Centre Manager for several months, to Gina Macauley the creative editor of Atisha News, to Di McClure and Gita Ratna who retired as Children's Dharma Club teachers, to Adrian Whiting as IT consultant and to Michael Toman, committee member. We warmly welcome Hirani Chambers who has successfully edited the Atisha News since the beginning of the year, and in addition has recently undertaken the running of the Children's Dharma Club; to Steve Williams, whose recycling and composting skills were invaluable during the retreat and is now the resident maintenance person and caretaker; to Janet Sambrookes who is the Accommodation Housekeeper; and to Paul Swoboda our new IT consultant.

Over the years Atisha Buddhist Centre has tried to encourage more volunteers to offer service. The Centre is becoming more well known, and since an organisation such as ours depends almost entirely on the kindness and generosity of volunteers, we always require additional hands on deck for a few hours each week. We thank Maggie, Ronda, Rheese, Linda McLeod, Linda Morton, Celia, and Atisha Gift volunteers, for their invaluable assistance several hours a week. There are many opportunities to gain merit and help the Centre for a few hours, to continue to provide

a substantial spiritual programme, to manage the gardens and grounds, to assist at Atisha Gifts, to maintain the buildings, water catchment, and compliance to OH&S, to ensure basic hygiene in the kitchen and dining room, and of course to service the popular accommodation for overnight guests.

It would be of enormous benefit for additional representatives of Atisha Centre to be on site during the week and especially at weekends, to ensure that visitors and guests are personally welcomed and that their requirements and queries, including questions about Buddhism, are met. There are at least four people working out at the Centre on most week days, and quite often this rises to six or seven, so that at times it's hard to fit us all around the table for lunch ... come and join us, and we'll all squash up!

Four of the five current Committee members are retired from paid employment and for now, at least, are able to volunteer their time several days per week in order to enable the smooth running of the Centre. However, this situation is not ideal because it is not sustainable. The same few people who are involved in decision-making are also implementing many of the decisions, together with undertaking a range of jobs around the Centre, that do not fall within a Committee member's responsibilities. In addition to the Committee members Hannelore, Noel and Annette are key volunteers, offering many hours of invaluable service to the Centre. Please come and talk with us if you have some time to spare, and perhaps together we can work on the big and small tasks. Please consider helping to fulfill Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's vision of bringing the sacred Dharma to as many sentient beings as possible.

Administration

Maxine Hawker continues to successfully multitask in her role as Office Manager. Maxine is the cheerful, helpful voice on the other end of the phone, and is usually the first person with whom visitors make contact. Maxine is a joy to work with, and if you have

ATISHA CENTRE

some free time and would like to work with her, she will be very glad of an extra pair of hands for a couple of hours a week.

Gardens and Grounds

Noel and Annette continue to amaze us with their indefatigable enthusiasm and dedication as they cultivate the hard ground, transforming it into the most beautiful gardens. Many people who attended Rinpoche's retreat could hardly believe their eyes at the extensive changes to the gardens over the last few years, and commented on the enormous amount of back-breaking work this must have entailed. It is with gratitude to Noel, working with guidance from Geshe-la, that we note the addition this year of two smaller Holy statues and the larger Reclining Buddha that now grace our environment.



Looking ahead to June 2012

As you all know our resident teacher of more than eight years, Geshe Konchok Tsering, has decided to leave Atisha Centre at the end of this year. We were, of course, initially shocked and saddened by this news; we will miss Geshe-la dearly and the amazing and extensive opportunities he has offered for us to study the precious teachings. Geshe-la is irreplaceable, but as students of the Dharma we accept the impermanence of all things, no matter how hard to bear. Geshe-la's departure will necessarily change the way the Spiritual Programme is currently offered, and we are working closely with the Monastery and FPMTA to provide a range of teachings, courses, and public talks both in town and here at Atisha Centre. More information will of course be available in the Atisha News.

Building

Before the end of this year, 2011, we have to construct a public unisex 'all ability' access

toilet, in order to meet Council requirements. The current ablution system will be

decommissioned, and without a replacement, this will leave the Centre without a toilet for volunteers and visitors; this is a very useful area to offer your support, financial or otherwise.

Administration and Juggling

Maxine's hours were temporarily extended to manage the enormous workload during the retreat period: March, April and May. We have juggled her hours a little to manage the diverse range of tasks her position demands. Since late August Maxine has staffed the office Monday to Friday between 12 - 4pm.

Adrienne has also juggled the demanding task of Treasurer with full time work and family commitments for over six years, and in addition this year she managed the complex Lama Zopa Australia retreat finances. Adrienne will soon commence working several hours a week in the Atisha Office, managing the finances.

As you can see from the preceding, we have enjoyed an intense year that has brought numerous benefits.

Though the past 12 months have had their share of disappointments, such as the impending departure of Geshe-la, they have also produced some real changes to the way Atisha Buddhist Centre operates, and has put our beloved Centre on the map, as it were, firstly with the enormously successful LZAR retreat, the completion, at long last, of our accommodation, and the rich improvements in the gardens. Thank you, members, for all you do to help the flourishing of Atisha Centre, which exists solely to benefit sentient beings.

Cherry Rattue.
Director.

ATISHA CENTRE

SPIRITUAL PROGRAM REPORT

During the year an Atisha member commented that the spiritual program looked full and robust with many opportunities for learning. This was only possible because of the support from our precious teachers and the many volunteer who assist in the delivery of the program.

We were very fortunate to receive precious teachings from Geshe Konchok Tsering who, as a role model of patience, kindness and wisdom, is an inspiration to us all. Geshe-la continued his weekly teachings of the Lam Rim on Wednesdays and Nagarujuna's Letter to a Friend on Mondays and travelled to Daylesford monthly to the Dromtonpa group. In addition, Geshe-la guided us through two valuable week-end teachings 'Parting from the Four Attachments' and 'The Six Preliminary Practices'. As well as teachings, Geshe-la led us in His Holiness Dalai Lama's Birthday, International Sangha day, Community Days, Animal Blessings, Statue Consecration and Blessing of the new Accommodation (She Di Kang Sar). Geshe-la introduced bi-monthly practice days at the Centre in 2009.

Vajratsattva and individual practice days continued to be held during the year allowing people to spend time doing personal practice and meditation and at the same time have contact with the Sangha and with the holy objects at the Centre.

It would be remiss, at this point, not to mention and to thank Noel Maddock in his role as interpreter, we are indeed very fortunate to have someone with Noel's experience. Translating is a very challenging and intense job and we sincerely appreciate Noel's ability and dedication.

Atisha centre is privileged to have the support of the Sangha from Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery. Their on-going commitment to giving teachings, leading meditations and Pujas is of great benefit and sincerely appreciated in the implementation of the Spiritual Program. We can all rejoice in the presence of the 'Sangha Jewel'; their example, their concern and care for others, has so much benefit to lay practitioners. I

would like to especially thank; Gyatso, Venerables Lhundrup, Tony, Lobsang, Jampa and Namgyal.

Atisha Centre, like most other voluntary organisation, relies heavily on lay practitioners who give their kind support in helping to broaden the Program. My heartfelt thanks go to the following: Al Gabay: for leading meditation and initiating 'Dharma Talk'; Dennis Kenny: for leading Sunday meditations; Ruby Karmay: for leading the Peace & wellness Practice on Mondays and leading meditations; Genny Blades: Leading meditations when the Sanga were unavailable; Molly Wiseman: for leading Tara and Medicine Buddha Pujas on alternate months; Gita Ratna and Di McLure: for leading the Children's Dharma club; Maggie Wallace and Ronda Rodwell for their tireless support in the kitchen preparing the lunch on Community Days and other special events.

I would like to say a big thank you and express my gratitude to Cherry and Hannelore for their support in the SPC team. Hannelore works tirelessly in support of the program, coordinating Discovering Buddhism, updating and maintaining the SPC files, assisting with planning and running many events and in re-establishing the library. Her sincerity and cheery presence adds to the welcoming tone of the centre. Cherry has been an invaluable support to me and to the Spiritual Program, skilfully assisting and ensuring that the overall program of the centre is cohesive and continuous.

Our programs cannot run without the efficient and helpful administrative support of Maxine who has enabled all those who have sought to participate in our program to feel welcome and cared for. Her skills in public relations are superb. Thank you, Maxine. Thanks also go to Al Gabay, Noel Maddox and Ven. Lobsang for their incidental support and advice whenever I have needed it.

I took responsibility for all facets of the SPC role in March 2010 however it was not until April 2011 that I actually began to operate fully as SPC. This delay was due to my time

ATISHA CENTRE

commitment in the completion of the new accommodation centre. Since April, following and during Lama Zopa's retreat I have been able to concentrate on learning the finer points of being the SPC. As this year progresses and as I develop a greater understanding I will be able to further develop and improve the Spiritual Program and ultimately the Atisha Centre.

The spiritual program continues to run smoothly and efficiently.



SUMMARY OF SPIRITUAL PROGRAM

WEEKLY PROGRAM

Sunday

- Introduction to Buddhist Meditation

Monday

- Teaching with Geshe Konchok Tsering - Nagarjuna's 'Letter to a Friend'
- Peace & Wellness Practice at Atisha Gifts

Tuesday

- Buddhist Meditation at Atisha Gifts
- Karuna Relaxation meditation. Atisha Gifts

Wednesday

Teaching with Geshe Konchok Tsering
"Liberation in the Palm of your Hand".

MONTHLY PROGRAM

- Community day and Dharma Club for Children 2nd Sunday in month

- Geshe Konchok Tsering teaching at Dromtonpa study group Daylesford.

Pujas and Precepts on designated dates

- Tara and Medicine Buddha
- Guru Puja:
- Precepts
- Special Guru Pujas (Sept)
- Special Tara Puja (Oct)

Teachings

- Atisha Centre played an integral role in the planning and implementing the month long retreat with Lama Zopa Rinpoche.
- Week-end teachings with Geshe Konchok Tsering (Three)
- Introduction to Buddhist Teaching and Meditation Public Talks with Gyatso.
- Discovering Buddhism, four modules.
- Nyung Ne. Two Sessions.
- Individual practice days.
- Vajratsattva practice days.
- Lama Tsong Khapa Day Guru Puja.
- Refuge Ceremony with Geshe Konchok Tsering.
- Prayers for Peace Multi-faith.
- Chenrezig Retreat and Light Offering.

Other Events

- Walk for peace.
- Geshe Konchok Tsering's birthday celebration.
- His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday celebration.
- International Sangha Day.
- Animal Blessing Days.
- Universal Prayer Day and Meditation.
- Dharma Talk with lay teacher.
- 8000 Recitations of Heart Sutra were completed.
- Sutra recitation.
- Blessing of new accommodation building.
- Consecration of new statues.

Liam Chambers.
Spiritual Program Coordinator.

ATISHA CENTRE

ATISHA GIFTS



Atisha Gifts is an enterprise of the Atisha Centre, with two venues, in the CBD at Lyttleton Terrace and at the Atisha Centre, whose main purposes are providing a vital source of income to promote the growth of Atisha Centre, and a ready support for the growing portion of the regional population who exhibit an interest in Buddhism. Staffed mostly by volunteers, they also make it possible for volunteers to give service and thus accrue valuable merit and a deeper understanding of the Buddhadharmā. Not only does it provide a retail outlet to raise valuable funds for the Centre, it also provides a public face in the Bendigo CBD to promote Atisha centre and its programs, as well as a convenient venue for regular courses and meditations. Over the last few years, the shop space has been utilized to a fuller extent, with *Discovering Buddhism* teachings, *Introduction to Meditation*, and *Peace and Wellness Practice* being held on days and evenings outside of shop hours.

Despite a negative economic climate, Atisha Gifts maintained trading four days a week. With extended trading hours over Christmas, improved its earnings, and introduced several new stock lines which have showed promise.

Atisha Gifts continues to sponsor the quarterly Atisha News for members, and to make donations to support the Geshe and translator fund.

The backbone of the enterprise continues to be the volunteers, who are outstanding in their commitment. New volunteers were welcomed, but as always, more volunteers are needed to continue keeping the shop open.

Atisha Gifts, as of August 10 2011, has a new manager, Elaine Doling. We thank Rose

Green for her dedication and hard work as shop manager over the past three years and welcome Elaine to the Atisha Centre team.

Atisha Centre Gifts

The Atisha Gifts shop at the Centre came into its own prior to and during the recent April retreat with Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Thanks to the kindness of Fiona and Peter, among others, the shop received a complete overhaul, with painting and reshelving, together with the purchase and display of new stock. The management of the shop wanted to turn the Centre shop more into a Dharma outlet, rather than stocking the general gift lines offered by the City shop. We were fortunate also in engaging new volunteers, so that being open every day during the April retreat, the Centre shop enjoyed a substantial profit. Many new lines, and extensions of existing items such as Buddhist books and practice manuals, were introduced, and new and exciting stock from India, Singapore and Khazakstan added more spice to the offerings, as well as continuing with the provision of deity statues and thangkas from the best Nepali craftspersons.

Al Gabay.

Atisha Centre Shop

Rose Green

Atisha Gifts Manager

ATISHA CENTRE LIBRARY

Following the Lama Zopa Retreat the library was relocated to its former space in the small Gompa. There is now considerably more space to display books and for members to browse. There is a sofa and small heater so come and take a look. In the near future new titles will appear on the shelf. Once that is completed the catalogue will be updated also. Thank you to all the generous people who have donated items.

The video and audiotapes have been boxed as they are rarely used but are still accessible if required. One thing that became apparent as I sorted through the materials is that we are missing quite a few books, CDs, DVDs as

ATISHA CENTRE

well as audio and videotapes. Would everyone please check their homes for possible items that have been forgotten and return them as soon as possible. All returned items happily received - no questions asked!

With improved space and a greater selection of items it is hoped that the library will be of benefit to members and friends of Atisha Centre well into the future.

If you have any queries or ideas as to how to improve the library please talk to me.

Hannelore Best.

DISCOVERING BUDDHISM

Discovering Buddhism continues to thrive. In 2010 students undertook *Module 12, The Wisdom of Emptiness* and *Module 1, Mind and its Potential*. In 2011 *Module 9, Samsara and Nivana*, and *Module 7, Refuge in the Three Jewels* were completed. Attendances at classes have been good, with groups ranging from 12-18, with some new students and the return of a core group of existing students. Thanks go to Venerables Gyatso and Lhundrup for their kindness in presenting teachings and meditations and leading stimulating discussions. Thanks also go to the students who contributed interesting questions to the discussions and to Maxine Hawker who provided administrative support to the courses.

Hannelore Best.

CHILDREN'S DHARMA CLUB

Di and Gita take a well earned break.

A very big THANK YOU to Gita and Di for all they precious work with the children in the Dharma club

Dharma club is held on Community day from 10.00 am – 11.00. We have a core group of 9 – 12 children aged between 3 to 9 years old.

Our aims are to develop a basic understanding of the Buddha's teachings, Buddhist concepts and Buddhist practices. We encourage a sense of community and belonging within the centre, the application of Buddhist principles in every day life and friendship and kindness.



Our sessions comprise of preparing an altar, motivation for the session, prostrations, mantra recitations using a mala, yoga, meditation, a motivational story, a craft type activity and a dedication.

We use a variety of resources including, Jataka Tales Series – Dharma publishing; Buddhist Animal Wisdom Stories – M McGinnis; Meditation for Children – FPMT Ed Dept; Buddhism Stages 1 & 2 – Buddhist Education Foundation and Prince Siddhartha – the story of Buddha.

Love and Blessing Gita and Dianne

ACCOMMODATION BUILDING REPORT

July 2010 – June 2011

The completion of the accommodation block, Shi de Kang Sar, in March, generated bliss and joy both in those involved in the building and those who participated in the consecration ceremony led by Geshe Konchok Tsering and attended by Mayor Fyffe.

For more than twenty years the only accommodation available was the railway carriages, loved by many but becoming inadequate to the needs of a growing Dharma centre. Five years ago they were decommissioned by the council. Completing the accommodation block following the removal of our iconic railway carriages in 2006 was a long and difficult project, with many obstacles to face ... all of which have been overcome through the kindness and

ATISHA CENTRE

generosity, not to mention the hard work, of numerous individuals. On many occasions it seemed that we would never secure sufficient funds, that we lacked the expertise, or willing hands to complete the accommodation block. But the kindness of others is never to be underestimated. The project was completed through the generous sponsorships of labour, financial donations and loans from three sister FPMTA centres, together with the individual financial assistance of a number of Atisha members and friends, and above all through the dedicated labour of a small, hard working team of people and the prayers of many others within our Atisha mandala.



Completion of the new accommodation is crucial to the heart of Atisha Centre... as a Tibetan Buddhist meditation centre, we will now be more capable of providing opportunities for people to study and practice a spiritual path. We can offer comfortable, affordable and quiet accommodation, conducive to longer periods of retreat from our busy world. This can only benefit our minds, and assist us to be happier and to go more lightly in the world. I thank everyone for their contribution, and seek to dedicate your generosity and enthusiastic perseverance for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Over the years everyone has contributed as much as they could, and each person's contribution is deeply appreciated. Last year several groups of young people from TAFE and CVGT showed great enthusiasm during their work experience, a couple of whom turned up on other days just because they enjoyed being here. We rejoice in the incredible perseverance of the core team of workers, from 2006 to 2011, who committed

days, weeks, months and years of their lives to the completion of this project.

The building cost approximately \$325,000. This includes the plans, the preparation of the block, the purchase of the two school buildings, all soft furnishings, and the employment of a site manager during 2010. Funding for this project came through very generous donations and loans. Our current outstanding debts include \$27,000 in interest free loans to three Atisha Centre members, and an additional \$20,000 five year loan to the Great Stupa.

Cherry Rattue
Director

GREEN TARA STATUE FOR ATISHA CENTRE

The project for the Green Tara statue commenced in 2004 when Barbara Mclean was approached to make a life sized Green Tara statue. So approximately 6 or so years later it is completed. How wonderful!

On the 26th June the statue was the consecrated and placed in the Atisha Centre Gompa. In the consecration the statue is filled with many holy Mantras and precious substances that represent the Buddha's holy body, speech and mind. In this ritual the statue becomes a suitable object of refuge and becomes representative of a living Buddha.

We still require a place to house the statue and many options are presently being considered. An enormous thank you to Geshe Konchok Tsering, Konchok Rinchen and Venerable Gyatso and all the support from friends those donors and those reciting Heart sutra and Green Tara mantras. All projects require a large amount of people to be involved to bring the project to completion, a sincere thank you to each of you.

We sincerely pray that the statue will inspire sentient beings to practice the Dharma and travel the path to full enlightenment.



Please visit the blog for more information and photos of the statue.

<http://tarastatue.netai.net>

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The generosity of all members is acknowledged and we rejoice in the merit created through your ongoing support of Atisha Centre.

The current membership stands at 87, slightly down on this time last year. The number of people who have opted to take advantage of our EFTPOS facilities and to pay their membership on a monthly basis stands at 58, however, membership dues can still be paid on a yearly or half yearly basis.

During the year a number of activities were organised for members. The pre-Christmas picnic in the park, on the banks of Lake Neangar at Eaglehawk was well attended. Geshe Konchok Tsering led the morning meditation followed by a talk and acknowledgement of all the hard work that had taken place at Atisha. The Atisha

Executive Committee also took this opportunity to thank all members and volunteers for their generosity and support over the past twelve months. A delicious lunch was enjoyed in a relaxed, informal atmosphere, with the opportunity to convey

our thanks and farewells to Geshe-la before he left for India over the summer break.

In September a special puja led by Ven. Gyatso and attended by Geshe-la and Sangha, followed by a dinner at the Indian Tavern, were held to thank Keith Garret as master Tsa Tsa maker, Adrienne Nash as outgoing treasurer, Gen Blades as outgoing SPC and Kathy Rice as outgoing 2009 secretary. Unfortunately Adrian Whiting was unable to attend but a sincere thank you for his technological wizardry was extended to him.

During the Lama Zopa Retreat in April, a morning tea was organised for Lama Zopa. The number of members attending this event was wonderful. Cake and refreshments, along with a slide show of past and present members were enjoyed by all, however, it was during this time that our Lama's sudden illness was made known to us. His attendant Sangpo conveyed well wishes from Lama Zopa and all attending were given a blessing string and a beautiful copy of Namgyalma Mantra with Lama Zopa's blessing.

In May we celebrated Geshe-la's birthday. This year it was hosted by Kathy and Phil Rice, who took the opportunity to have their home blessed. Geshe-la also requested that a light offering of 108 candles and prayers be made for the health of Lama Zopa and these were incorporated into Gen-La's birthday celebrations.

I would like to thank all our members for your support and generosity and look forward to another year working for you as Membership Manager.

Kathy Rice
Membership Manager

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial report will be distributed at the AGM

NEW WEBSITE FOR ATISHA CENTRE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Our wonderful web designer, Lila Tucker, who coincidentally is Gyatso's niece, is working hard to build a new website for Atisha Centre. Committee Secretary, Marilyn Chambers, has been consulting with her regularly since May to create a website which will do much more than our current website does and increase our efficiency. Once it is 'up', Marilyn will manage the website overall and will be able to delegate management of relevant sections to other volunteers. Improvements include a completely different 'feel' and 'look' for the website, access to more information, interactive calendar, photo gallery, newsletter archive, online membership sign up and payment, online booking for courses and programs, online donations, online booking enquiries for accommodation and hire of Atisha Centre facilities and online storage for our Operations manual which contains all our policies, templates and forms. We will be able to manage this website ourselves and keep it up to date and fresh with the latest information and news. We hope to have the new website live before the end of 2011. The web address will not change.

Atisha Buddhist Centre

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Program](#) [Contact Us](#) [Accommodation and Facilities](#)
[Operations Manual](#)

“ Happiness and suffering come from your own mind, not from outside. Your own mind is the cause of happiness; your own mind is the cause of suffering. To obtain happiness and pacify suffering, you have to work within your own mind. **”**

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Become a Member
Membership is open to anyone, Buddhist or non Buddhist, who is committed to developing a good heart for the benefit of all living beings.
[Click here for membership >>](#)

Newsletter
Download our latest newsletter and access our archive of past newsletters.
[Click here >>](#)

Find Us
Atisha Centre is nestled in the quiet native bushlands of central Victoria, near Bendigo.
[Click here for a map and more details on how to find us >>](#)

Donate
Enjoy the many merits of generosity and support Atisha by making an online donation.

Site Search

Welcome to Atisha ...
Atisha Centre is a serene and peaceful retreat centre and hub of Buddhist education, nestled in the quiet native bushlands of central Victoria, near Bendigo. Founded in 1981, the Centre provides a tranquil and welcoming setting for those interested in exploring the Buddhadhama. Drawing on the dynamic and inspiring vision of Lama Thubten Yeshe, founder of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), Atisha Centre is proudly affiliated with the FPMT, and is part of a network of Buddhist centres in Australia and around the world.

Situated in close proximity to Atisha Centre is the imposing Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, currently under construction, and soon to become among the most significant Buddhist temples and pilgrimage destinations in the world, and the Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery, where monks devote themselves to study, meditation and spiritual transformation. This monastery provides a valuable opportunity for people visiting the Centre complex to make a connection with the ordained Sangha.

reaching karmic consequences that last for many lifetimes.
[Please click here for more details >>](#)

Program Summary
To view our interactive calendar, full event details and to register for upcoming events.
[Please click here >>](#)

Sunday, 11 September 11
Buddhist Meditation
10:00 AM-11:00 AM
Guided Meditation and short introductory talk, followed by chai in the dining room. Fantastic for beginners and experienced practitioners.
[Read More>>](#)

Monday, 12 September 11
Peace and Healing Practice
01:30 PM-02:00 PM
Short guided meditations including mantra recitation. This practice is useful for those who are suffering disease and helps overcome obstacles to achieving health and happiness.
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Sunday, 18 September 11
Buddhist Meditation
10:00 AM-11:00 AM
Guided Meditation and short introductory talk, followed by chai in the dining room. Fantastic for beginners and short guided meditations including mantra recitation. This practice is useful for those who are suffering disease and helps overcome obstacles to achieving health and happiness.
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Sunday, 25 September 11
Buddhist Meditation
10:00 AM-11:00 AM
Guided Meditation and short introductory talk, followed by chai in the dining room. Fantastic for beginners and experienced practitioners.
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Monday, 26 September 11
Peace and Healing Practice
01:30 PM-02:00 PM
Short guided meditations including mantra recitation. This practice is useful for those who are suffering disease and helps overcome obstacles to achieving health and happiness.
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Sunday, 02 October 11
Buddhist Meditation
10:00 AM-11:00 AM
Guided Meditation and short introductory talk, followed by chai in the dining room. Fantastic for beginners and experienced practitioners.
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ATISHA CENTRE

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MEMBER OF THE FOUNDATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE MAHAYANA TRADITION

Atisha Centre is located just 15 minutes from the heart of Bendigo.
Follow the Loddon Valley Highway through Eaglehawk and turn left at the
Allies Hotel (Allies Rd) turn right into
Sandhurst Town road

fpmt
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