

Mahamudra retreat – dates changed. Previously advertised as Nov 21st – 26th this retreat will now run Nov 28th – Dec 3rd 2002.

Retreat Programme Extended. Please refer to the full programme for details on retreats and booking. Note the new booking address – Peter Howard is now receiving retreat bookings. A new extended retreat programme is being distributed with this newsletter.

Please Book Early. Sometimes retreats fill up quickly and we have to turn people away. Sometimes retreats book up slowly and at the time that we send out booking confirmation letters (about a month beforehand) we have to decide whether to cancel an under-booked retreat. Please try to book retreat places well in advance, so as to secure a place for yourself and to help us with the planning and organisation.

Email Announcement List. In future we hope to make more use of electronic distribution of updates. We shall continue to send newsletters and retreat programmes by post, but shall issue occasional updates a few times per year by email only between postal mailings. Please sign up for this service by entering your email address in the “subscribe” box at the bottom of the menu on the website *WesternChanFellowship.org*. You may add additional or new email addresses if you wish, and you may unsubscribe from this mailing list at any time.

Website address. Please update your bookmarks to the new address for the WCF website: *WesternChanFellowship.org*. This is a little longer than the previous name but easier to remember and explain – the previous name was chosen for brevity but people seemed to stumble over the hyphens in it.

Email addresses. Corresponding to the changes in the website address there are new email addresses for the officers of the WCF – please refer to the contacts section.

Committee changes. Since the last newsletter we have had some changes in the

committee and officers of the WCF. At the AGM in February Tim Blanc retired at the end of his second term in office, and Jake Lyne was elected as treasurer. Tim had also been doing the work of membership secretary, and Peter Howard has now taken over this role. Thus for any matters to do with membership of the WCF, retreat bookings, NCF subscriptions, etc, please now refer to Peter. For any financial matters such as making donations please contact Jake.

Committee Meeting. The next committee meeting will be on Sunday 20th October. If you have any matters that you wish the committee to consider then please contact a committee member before then.

Chan Comes West This book has now been printed and copies are available from the Secretary. It includes articles by Chan Master Sheng-yen and his Western Dharma Heirs: John Crook, Simon Child, Max Kalin, and Zarko Andricevic. It is for free distribution, the printing costs having been paid by donations from fellows and others and from the WCF publications fund. To receive a copy please send to the Secretary stamps for at least 54p (e.g. two first class or three second class stamps) or an A5 SAE with at least 54p postage. To make a donation to the WCF publications fund please send to the Treasurer.

Letters. The newsletter doesn't always have room for correspondence, but you are welcome to write/email and your letter may be used in a future issue.

Notes from the Network of Buddhist Organisations - Sally Masheder 30.4.02

The Constitution of the NBO At the recent AGM of the NBO, a major re-appraisal of the Constitution was undertaken. This is not usually the stuff of riveting reading, but as many of you know, the NBO has been in considerable difficulties in the recent past and this review was designed to set a new structure in place which we hope will produce a Network which functions better in the long run. The changes were, for the most part accepted.

For the time being I will be helping out on the 'Activities Committee', keeping the show on the road in between meetings. In particular I shall have responsibilities as Membership Secretary, so if anyone comes across people from another organization who express interest in the NBO, please put them in touch with me.

Scurrilous Publications The FWBO have been the victims of a number of scurrilous publications which purport to come from them but which do not. They have titles such as 'The Meaning of Jihad in Buddhism', which is clearly a nonsense to insiders but which is equally clearly designed to confuse others. The FWBO ask us to exercise our common sense if we see such publications and to give them the benefit of the doubt.

The Dunhuang Grottoes The Commercial Press (H.K.) Ltd have a web-site about the material they are publishing from the Dunhuang Caves. I haven't had time to look at it myself so far, but the web-site address is www.dunhuangcaves.com

The Whole Life Festival The event is scheduled to take place at Olympia on September 6-8th. The NBO have been offered 22 sq. m. of space to have a stall, possibly with a 'rolling programme' of exhibits. If anyone is interested, please contact Paul Seto in 020 8682 3442.

Contact One Sindy Cartman has put out an appeal for any news of an old Buddhist friend of hers, Rosemary Campbell with whom she attended 'Friar's Camps' in the early 90s. She can be found on 01364 643936 or syndel@supanet.com

Travel in Japan Cate Feldman will be leading a pilgrimage through Western Japan, dedicated to the Bodhisattva of Compassion, focussed on healing both at the personal and the wider level. Details can be found on www.japanpilgrimage.com

Film – Chasing the Buddha I have heard good reviews about this film, a documentary about the work of Robina Courtin, a nun who is engaged in working with prisoners in the USA. It might be possible to get copies from The Meridian Trust who run a film and video archive. They can be contacted on 0207 286-9532 or email info@meridian-trust.org

My Details If you wish to contact me, my home address is 6 Tyne Rd, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8EE, Tel 0117 924 8819 sally.masheder@physics.bristol.ac.uk

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

Bound Volumes Of The First Ten Years Of New Ch'an Forum containing issues 1 – 21 are now available. These are fine volumes, with probably better quality printing than the original issues, and with some of the pictures in colour. These are made to order and so must be paid for in advance, £65 per copy including p&p, payable to WCF and sent to Jake Lyne. You can see an example of these bound editions in the Maenllwyd library.

NEW BOOKS: ILLUMINATING SILENCE

MASTER SHENG YEN. Introductions and commentaries by John Crook.

This comprehensive work provides an introduction to the practice of Chinese Zen (Chan) by a great contemporary Chan master based on talks given during two intensive retreats at the Maenllwyd - the meditation centre of the Western Chan Fellowship in Wales. It provides a basic handbook for all concerned with an effective training in Zen for the West.

In his foreword Stephen Batchelor writes: "The discourses are lucid and direct, drawn widely on the sources of Chinese Buddhism, and speak in a refreshingly modern idiom. Perhaps because the setting was relatively small and intimate, the gentleness, warmth and humour of Master Sheng Yen radiate throughout the text."

Part One provides full details of the unfolding of a Chan retreat with details of schedule, liturgy and all talks by the Master thereby enabling the reader to sit in on the retreat as it developed.

Part Two contains a careful presentation of the meditation method of Silent Illumination (*mo chao*) which, taken later to Japan, there became the sitting style called "shikantaza" The talks here are based in the original presentations of Master Hongzhi Zhenjue (1090-1157).

Part Three comprises retreat reports written by the editor during his training with Master Sheng yen and which thus provide the reader with an experience of what it is like to "sit" a training retreat with a Chan master.

John Crook, the Teacher of the Western Chan Fellowship and the first European Dharma Heir of the Master in the Linchi and Caodong traditions of Chinese Zen, has constructed the text from the taped English interpretations by Ming Yee Wang of the spoken mandarin. He writes: " I was engaging in an exercise in hermeneutics, an interpretation of the teaching in which my own subjectivity was highly engaged. I thus received the teachings many times over." John also provides combinatorial introductions to each part of the text and an edited autobiography of the master.

Publisher WATKINS. 20 Bloomsbury St. London. 2002. Price: £9.99. US\$14.95.

Available

- from Watkins Books, 19. Cecil Court. London. WC2N 4EZ. Fax 020 7836 6700. Phone: 020 7836 2182,
- from all bookshops,
- by clicking the link at www.WesternChanFellowship.org/books.html

LOCAL GROUP EVENTS

Bristol: Check for updates at: www.bristol-chan.co.uk

Bury: Check www.WesternChanFellowship.org/bury for dates of day retreats held on Sundays about once every 6 – 8 weeks, the next is 28th July.

Data Protection Act The WCF maintains a computer database, which is used for keeping you informed of Western Ch'an Fellowship activities. Please notify me if you do not wish your details to be kept on a computer database or if you do not want to receive any further mailings. Thank You.
Peter Howard (Membership Secretary)

Western Ch'an Fellowship Contacts

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Chair@ WesternChanFellowship.org

Secretary Simon Child, 24 Woodgate Ave, Bury, Lancs, BL9 7RU Tel 0161 761 1945 Fax 0161 763 3221
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Tel 01793 740659 *Membership@WesternChanFellowship.org*

New Ch'an Forum Submissions: *Editorial@WesternChanFellowship.org*

Western Ch'an Fellowship Webpages *www.WesternChanFellowship.org*
(include past issues of New Ch'an Forum, retreat programme updates, etc)

WCF-L Ch'an Email List Email *Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org* and ask to be added to the list

WCF Announcements Email list Subscribe using the box on the website (bottom left of menu), or email
Secretary@WesternChanFellowship.org and ask to be added to the list

Retreats in New York with Master Sheng-yen contact: Ch'an Meditation Center, Institute of Chung Hwa
Buddhist Culture, 90-56 Corona Ave., Elmhurst, New York 11373, USA,
Tel: 00 1 718 592 6593, Fax: 00 1 718 592 0717 *ddmbaus@yahoo.com* *www.chancenter.org*

Local Groups Contacts *Affiliated groups* are groups which principally practice Ch'an and are closely associated with the WCF. *Associated groups* are groups which include friends and practitioners of the WCF, but may follow other traditions in addition to Ch'an.

Affiliated Groups

Bristol Sally Masheder 0117 924 8819

Bury N Manchester Simon Child 0161 7611945

Cheadle S Manchester Ron Henshall 0161 491 0612

Gillingham Stuart McLeod 01634 571659

Glastonbury Ned Reiter 01458 833663

London Bruce Stevenson 020 8961 7802

York James McCarthy 01904 330977

Associated Groups

Aberystwyth Ken Jones 01970 880603

Cardiff Eddy Street 029 2069 1146

Guildford Roger Taylor 01483 202422

Newbury Dave/Aurie McKay 0163546139

Swindon Hughie Carroll 01793 343447

Subscriptions to New Ch'an Forum: WCF Fellows receive NCF as a benefit of Fellowship. Others may subscribe by writing with payment enclosed as below.

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New Ch'an Forum subscription: Send a £10.50 cheque, payable to: Western Ch'an Fellowship, to: Peter Howard 22 Butts Road, Chiseldon, Wiltshire, SN4 0NW

This will pay for three issues, which are published approximately two to three times per year (variable). Back issues only if available can be obtained for £5 per issue (otherwise please download from the website).

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

Name Tel Fax e-mail

Address