

*Don't disregard merit, thinking,  
"It won't come back to me!"  
With dripping drops of water  
Even a large water basin is filled.  
Little by little,  
A wise person is filled with merit.  
The Buddha  
Dhp 122*

## **News from Vimutti Monastery**

### **The Relic Display**

On February 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Vimutti Monastery held its largest event to date. Over the two day period, an estimated 500 people came to see and meditate with the relics, listen to Dhamma talks, take part in ceremonies, offer almsfood, partake of a feast (seven long tables laden with food) and tour the normally restricted parts of the monastery. Ajahn Chandako mc'd the wholesome fest and offered the teachings. Much thanks goes to all the volunteers who offered their time to make the event such a success.

We were joined by a number of distinguished local Sangha members. On Saturday Luang Por Sengchan, abbot of the Lao temple in Auckland and Lama Pasang, the abbot of the Tibetan Monastery in Kaukapakapa, both came. Tenzin Chogkyi, resident teacher at Mahamudra Centre, Ven. Chang Shean, our chi kung teacher, a nun from the NKT Tibetan centre and a Thai nun were also present. Sunday the abbots of all three Burmese Temples joined us: Ven. Obasa, Ven. Sumanasiri and Ven. Punna; and monks from the Thai and Sri Lankan temples, Tenzin Chosan from Hamilton, and Amala Sensei, the head of the Auckland Zen Centre, all came.

Sunday's ceremonies included initiating the process of enshrining the personal items to be included in the base of the stupa. For a detailed account, see the Stupa section below.

The day after the Display we were visited by a highly respected Tibetan lama from India, Geshe Sonam Rinchen, who was on a

teaching tour of New Zealand. He was accompanied by the abbot of the Tibetan monastery in Whangarei, Geshe Sengye Trinley. Geshe Sonam showed great enthusiasm for the display, and said he had never seen such a collection anywhere.

[View the Photos from the Relics Display](#)

If you have an impressive photo taken during the Relics Display, you can send it to us to be included in our website.

### **Luang Por Piak's Visit**

Preparations for the visit and Easter retreat with Luang Por Piak have been proceeding well. Nacha has offered and booked all the plane tickets and personally arranged the visas at the embassies in Bangkok. Luang Por Piak, his second monk Ven. Ajahn Isara, and a lay attendant are scheduled to arrive April 19 and depart on the 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the retreat, Luang Por is planning to give talks in Auckland and meet with monastics from other traditions. Luang Por is one of the most respected Buddhist masters in Thailand and a good friend of Venerable Ajahn Dtun, who visited Vimutti in the monastery's first year. We think this will be a very special occasion.

Luang Por has a frail digestive system and requires a special, extremely bland diet. We are looking for a volunteer to stay in the monastery and cook for Luang Por or else take responsibility for bringing his food to the monastery each day.

Would you like to help serve the Easter Retreat so that others are free to meditate? This can be a joyful way to participate in the retreat, while supporting the practice of others. Retreat managers and assistants keep the practical aspects of the monastery functioning smoothly while still being able to meditate and attend the Dhamma teachings.

For details of the Easter Retreat see the retreat section below.

### **Western Monastics Gathering**

On March 3, Vimutti hosted a gathering of Western-born Buddhist monks and nuns living in the Auckland area. This was a valuable opportunity to discuss topics relevant to Buddhist teachers in a Western context and to build community among renunciates who are

often isolated on a small island in the middle of the Pacific, far from larger monastic Sanghas and the countries of their Asian traditions. or. The full day included structured discussion but also allowed much flexibility to accommodate spontaneous arisings in the present moment. This is the second occasion this gathering has taken place, the first being two years ago also at Vimutti. It was a day filled with in-depth discussion of Buddhist topics, much laughter and heartfelt comradery.

### **Earthquake Relief**

The Vimutti community packed and sent canned food, clothes, toiletries and loads of toilet paper down to Christchurch as part of the nation-wide relief support. As traumatic and difficult as that earthquake has been for New Zealand, we can only imagine the scale of destruction and suffering in Japan and send our empathic compassion for their hardship, pain and loss. Nature still remains our primary Dhamma teacher.

### **Resident Sangha**

Last week we were fortunate to have Bhante Jinalankara stay with us for a period of solitude and tranquility. Ven. Mudito plans to go on tudong March 28 for a couple of weeks. Ajahn Jotipalo hopes to visit Vimutti on his way back to the U.S. after his retreat in Wellington concludes at the end of this month. Ajahn Dhirapanyo is planning to arrive with Luang Por Piak and be the primary translator during his stay.

## **Vimutti Stupa Update**

### **Construction Begins!**

The long awaited start date for the actual building of the stupa arrived on Monday, March 14, as the builders, architect and Sangha met on site. The excavation for the foundation began a few hours later, and on Monday March 21 the concrete began to pour. We have much gratitude to John Constable of Constable Hurst Architects for his high quality professional work offered as dana. Designing a stupa is definitely outside the box, and he and the project manager Meth have done some excellent creative brainstorming.

Meanwhile the four main Buddhas to be enshrined are being carved in Indonesia. Irene has done a very competent job of managing this aspect of the project. With the aid of modern cell phone camera technology, we are able to follow the stages of the carving from a rough cube to its final serene shape. Thanks also goes to Harsha, who has helped to facilitate the shipping.

During the Relics ceremony and Sangha Gathering, the central pole for the stupa was signed and blessed by the visiting Sangha. Many of the monks and nuns wrote brief teachings in (so far) six languages. The pole is a 3 metre, four-sided, tapered, painted trunk taken from a tree that we had planted seven years ago at the stupa site. When ready to be enshrined, the pole will be wrapped with Buddhist flags and blessed scarves and then sealed inside a large polyurethane pipe. Thanks to Jeevendra who arranged the pipe this past week.

### **Personal items**

The past couple of weeks Ajahn Chandako and Ven. Mudito have been carefully sorting and packing the plethora of personal items offered to be included in the base of the stupa. It has been a touching process to witness the objects and packages that hundreds of people had so carefully prepared. There were so many bits of people's lives, items that symbolised the people and activities that held the greatest meaning for them. For many their offerings were an act of renunciation: giving up things that they had had for decades, things of value, and laying to rest memories of the past.

Inside the box an engraved metal sign with the following message will be included:

*On Magha Puja, the full moon of February 2011, these personal articles were placed in the base of Vimutti Stupa by the local Buddhist community. The items represent the lives, hopes, memories, love and aspirations of hundreds of our Dhamma friends.*

*May they all soon attain the supreme happiness of Nibbana.*

*Vimutti Buddhist Monastery  
Bombay, New Zealand*

The amount of love, care and devotion with which these items were given was deeply touching. Many people put much thought into making up a small representative package that reflected their lives. For example, Ajahn Chandako's mother included a button from her mother's wedding outfit, a pin from her father honouring his years of work at a company, her husband's tie clasp and a turquoise rock brought from Tibet as a gift from her son—all enclosed in a box from Thailand.

There was a large amount of sentimental family jewellery offered, including Benita's wedding ring and another woman's wedding ring that she had had for over 60 years. Even as the ceremony proceeded, women were pulling off their earrings and bracelets to include.

There were bones, ashes, hair, glasses, office keys and belongings of loved ones who have passed away. One with the quote:

*"Those we lose would not want us to be mournful, but as we were when they loved us. And too, when we remember them with happiness we bring them closer."*

There were greenstone carvings, medicine from a Tibetan master, photos of families, ancestors, best friends, past phases and happy memories; articles from around the world, English tea pots, castle prints, German pewter mugs, flags, Chinese trays, Japanese wooden dolls, a kimono, New Zealand All Black's cups, Maori carvings, New Zealand and kiwi glass coasters, 'I love NZ' paraphernalia, sheep magnets, NZ souvenir plates, Mt Cook glass paperweight, shells from New Zealand beaches, tools of the trade, a carpenter's square used to build Bodhinyanarama and Vimutti Monasteries, Dr. Freddie's stethoscope, a mechanic's wrench and nuts, AC's multitool, a huge crystal, a wide variety of special or sentimental rocks from different parts of the planet, an ancient New Zealand fossil, a horseshoe found at Vimutti, a net ball racquet, a toy rugby ball, a Vimutti t-shirt, Luang Por Sumedhos's spoon and Ajahn Chandako's robe.

There was a large quantity of cards written with people's hopes, aspirations and well wishes for the planet. Some of the contributions were long, reflective letters. Others were short and pithy. As part of

our New Year's ceremony, we gave people the chance to write something to include in the stupa. Examples from New Years are:

"Whenever and wherever I will be reborn, may I always be a Buddhist (i.e. encountering the Buddha's teaching) May all beings (including me) be happy and peaceful."

"May there be peace in all hearts."

"On my deathbed I want to be remembered as a courageous, caring, and loving spiritual woman who is striving to make efforts to understand how to be a better human being."

"For human rights and freedom for all."

"May this world be more clean and peaceful place for future generation."

(in the handwriting of a child) "I hope that my dad and mum see me get a great job and earn good money so my dad is happy of me."

"Take my family towards the Nibbana. Keep them happy and peace in this journey."

"I hope I will become a civil engineer."

"I love my family very much. I love my old mother."

"I want to earn money by working hard to help poor children's higher education."

"I respect with all my heart Buddhism and my parents."

"May I realise four Noble Truths and be born in a pleasant realm till I realise Nibbana."

"May I always meet with success. May I also have the courage, understanding, determination and patience to overcome inevitable difficulties, problems and failures in life."

"I love my family."

"Not spend too much time on the computer."

"I wish my life, now and more to come, will touch other people's lives, be of service to others, through the encounter of the Buddha's teachings."

"May the Buddha guide my thoughts and actions throughout the day. May the Dhamma help me to be strong in moments of weakness, brave in times of trouble and calm in the face of changing fortunes. May the Sangha inspire me to act with kindness, patience and forgiveness in my dealings with others, including those who are unfriendly to me. May I have the opportunity today to help someone in need of my love and support. I shall not waste this life in useless pursuits but use it well to bring benefit and happiness to the world."

“Is there anybody called me to hang on, other than a process? Overcome this problem ends up in Buddha stage.”

“Whatever good deeds I may do, may they be the cause for this mind to be liberated, to realise ultimate truth and to attain Nibbana. May I always be born where conditions are conducive to the practice of Dhamma. May I always be near good Dhamma teachers. May I always be born in a family that keeps the five precepts, knows harmony and the path to true liberation. Until I realise Nibbana, may I always, always have the Dhamma in my heart to guide me skilfully through life’s journey. May I forever have the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha in my heart ‘till I attain Nibbana.”

The personal articles are now being packed in watertight toolboxes which will be placed in one very large (coffin sized) yellow, heavy duty tool box. This will then be glued and welded shut for eternity (well, at least for a heck of a long time probably). It is not unlikely that some future civilisation may find and open this box hundreds of years from now and place all of the items in a museum! (don’t worry, you’ll be too dead by then to be embarrassed). If you still wish to take advantage of this rare opportunity, you have a few days to bring your items to Vimutti before the box is sealed.

We will be receiving Buddha images (statues, paintings or amulets) to be enshrined in the next level of the stupa for a few months yet.

### **Tipitaka, the Pali Canon**

As part of the auspicious items going into the Vimutti Stupa, we are preparing a collection of Buddhist Scriptures to be enshrined. Supporters in Malaysia have helped to complete our English version of the Tipitaka: the Suttas, the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma. Supporters working on the World Tipitaka Project in Thailand (a huge, technically complicated, decade-long project to create the most authoritative Pali Tipitaka) have offered to provide us with the Pali version.

### **Hierarchy of the items to be enshrined within the stupa**

The items enshrined will be ordered with a clear reverence for height and level of significance. The relics themselves will be placed in the square section, known as the harmika, near the top of the stupa.

Directly below them, in the bell shaped section known as the anda, will be the Pali canon, the Tipitaka. In this area there will also be four large Buddha statues, numerous smaller ones, and many sacred objects and items of psychic potency. All these would still be above the waist level of the people circumambulating. In the square base, below foot level, but directly underneath the stupa, would be the box containing personal items. In this way, no one would actually be circumambulating the personal items, but they would be respectfully tucked into a protected space below the level where people are worshipping or paying respect.

### **Ceremony for Enshrining the Tipitaka and Buddha Images Saturday May 21, 2011**

Just after the full moon of May, Wesak or Visakha Puja, we plan to have the ceremony for enshrining the Tipitaka in the Stupa. These are the teachings of the Buddha that have been preserved in the Pali Canon, the oldest and most historically reliable account of what the Buddha taught. Both Pali and English versions will be included. On that day we will also be enshrining Buddha statues, the sacred central pole, holy amulets, and other sacred scripts.

**For complete details, background and architectural sketches,  
please see  
[The Vimutti Stupa](#)**

## **Vihara Upgrade**

As part of the effort to spruce up the Auckland Buddhist Vihara, new carpeting and chairs have been added downstairs. We are now looking for people knowledgeable about kitchen cabinets, cupboards and interior decorating to offer information for the next step. We have some Buddhist paintings that could be used, but they are currently only a roll of canvas. We are looking for anyone skilled in mounting the canvas artwork on a wooden structure and framing it properly.

## **Upcoming Meditation Retreats**

## **Day of Peace**

**Saturday, March 26, 8:30am--4:00pm**

**Led by Venerable Mudito and Ven. Chang Shean**

This is a valuable opportunity for beginners and experienced meditators alike. This full day of meditation, instruction and silence is an excellent way to keep up with your dedication to inner peace. Meditation is a vital skill for developing calm and insight on the path to enlightenment. It has also been shown to reduce stress, strengthen the immune system and keep the left prefrontal cortex from deteriorating with age. It is a practical way to recharge your batteries and to train mindful awareness for integration into daily life. It is good to bring loose fitting clothing, a sun hat and some food for a shared lunch. Ven. Chang Shean is a Taiwanese bhikkhuni who leads the group in Chi Kung.

**Held at: Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay**

**Registration: no need to register beforehand**

## **Shazam**

**Saturday, Sunday March 26, 27**

**Taught by Ajahn Chandako and Dr. Bruce Lipton**

This unique and rare collaboration between Dr. Bruce H. Lipton, an internationally renowned cellular biologist, author and speaker, and the Venerable Ajahn Chandako, a revered Buddhist meditation monk and abbot, highlights their unique paths as they explore the common ground for transforming human consciousness in this critical period of our history.

This workshop will feature lectures, meditation and discussion and provide a serious avenue for having fun whilst awakening to new possibilities. As Bruce Lipton refers to nuclei and mitochondria, and Ajahn Chandako refers to liberation of the mind, one comes to realize that they are not speaking different languages, but that from their different perspectives they are both addressing the same reality....heightened consciousness. An understanding of the interface between consciousness and biology enables participants to

take back creative control over their own lives and contribute to humanity's evolution.

**Held at:** Wellpark Wellness Retreat Centre at Kawai Purpura

**Registration:** Go to [www.rockyourlifeevents.com/shazam](http://www.rockyourlifeevents.com/shazam)

## **Easter Retreat with Luang Por Piak**

**Thursday evening, April 21 to Monday, April 25**

**Held at:** Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay

**Registration:** To register contact Rosalind at (09) 626-7804 or email: [hew@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hew@xtra.co.nz)

Please provide your name, address, email and phone number and an emergency contact.

Luang Por Piak will be staying at Vimutti Monastery April 19-30. In addition to the Easter Retreat, he will give a public talk at the Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Road, at 7:30 pm, Friday, April 29. As this is the first time Luang Por Piak has taught in the West, we consider it a rare opportunity and great honour.

Information about Luang Por Piak's retreat is attached.

## **One World, One Truth**

**Saturday May 7- Saturday May 14**

**Taught by Ajahn Chandako and Ven. Nawang Lhatso**

In this rare and uniquely collaborative meditation retreat, these two Sangha members from the Theravada and Vajrayana traditions will spend a week exploring and discussing the common ground and differences between these two ancient ways of practice and how they manifest in the melting pot of contemporary Western Buddhism. As with previous retreats, it will be conducted in silence with thorough meditation instruction and guidance. Ven. Lhatso is a New Zealand-born nun who ordained in the Tibetan tradition in 2008. The setting for the retreat will be the beautiful hills and lush bush of Te Moata.

**Held at: Te Moata Retreat Centre**

**Registration: contact Te Moata**

[http://temoata.org/Te\\_Moata/Registration.html](http://temoata.org/Te_Moata/Registration.html)

## **Lake Cabin and Forest Retreat**

**Saturday June 18- Sunday June 26**

**Taught by Ajahn Chandako**

This year would be the third retreat held at the remote and tranquil Tendall lake cabin. This is an opportunity to experience teachings from the forest tradition in the heart of the forest. Conditions are simple as we live and practice as part of the surrounding natural environment.

**Held at:** Northern Minnesota, USA

**Registration:** Contact Common Ground Meditation Center, Mpls.

### **Dana**

All retreats and teachings held at Vimutti Buddhist Monastery are offered on a 'dana' basis. Dana is Pali for 'generosity'. Offering teachings freely is a vital principle to uphold. This system of mutual generosity means that there are no registration fees: no charge for the facilities, the food, the management, caretaking, accommodation or the teaching. To engage wisely with a system of dana means that instead of an attitude of paying for goods and services, a retreatant makes good kamma (merit or *punna*) by donating whatever amount feels right: neither too much nor too little. The natural result of generosity is an internal brightness and joy that creates a wholesome and fertile mental environment for developing meditation.

### **Need a Ride to the monastery?**

If you are looking for a ride to Vimutti Monastery, you can post your request on our ride sharing calendar. If you are planning to drive to the monastery and have room for another person, check the calendar to see if someone needs a ride.

Click here to see [the carpooling calendar](#)

### **Free Firewood**

Free pine firewood is available from the monastery land for anyone who would like to have it. Some is already prepared and some would need to be cut with a chainsaw.

## **Upcoming Events**

**Vimutti Buddhist Monastery and the Auckland Buddhist Vihara**

**Click on these links to find out more:**

**[Good Karma Day](#), [Open Day](#), [Day of Peace](#)**

**Saturday, March 26, 8:30am-4:00pm**

**Day of Peace, a one-day meditation workshop with Ven. Mudito  
Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay**

**Saturday and Sunday, March 26, 27**

**Shazam Workshop, with Ajahn Chandako, Bruce Lipton  
Wellpark Wellness Retreat Centre, Kawai Purapura, Albany**

**Saturday, April 9, all day**

**Good Karma Day, our monthly working bee  
Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay**

**May 7-14**

**Meditation Retreat: One World, One Truth, with Ajahn Chandako  
Te Moata Retreat Centre, Tairua, Coromandel**

**Saturday, May 7**

**Working Bee  
The Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Rd., Mt. Wellington**

**Sunday, May 15**

**Wesak Celebration  
The Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Rd., Mt. Wellington**

**Saturday, May 21**

Ceremony for enshrining Tipitaka, Buddhas and sacred items in the Vimutti Stupa  
Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay

## **June 18-26**

Meditation Retreat: Lake Cabin and Forest Retreat with Ajahn Chandako  
Tendall's Lake Cabin, Northern Minnesota, USA

## **July 16**

Beginning of the three month Rains Retreat  
Vimutti Buddhist Monastery, Bombay

## **Every Sunday 10:00-11:00am** (except Open Day)

Chi Kung lessons with Venerable Chang Shean  
The Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Rd., Mt. Wellington  
This meditation in movement is an outstanding way to relieve stress, balance energy and develop mindfulness.  
Sister Chang Shean is a Taiwanese Bhikkhuni who offers these lessons freely on a donation basis. All proceeds go to the ATBA.

## **Every Sunday 3:00-4:30pm**

Dhamma School  
The Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Rd., Mt. Wellington  
Give your children a good start in life with the ATBA Dhamma School. Available for any child or teenager from the ages of 5-18. Contact Benita 09 520-1392

## **Every Sunday, 7:30 pm**

Meditation, chanting and listening to a Dhamma talk  
The Auckland Buddhist Vihara, 29 Harris Rd., Mt. Wellington

## **Useful items to donate to the Monastery**

A black and white printer  
Small, medium or large sized brass or stone boxes for placing smaller items within the stupa  
Coffee table (unpainted wooden, used OK).

**Chilly bin/cooler**  
**Brown crocs (or similar) size 12-15**  
**Anyone who is skilled at framing large paintings and photos**  
**Goldfish for the monastery ponds**

## **Anumodana**

**We rejoice in the good kamma made by the following people:**

**ATBA committee** for assistance with preparation for the Relic Display  
**All the young Vimutti volunteers for the Relics Display**  
**Rasindra** for Audio & Visual for the Relics Display  
**Kiow, Nuk and Sopa** for organising the flower arrangements  
**Duktah** for organising the tent for free Thai noodle soup  
**Good Kamma Day: Dayananda, Boo, Pasquel, Adeline, Richard Tenzin Chogkyi** for helping to organise the Monastic Gathering  
**George** for computer and website assistance  
**Edward** for sharpening the landscaping tools and moving a caravan  
**Jo** for offering a lawn mower  
**Tamara** for a stupa donation  
**Gamini** for a stupa donation  
**Freddie, Mike** for helping Ajahn get his permanent resident visa  
**Steve and Peter** for chainsaw work  
**World Tipitaka Project** for a digital version of the Pali Canon  
**Yoke Leen, Soh Hua, Siew Swan and Sukhi Hotu** for offering English volumes of the Tipitaka for the stupa  
**Nacha and Nuan** for offering tickets for Luan Por Piak, Tan Ajahn isara and their attendant  
**Nacha** for arranging the visas for Luang Por Piak to NZ and Oz  
**Nacha** for managing the Buddhas being carved in Thailand  
**Irene** for managing the Buddhas being carved in Indonesia  
**Jevendra** for organising the parking at the Relics Display and offering large pipe for housing the central pole for the stupa  
**Freddie's grandson 'Freddie Jr.'** for a stupa donation  
**Dhamma friends in Palmerston North have been very thoughtful and generous in supporting our new garage and upgrading our**

water system. This will help to ensure that future retreats at Vimutti will always have enough water. Special thanks goes to Judy and Larry Loo, Angeline Loo; Lily, Rebecca and Dzin Alekzanda; Asher, Sheena and Thomas Loo; H E Lim, Stephen and Stephanie Goh, Carrol Chan, Stephen Wong, Mae Wong, Aw Wai Chin, Benson, Vivien and Nicholas Wong, Emily Wong, and Violet Wong.

**By the power of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha,  
may these offerings be a cause for you to realise  
the freedom and peace of Nibbana.**

## **Download the ATBA Chanting**

[Evening Chanting](#)

[The Buddha's Words on Loving-kindness, the Metta Sutta](#)

## **Basic Introduction to Buddhism**

For a simple, straightforward and easy to read introduction to the teachings of the Buddha, click on the following link

[What is Buddhism?](#)

## **Carpooling**

To make it easier for people to visit the monastery and to reduce your carbon footprint, we have now set up a ridesharing system. If you would like to come to Vimutti but do not have a vehicle, or you would like to share a ride and petrol costs with others, please have a look at the carpooling page of our website. Both people looking for a ride and people who wish to offer a ride can post information on the site. Ridesharing is environmentally friendly, economical and brings people together.

Click here to see [the carpooling calendar](#)

## **Definition**

**Vimutti:** [Pali] Release, liberation, emancipation; freedom from the fabrications and conventions of the mind. The suttas distinguish between two kinds of liberation. Liberation through wisdom (*pañña-vimutti*) describes the fully enlightened mind of a Buddha or an Arahant. Liberation through awareness (*ceto-vimutti*) is used to describe either the unbounded but temporary liberation of mind in deep samadhi (*jhana*) or the supramundane state of samadhi in the completely purified mind of a Buddha or an Arahant.

**[Visit our Website](#)**

**For complete information on Vimutti Buddhist  
Monastery and the ATBA, including maps, please  
see our website**

**[www.vimutti.org.nz](http://www.vimutti.org.nz)**

**We wish you all much benefit and happiness  
from practicing meditation and leading a  
good life.**