

ZEN NEWSHEET

Nº 1

Wednesday meetings: Meditation and discussion meetings continue every Wednesday at 78 Jesmond Rd., Newcastle 2. It is good to feel the way this group has gelled in the last couple of months, providing a firm basis for members' own daily zazen practice. Rooms vary from week to week and those attending are asked to consult the notice board in the entrance hall. Please note there will be no meeting on 25.12.74.

The meeting on 27th November will be led by Reverend Daiji Strathern, prior of Throssel Hole Zen Priory. From the new year we are hoping that Reverend Strathern will be able to lead at least one of our meetings each month.

Durham Retreat: We are grateful to Reverend Strathern for leading a one day retreat on Sunday 27th October for our selves and Durham meditation group, at St Mary's College, Durham University. This was well supported and provided a very useful introduction to Zen for a number of people new to meditation as well as a spur to the practice of more experienced members.

Dr. Werner: It is hoped that Dr. Werner from Durham University will be able to attend and lecture at one of our Wednesday meetings in the near future, drawing on his thorough studies and practice of Theravada Buddhism.

Books and equipment: Orders for books on Buddhism and for meditation stools should be sent to Gordon Bell (address below). Kennett Roshi's book "Selling Water by the River, A Manual of Zen Training" is available from Throssel Hole Priory as is a very useful booklet on zazen (price 30p). The Priory may also begin producing meditation cushions and stools for sale in the near future.

U.K. visit of Gyalwah Karmapa: His Holiness the Gyalwah Karmapa, spiritual head of the Kagyudpa school of Tibetan Buddhist practice is at present paying his first visit to western countries and will be in U.K. in late November and early December. We hope that His Holiness's visit is blessed with happiness and success. Further details are available from Kham House, Ashdon, Near Saffron Walden, Essex.

Retreats at Throssel Hole Priory: Members have attended weekend retreats at the Priory on 12th & 13th October and on 2nd & 3rd November. Members are also planning to attend the retreat on 30th November - 1st December and the week sesshin ("searching of the heart") on 14th to 22nd December. Some pooling of transport should be possible. For details of these and future retreats please write direct to Throssel Hole Priory, Carr Shield, Near Hexham, Northumberland.

Sunday visits to the Priory: The Priory is open to visitors without prior arrangement on Sunday mornings. At 11.30 a lecture is given followed by a period of zazen and there is some opportunity for sanzen (private interview) with Reverend Strathern. Members have recently begun to take advantage of this opportunity and several visits have been made.

Future Newsheets: Newsheets will be produced from time to time and will be distributed to those attending the group's activities and to others on request.

Further information is available from:

B. Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland;
G. Bell, 27 Rothbury Ave., Horden, Peterlee, Co. Durham; or
Mrs. E. Cook, 31 Grafton Rd., Whitley Bay, North Tyneside.

zen

newssheet



Number 2

January 1975

Editorial: Turning Goodwill into Action

This Newssheet is an attempt to foster the practice and study of Zen in the North East. We would like interested readers to get in touch with us. We would like to be able to create links between people when we can. If you have any item of news or information which would be of interest to followers of the Buddhist way we should like to hear about it. If you would like to meet others with a similar Buddhist interest to yourself, we may be able to help. If you know of anybody else who would like to receive this publication, please send us their address. We will welcome all communications and offers of help and will use them as best we can.

Meditation Meetings in Tyneside area

Meetings for meditation and discussion will be held at 78 Jesmond Rd., Newcastle 2 (by Jesmond station) on January 15th, 22nd and 29th.

Meetings in February will be as follows:

- | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Feb 5th | 31 Grafton Road, Whitley Bay |
| 12th | 15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth |
| 19th | 7 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington |
| 26th | 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland |

Basic instruction for beginners is provided when required. Please arrive between 6.30 & 6.50pm if possible. Lifts can usually be organised for those with transport problems.

All of these meetings are on Wednesdays and it has been suggested that this may exclude some people who would wish to attend. We are unsure if this is so, but if interest were shown it would be possible to start meetings on other days or in other locations. If you would like to be involved in starting a new group we would like to hear from you.

Reverend Daiji Strathern

Reverend Strathern, Prior of Throssel Hole Zen Priory, will lead the Wednesday group meditation meeting at 78 Jesmond Rd., on 29.1.75 and will talk on the practice of Soto Zen.

Day Retreat at Killingworth

Following the success of our short retreats held at Durham we have decided to hold one nearer Newcastle on Sunday 16.2.75. Rycharde Apps has kindly agreed to allow the use of his house at 15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth NE12 0UE for this purpose. The retreat will be led by Reverend Strathern and will last from 9am to 9pm. Two meals will be provided and a charge of 85p per head will be made. It eases the task of organisation considerably if participants can book in advance.

BUDDHIST WEEKEND SEMINAR

HAYES CONFERENCE CENTRE, SWANWICK, NR. DERBY. MARCH 21-23
CONTACT MR & MRS STRUTH 5 EILEEN AVE., LEICESTER LE4 0DR

Visits to Throssel Hole Priory

Sunday morning visits to the Priory for lectures and zazen are becoming a regular event and transport to the Priory can thus now be arranged almost every week. In addition members have participated in the weekend retreat on 30th November - 1st December and the week sesshin on 14th to 22nd December. Further retreats at the Priory are scheduled for 1st & 2nd February, 1st & 2nd March and 12th & 13th April. For further details of these please write direct to Throssel Hole Priory, Carr Shield, Nr. Hexham, Northumberland. For those who wish to obtain more than a superficial understanding of Zen but have not yet visited the Priory we can recommend nothing better than that they should arrange to spend a period there as soon as possible.

Jumble Sale

We are very pleased to hear that after many delays planning permission has now been granted for the new zendo (meditation hall) and refectory to be built at Throssel Hole Priory. An appeal for funds is to be made for this building project. Our training in Buddhism owes a great deal to the instruction and guidance we have received at the Priory and we wish to help in any way we can. One of us is organising a jumble sale to be held at St George's Church Hall, Cullercoats on Saturday 8.2.75 at 2.30pm. If you can help by providing or collecting jumble or by manning a stall on the day please get in touch. You may also have fund raising ideas of your own or wish to contribute in other ways.

Buddhist Union

We have received notification of the formation of a new Buddhist organization to be known as the Buddhist Union. It is understood that this will be primarily an organisation for lay people and that it will be concerned with activities of a charitable nature. We will print further information as it becomes available.

Durham

The following meetings, organised by Durham University Buddhist Society will take place at the Elvet Riverside Rooms, Old Elvet, Durham. Meetings commence at 8pm.

27.1.75 Dr Werner - Introduction to Buddhism

10.2.75 Rev. Strathern - Zen meditation

10.3.75 Ursula Dorkins - Relaxation

24.2.75 Dr Werner - Buddhist Philosophy

Middlesborough

Reverend Strathern will be speaking at The Centre, Harrow Road, Middlesborough at 7.30pm on 24.1.75 about "The Buddhist View of the Origins of Man". There is a 20p admission fee.

CLEVELAND MEDITATION GROUP

FEB	13	46	CLYDE ST.	M'BRG
	20		FLAT 10.07	STUDENT HOUSES, KING EDWARDS ST. M'BRG
	27	48	ENFIELD ST.	M'BRG
MAR	6	2	THE CRESCENT	LINTHORPE M'BRG

ENQUIRIES TO MR. JAYATISSA, 73 WELLESLEY RD. M'BRG

Compiled and published by

D. Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland;
G. Bell, 27 Rothbury Ave., Horden, Peterlee, Co. Durham; &
Mrs. E. Cook, 31 Grafton Rd., Whitley Bay
on behalf of Newcastle Zen Buddhist Group.

zen newssheet

Number 3

March 1975

Editorial: Being Human

An editor is in a special position, privileged to give you his wisdom. But I am not special. I have no special power which makes me uniquely qualified to tell you my mind. Perhaps I should leave this space blank; wait until I am safely in nirvana before I speak; give you nothing until I am home and dry. At least I will share with you this temptation of mine. Perhaps you have a similar one. It would be nice if we had something in common. It might be a start to friendship. We might be able to help one another.

All I can give you is my ordinariness. But perhaps that is alright. It is said that in Zen training we become more and more ourselves and that in doing so we find ourselves more and more open to others. I hope so.

Meditation Meetings in Tyneside area

Gatherings for meditation and discussion will be held on Thursdays as follows:

March	6th	15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth
	13th	25 Grange Lane, Whickham
	20th	31 Grafton Rd., Whitley Bay
	27th	20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland
April	10th	8 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington
	17th	15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth

Meetings begin at 7pm. Beginners are welcome.

Transport Coordination

If you are travelling to meetings or other activities by car and could give somebody else a lift, please let Rycharde Apps know in advance. If you would like a lift organized please ring Rycharde at Newcastle 682610 outside working hours. Lifts can also usually be arranged to Throssel Hole Priory for the lecture and meditation periods held on Sunday mornings.

Day Retreats at Killingworth

A day retreat was held at Killingworth on 16.2.75. We wish to thank Daiji for his kindness in leading the retreat and his patience when answering our many impatient questions, Rycharde Apps for the use of his rather nice house and Eddy Cook for organizing meals. Consensus of opinion seems to be that one day retreats are not only an enjoyable experience but also very beneficial to the individuals concerned so let's have some more please.

- Diana Brazier

Reverend Strathern has agreed to lead a further day retreat at Killingworth on Saturday 19th April. As previously this will last from 9am to 9pm. Two meals will be provided and a charge of £1 per head will be made (75p for regular contributors). Please book in advance with Rycharde Apps, 15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth NE12 0UE.

Durham

Ursula Flemming will be speaking on "Relaxation" at Elvet Riverside Rooms, Durham on Monday 10th March at 8.15pm.

The University meditation group meets in St. Mary's Junior Common Room at 8.30pm on Tuesdays 11th & 18th March. After the vacation meetings will recommence on 22nd April.

Cleveland

Cleveland meditation group will meet at 7pm on Thursdays as follows:

March 13th	73 Wellesley Rd., Middlesbrough
20th	46 Clyde St., Middlesbrough
27th	48 Enfield St., Middlesbrough
April 4th	2 The Crescent, Linthorpe

Further information from Mr. Jayatissa, 73 Wellesley Rd., Middlesbrough.

Weekend Seminar

A Buddhist weekend seminar will be held on April 4th-6th at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire. Visiting speakers will include Sanga Klampila and Lama Chime Rimpoche. There will be periods of meditation, talks and discussion. Those wishing to attend should contact: The Buddhist Groups Association, 8 Eileen Avenue, Leicester LE4 0DR.

Spode House Retreat

Reverend Strathern will be conducting a week retreat at the Catholic Retreat Centre at Spode House on 18th-25th July. Further details from The Warden, Spode House, Rugeley, Staffs. If you wish to attend it is advisable to book early.

Raising Money for Throssel Hole Zen Priory

Zendo Appeal Over the next few months a national appeal is to be made to raise £20,000 for a new building at the Priory. The building will house a meditation hall, dining room, kitchen, toilets and showers. It will double the present capacity and replace the existing building which is leaning and is structurally unsound. It is good to see that Britain's only Zen Buddhist training monastery is growing and expanding due to the trainees' hard work and the demand for a British Sangha which is not connected directly with the East. Several of our group are helping on the fund raising committees to organize the appeal and raise the funds. So far we have over £4,000. If you would like to help please let us know.

- Gordon Bell

Our Jumble Sale held on Saturday 8th February in Cullercoats was very successful. We were surprised to discover we made £65. Many thanks for the invaluable help given by all: Gordon who printed all the collection tickets and the final day posters and saw to advertizing the jumble sale on local radio; those who helped on the day: our friends Claudia and Tony, Pat and Theresa, Wilma and little Ernestine; Members of our meditation group, David and Diana, Duncan and David, Robert and Richard. Thanks again to all for without the group effort it wouldn't have happened.

- ETTY COOK

If you would like to know how you can help, please contact the chairman of the north east area fund raising committee, Robert Dunnett at 8 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington, Tyne & Wear.

Views about Books

Practical Buddhism by Charles Luk (Rider 1971)

The book deals briefly with the basic teachings of both the Hinayana and Mahayana. After describing the methods of the Chinese Mahayana schools, Charles Luk then devotes the rest of the book to Ch'an (Zen). The third Chinese Patriarch's gatha "Have Faith in Your Mind" is translated in full. Two thirds of the book is given to the autobiography of the Zen Master Han Shan. Although the book is not as practical as one may expect, it does include much useful and relevant information for the student of Zen. - Gordon Bell

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism by Chogyam Trungpa (Watkins 1973) Paperback £1.50.

This book is to be highly recommended to anyone who feels himself to be up to his neck in mud and would like someone to show him a way out. Written with great warmth, humour and understanding, Trungpa deals with all the basic questions that people ask and basic fears that people have. If you find most Buddhist books seem to be shouting directions at you from a distance and you can't quite hear what they are saying, try this one, it might get through. - Diana Brazier

Posters

If you know of anywhere where you could put up a poster advertizing our meetings, please let us know. Copies of this Newsheet may also be displayed on notice boards. This is a simple task and can be most helpful.

Next Newsheet

The next Zen Newsheet will appear in late April. Contributions should reach the editor by 17th April at the latest.

Compiled and published by members of Newcastle Zen Buddhist Group to foster the practice and study of Zen in the North East. All correspondence to the editor please: D. Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland.

Zen newsheet

Number 4

May 1975

Editorial: All is one, All is different

This Newssheet is sponsored by members of the Newcastle Zen Meditation Group. I hope it may be a positive expression of our training in Zen and I hope it is of use and interest to you, the reader, whether your practice is the same as ours or different.

It is in the nature of the world that there are always differences for us to see and wherever we see differences there is a danger that we may be moved by rivalries, by the idea that one practice is superior to all others, that one person's training is superior, that one group is best. Such attitudes are born of a desire for power over others and a failure to accept responsibility for our power over ourselves. If we seek true religion we must never rest in our efforts to leave this contentious kind of thinking behind.

At the same time it must be clear that true unity does not lie in the pursuit of uniformity, for this is to be attached to forms whilst ignoring reality. I shall try to follow my practice, my way of training, as heartily as I am able. I hope you will follow yours similarly. Our paths will never be identical but that is neither here nor there. What seems important is that we each make a sincere attempt. If we can work hard at this, I am sure there will be a unity between us which transcends all appearances.

For this Newssheet material for publication will be considered, from whatever source it may come, provided only that it is well intentioned. No material will be published which appears likely to stir up ill will. Thus I hope our contributions may be of value to one another. I hope we may all be encouraged. I hope we may learn to live together in a positive, practical, harmonious way. It is in this way that the Dharma flourishes.

Jukai Sesshin

Four of us from Newcastle were amongst the thirty priests and laymen at the Jukai sesshin at Throssel Hole Priory this Easter. Thirty people must represent the full capacity of the existing facilities and I was the last to successfully book for the week as far back as early February.

The ceremonies of Sange, Reading the Kyojukaimon, Ketchimyaku and Recognition were splendid, making sure we understood the importance to us of taking the precepts. Daiji was helped by Hofuku and Kyosei Hughes from the London Zen Priory. We had plenty of snow during the week which made the Sange procession, outside, at night and barefoot, very memorable.

The snow also encouraged the outside work to be done more actively to keep warm. Much of the site for the new zendo has now been cleared. This has revealed some old coal workings which will call for some alterations for the foundations.

There is another Jukai sesshin in June for those unable to get to this one. When word gets round about Giko's Jukai cake, amazing in quality and quantity, I'm sure it will also be fully booked.

- Rycharde Apps

The word sesshin means searching of the heart and it is the name for a seven day period at the monastery when other work is cut to a minimum and the bulk of the time is given over to meditation. Jukai refers to the group of ceremonies in which participants affirm or reaffirm their wish to be Buddhists and to train in the Buddhist way. These are the most important ceremonies in the life of a Buddhist layman. Not everybody attending the sesshin necessarily participates in Jukai since this must be a voluntary undertaking. Details of the ceremonies are given in Selling Water by the River, Reverend Jiyu Kennett, (Pantheon) 1972. They contain in symbolic form all that one needs to know to train in Zen.

Effort

Dogen Zenji wrote in Zazen Rules (see Selling Water by the River) that "To live by Zen is the same as to live an ordinary daily life."

Zen is not something outside ourselves, outside our daily activities. We miss it when we have lost real contact with our life, when we are adrift in a fog, swayed to and fro by the tides of our opinions, attachments and with no sense of direction, no will. It may be surprising to find that we ourselves created the mess (well who else could), but we kid ourselves it is someone else at fault, in an attempt to escape from the responsibility and reality of life. I find one of the ways that I have done this, and I am sure others do too, is to drift and dream through the day, not attending to the job in hand, only half living. Something goes wrong, then it is never me that's wrong, always it is the tools, the materials or the idiot who gave me the job and told me how to do it. In such a state we break the precepts, we cut everyone off and take everything for granted.

Yes it seems much nicer to live in a fantasy world than get on with the mundane work. Much easier to turn away from the reality of life's not so pleasant situations. How often have you backed down from meeting or speaking to someone or put off doing some bothersome task until you feel in the mood for it?

How is Zen to be found in situations like these? Every event in life can teach us a great deal, if we wake up to see it. So the key to the quote above is "to live", to be there, facing up, getting on with it, pleasant or unpleasant. Going on, letting go of the off putting doubts, erks, grudges etc., set up by the ego. They can be very convincing and it is only natural to be pulled off centre and make mistakes. All we have to do is to trust, re-aim and go on, putting more effort into life.

In taking life on, stretching out a little, putting everything in and leaving nothing out, it can be found - an extraordinary life to be lived.

- Gordon Bell

NEWS

Buddhist Union: Further information has now been received about this organisation. It appears to be a valuable attempt to create links between different groups of Buddhists and to foster practical expressions of the Dharma through charitable activities, mutual aid, exchange of information and other schemes. The success of a venture of this kind will clearly depend upon the support it receives. Those who would like further details should write to Max Craven Jackson, 128 Westbourne Ave., Hull HU5 3HZ (tel 492882).

Retreats at Throssel Hole Priory: Weekend retreats will be held on 3rd-4th May, 31st May - 1st June, 5th-6th July, and 30th-31st August. There will be a Jukai sesshin on 21st-29th June and a sesshin on 2nd-10th August. Bookings should be made in advance to the Guestmaster, Throssel Hole Priory, Carrshield, Nr Hexham, Northumberland. Reverend Strathern will also be conducting an inter-religious retreat with Fr. Stephen Gowers OCR at Spode House, Hawkesyard Priory, Rugeley, Staffs on 18th-25th July. Applications should be made to the warden.

Sunday Visits to the Priory: For some time now members of the Newcastle Group have been fairly frequent attenders at the lecture, meditation and sanzen given at the Priory on Sunday mornings from 11.30am until lunchtime. This arrangement has now been extended so that those who wish may stay on for the rest of the day. A charge of 50p will be made for lunch and 75p for lunch plus evening meal. Those wishing to stay for the day in this way should let the Priory know by Friday morning at the latest to facilitate catering.

Edinburgh Group: Through members of the Newcastle Group who have connections with Edinburgh meetings have now started at 4 Clarence St, Stockbridge, Edinburgh at 2.30pm on Sundays. This is only in the early stages of forming into a zazen group but has already attracted five or six keen members. Others are welcome.

Durham Group: The meditation group meets on Mondays in the Chapel, Van Mildert College at 8pm. Information - Jonathan Sutton, Littleton House, Littleton, Co. Durham.

Cleveland Group: meets Thursdays at 7.30pm as follows:

48 Enfield St, Middlebrough	May 1	May 29	June 26
73 Wellesley Rd, M'bro	May 8	June 5	
2 The Crescent, Linthorpe, M'bro	May 15	June 12	
46 Clyde St, M'bro	May 21	June 19	

Information - Mr. Jayatissa, 73 Wellesley Rd, M'bro.

Tyneside: Meetings on Wednesdays (except Thursday May 8th) at 7pm as follows:

31 Grafton Rd, Whitley Bay	April 23	May 21	June 18
8 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington	April 30	May 28	
20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland	May 8	June 4	June 25
15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth	May 14	June 11	

Information and organisation of lifts - Rycharde Apps, 15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth (tel 682610).

Buddha's Birthday: Reverend Strathern will lead a special meeting of the Newcastle Group to mark the anniversary of the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha on May 8th at 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland.

Compiled and published by members of Newcastle Zen Buddhist Group to foster the practice and study of Zen in the North East. All correspondence to the editor please: David Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland.

Godan

zen newsheet

Number 5

July 1975

Editorial: Do not kill

To live by Zen is to fulfil the moral precepts which have been transmitted from teacher to teacher since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. These are not easy teachings and training to realize their true significance requires all our energy. It is said that the precepts are the highest form of koan. It is not, therefore, enough merely to regard them as a set of restrictions by keeping to which we may obtain some reward later on. Merely to go through the motions or to act from some ulterior motive is quite inadequate. To regard the precepts only as restrictions is to see their observance as a form of slavery and to place oneself in such bondage is a fine way to cultivate either bitterness or self-righteousness or even both. Zen is not a form of slavery but of liberation.

The reason that the precepts are the true gateway to enlightenment is that they lead us back to what we know and want in our hearts. They help us to stop trying to kill off the Buddha nature which comes to life in us whenever we are honest with ourselves. They require us to face situations realistically and act sincerely. I think this is what all of us would really like to do if we had the courage, if we were not afraid of each other, afraid of ourselves.

Our training in Zen is to dissolve these fears by putting our energy into living positively rather than into defensive manoeuvres. In reality we cannot cut ourselves off from others. Only in our heads can we create such barriers. To train, to meditate, is to give up attachment to prejudice and to the fixed ideas we set up to deceive each other. It is to give up what really enslaves us, our greed, our hatreds, our delusions. These are what really destroy life. A life lived sincerely is the life of a Buddha. We can continue the life of Buddha by being true to ourselves or we can kill it by insincerity, by refusing to allow it to live in us, by refusing to see it in others.

To live by Zen, therefore, is to carry our meditation into daily life, to work hard at whatever life requires of us and not to be content with half hearted efforts. In this way we may live our lives to the full and be useful to others. This is the task we take upon ourselves each day and if we sincerely wish it I believe we can succeed.

(The precepts and their religious interpretation in Zen are set out in the Kyojukaimon scripture which is to be found on pages 212 to 214 of Selling Water by the River, Reverend Jiyu Kennett (Allen & Unwin, 1972))

Notes on a Day Retreat at London Zen Priory

We assembled for the retreat on Saturday evening so as to enable an early rise on Sunday morning.

During the retreat the majority of the time was spent in the zendo or in the refectory whilst in work periods we scraped off wallpaper from the bathroom walls. The essentially compact nature of the priory reduced the number of distractions to the minimum and without the provision of modern panoramic windows even the urban terrain and the Englishman's obsession with the weather were excluded from our attention. Our old friend the ego does, however, like to be distracted so that such relative isolation often proves uncomfortable.

Hofuku and Kyosei Hughes led the meditation, sitting for periods of 25 minutes followed by kinhin, with four such periods at a time. This seemed to be a more intense form of training than the practice of sitting for two 40 minute periods.

The compound effect of the enclosed environment and the extended period of sitting could only be faced (endured) by a surrender of doubts and preconceptions.

- Duncan Sellers

(The London Zen Priory is situated at 4 Fairford Gardens, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7BQ. Evening zazen classes and day and weekend retreats are held and a newsletter "The Stubborn Ox" is issued. For further details please contact the Priory direct.)

Breaking Rocks ...

Work on the site for the new zendo (meditation hall) at Throssel Hole Priory continues energetically despite a series of apparent set backs. As a situation for practicing all acceptance this must rank high. As the site was levelled, itself a substantial task involving shifting large quantities of earth and rock, it became clear that what was removed had been the roof of a system of tunnels dug out of the hillside in former years for coal mining. The site now therefore is criss crossed with trenches six to eight feet deep and in order to ensure that the foundations will be structurally sound it has been necessary to clear out the rubble from these. They will now be properly filled and a reinforced concrete raft will be constructed across the whole site instead of building straight onto the rock as originally intended. There is thus no shortage of work for both priests and visitors - a very active form of meditation indeed.

... and Raising Money

Meanwhile, it is good to know that the fund raising effort for the zendo project has now passed the half way mark with over £10,000 worth of cash and covenants received. This results from the generosity of many donors and the hard work of those who have taken on the organizing of this appeal. If you would like to help raise the other half of the money, please contact the North East Area Committee chairman, Robert Dunnett at 7 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear (tel 466294).

Resolutions

It is a tradition in England to make new year resolutions. Since we were quite young many of us will have done this. The tradition also includes the breaking of these resolutions shortly after the first few days of the new year. How frequently have I decided to turn over a new leaf?

We are all old enough now to have a pretty impressive record of good intentions, but what have we learnt from our failures? Generally we see the seedy failure in the seed of the intention and conclude that not making the resolution is the reasonable solution to disappointment.

This might be reasonable but it is our intellect that reasons, our heart doesn't and in our heart a good intention really is good. Our heart is sad with the failure of the good intention and our brain tries to cheer it with plausible reasons.

But surely we have some successes to our credit. Probably small ones but good enough to build on. I've successfully resolved to control my temper in certain situations, to do some unpleasant jobs better and to make a pig of myself less often. Perhaps if we could resolve to make our resolutions smaller, less momentous, less greedy, we could clean up our shady corners. Also, by repeating and renewing a resolution it can become a part of life. After all nearly all saints have many falls from grace and many blind alleys in their biographies, but they kept on doing what their heart told them, often tormenting their brain's reason.

I resolved to keep the precepts. I didn't give up the next day when I realized how quickly I'd broken them and I expect I've a lot more renewing of them to do. Thank you for helping me keep them and the Buddhas for the lessons learnt from breaking them.

- Rycharde Apps

Haiku

While sitting here
In pretentious pregnancy
I tried to stir a poem

I philosophise
I analyse
Sighs

Thought arises
Thought falls
The sleeper snores

A woodpecker's knock
Upon my roof. You know,
Nature has its rhythm too

- Richard Zahler

Views about Books

Approach to Zen by Kosho Uchiyama Roshi (Japan Publications)

This is a good book for a beginner who needs to know everything about zazen. In fact the author takes 86 pages to delve into every conceivable aspect of a few basic points. There is a second section (36 pages) which acts as an introduction to Zen, which makes one wonder why it comes last.

The book's obvious value to beginners like myself overshadows a curious use of cartoon illustrations, some of which seem unnecessary or over simplified. It is understandable enough without them.

- Dave Lavash

Born in Tibet by Chogyam Trungpa (George Allen & Unwin 1966)

This book tells the story of the first twenty years of Trungpa Rinpoche's life, beginning with his life with his mother and step father, the revelation that he is the eleventh Trungpa Tulku and his subsequent entry into a monastery and finally, on the coming of the Chinese to Tibet, his escape to India.

His acceptance, at the age of five, of separation from his mother and his devotion to the arduous studies he undertook at the monastery I found impressive. The character of his guru, Jamgon Kongtrul and of other teachers come across with vigour. One feels how difficult the decision to leave must have been and how terrible the winter journey over the high Tibetan mountains with a party of bewildered refugees consisting to a large extent of frail old men and women and crying babies.

The book is written with great simplicity and a quiet dignity and I found it reassuring to read of someone who, although harassed almost to the point of death, did not feel the need to seek retaliation against his oppressors.

- Diana Brazier

On Having No Head by Douglas Harding (Buddhist Society 1971)

The author uses many Zen anecdotes to describe and relate his curious experience of headlessness, discovered while in the Himalayas many years before his encounter with Zen. Headlessness refers to openness and completeness, the removal of the face masks and straight jacket conceptions that we take on, to pin ourselves down so we can understand ourselves intellectually. However, we never quite fit the plan. Douglas would have us believe that he literally has no head, hence the book can be very confusing at times. The book is aimed to whet the appetite. There is no substitute for effort and personal contact. As he says, "few indeed have seen into their Nature by reading this or any other book!"

- Gordon Bell

NEWS

Retreats at Throssel Hole Priory

Weekend retreats will be held on 5th-6th July and 30th-31st August. Week long retreats will be 2nd-10th August and 20th-28th September. Bookings in advance please to the Guestmaster, Throssel Hole Priory, Carrshield, Nr. Hexham, Northumberland. Reverend Strathern and Fr. Stephen Gowers O.C.R. will conduct an inter-religious retreat at Spode House on 18th-25th July. Applications should be made to the warden at Spode House, Hawkesyard Priory, Rugeley, Staffs.

Edinburgh Group

Meetings every Sunday at 10am at Flat 4, 2 Marshalls Court, Edinburgh. Information from John Bagust at same address.

Durham Group

Meetings will continue through the period of the University vacation at Littleton House, Littleton, Co. Durham at 8pm on Mondays. Information from Jonathan Sutton at same address.

Cleveland Group

Meetings on Thursday evenings. Locations of meetings were not finalized before we went to press. Information from Mr. Jayatissa, 73 Wellesley Rd., Middlesbrough.

Tyneside

Meetings on Wednesdays at 7pm as follows:

31 Grafton Road, Whitley Bay	July 2	July 30	Aug 27
7 Mardale, Albany Village, Washington	July 9	Aug 6	
15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth	July 16	Aug 13	
20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland	July 23	Aug 20	

Information and organization of lifts - Rycharde Apps,
15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth (682610).

Day Retreats

Retreats led by Reverend Strathern will be held on 12th July at 15 Hallington Mews, Killingworth and on 23rd August at 31 Grafton Road, Whitley Bay. 9am to 9pm. Cost £1 payable on the day. Bookings in advance please on the cut off slip below.

Compiled and published by members of Newcastle Zen Buddhist Group to foster the practice and study of the Dharma. All correspondence to the editor please: David Brazier, 20 High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland.

Booking Slip

Name
Address
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I wish to attend the day retreat to be held at
Killingworth on Saturday 12th July 1975
Whitley Bay on Saturday 23rd Aug 1975
(Please tick appropriate box)