



Buddhāloka

L I G H T O F T H E B U D D H A

Newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria

Volume 14 No. 6

Summer 2005 / 2547

Tsunami Memorial at the BSV

Sunday 9th January saw a full hall at the BSV when two monks presided over a service to support those tragically affected by the Asian tsunami disaster. The Sangha attending were Ven Wimalananda, from the Berwick Vihara, and Sayadaw U Pandita from the Dhamma Sukha Meditation Centre in Springvale.

In the morning service, Ven. Wimalananda chanted the *Ratana*, *Mangala* and *Karaniya Metta* suttas. In a moving symbolic ceremony, Dr. Mervyn Mendis, (whose daughter Dr. Priya Mendis had been to Sri Lanka as part of a team of doctors helping survivors) poured water to symbolise the sharing of our merits with those departed from this world.

In the afternoon, Sayadaw U Pandita led a metta meditation.

Many present felt some consolation and empowerment from the mutual support and goodwill. On a practical level, our "active compassion" caused nearly \$6000 to be raised on the day for those suffering in the aftermath of the tragedy. More than \$5000 was donated to the BSV Tsunami appeal, of which 80% has gone directly to a "grass roots" aid organisation in Sri Lanka - the Dhammavijaya Foundation. The remainder will follow, with ongoing donations, to support schooling, homeless and give medicine. \$500 was donated to the Berwick Vihara Tsunami appeal.

Our special thanks go to those attending and donating, to the Sangha and to those who organised the day.

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

from Gary Dellora



Above – Street scene from Galle (Sri Lanka) after the tsunami had passed

Left – Many ... many did not survive

Fotos provided by Wicky Wickramatunga, via Prem Nawaratne

Donations rolled into the affected areas from all over Australasia and South-east Asia. The Buddhist Maha Vihara in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) sent out an appeal, signed by Venerable K Sri Dhammananda and there was an overwhelming response from all over the country. The vihara grounds were filled with donations, and cash donations exceeded RM3 million within a few days. At least 400 volunteers worked around the clock and 35 container loads (even the containers were donated) have already gone out, especially to Indonesia and Sri Lanka. The vihara grounds have now been cleared, with the donation of a warehouse to store the remaining goods and continue this good work. There were so many stories of individual generosity, such as from one Jack 'Ng' and Lian Teng Hai who were holidaying in Australia when the tsunami hit. They quickly bought and sent 5810 boxes of *Kellogg's Corn Flakes* and *Frosties* and sent them to villages in Sri Lanka (these foods don't need refrigeration to arrive fresh, and can be eaten without cooking utensils – many of which were destroyed or washed away).

from Malika Perera

Tsunami safety rules are provided by the International Tsunami Safety Centre (part of UNESCO, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission) at Suite 2200, 737 Bishop St, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA (tel. 808-5326422 or itic.tsunami@noaa.gov).

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held on Sunday March 20, 2005

The Annual General Meeting of the Buddhist Society of Victoria will be held on Sunday 20th March at 12:30 pm, at the Buddhhaloka Centre, 73 Darling Road, East Malvern, 3145.

The matters under consideration at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) are very important to the Society, and these will be publicized in future editions of the Newsletter or via the BSV's web page www.bsv.net.au. They include the election of new Committee members and office bearers. Hence, all Members are urged to attend.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: To be eligible to vote at the AGM, members must be financial. In the past many Members have chosen to renew their Membership subscriptions on the day of the AGM. In order to minimize delays to the AGM we encourage you to renew your membership now.

ELEGIBILITY TO VOTE: Honorary Members & Ordinary Financial Members of not less than two (2) years standing are entitled to vote.

VOTE ALLOCATION TO ELIGIBLE MEMBERS:

1. Every Honorary Member - one (1) vote
2. Every Ordinary Member - one (1) vote
3. Ordinary Family Members where the subscription paid is less than two full subscriptions -one (1) vote for the family.

AGM - Agenda & Motions

Agenda and Motions by the Committee to the AGM will be circulated closer to the actual date. A Member wishing to submit any Motions to the AGM is requested to give prior notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary, not less than seven (7) days before the date of the meeting. There are 9 Committee members and four of these hold specific offices (defined in our Constitution) - these four office-bearers are President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. All Committee member positions are declared open at each AGM and elections are called if the number of nominations exceeds the number of positions to be filled. Nomination forms will be available from the Secretary (Cora Thomas).

PROXY APPOINTMENTS:

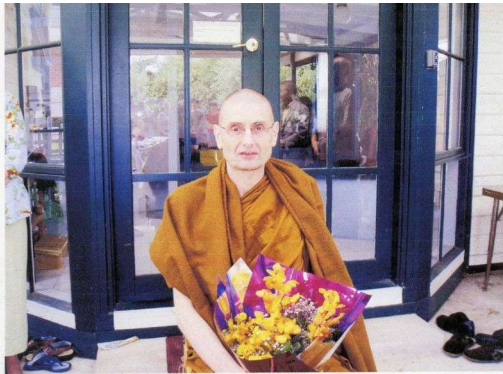
A Member entitled to vote may appoint another Member in writing as a Proxy to vote. Proxy forms will be available soon. Please have these duly completed and hand over to the Secretary (Cora Thomas) not less than two (2) days prior to the election, i.e. by Thursday 17th March 2005/2548.

Sangha

Venerable U Pandita's meditation course started on 6 January and extends into this year. It is scheduled for Thursday nights and is suitable for both beginners and experienced meditators.

Ajahn Thanasanti arrives at the temple on 21st February and will stay at the vihara for about 6 weeks. Volunteers are needed to offer dana and attend to her daily needs. Altho the teaching schedule has not yet been finalized, the plans include non-residential weekend retreats and perhaps a longer retreat as well. Recently, she has been in Madras in India and has been in close touch with the effects of the tsunami.

Ajahn Thitinyana's farewell on 19th December past was a very happy occasion. About 80 people brought dana, and many also brought flowers, messages and small gifts. Bhante seemed moved by the expressions of gratitude and commented that he had never before been given a party. He replied to Ian Chen's words of farewell with very warm comments about his 9 months at the Society. He recalled how he originally intended to stay only 3 months, and thanked us for the care and attention over the longer period.



Ajahn Thitinyana

From the Committee

Bathroom renovations – The bathroom in the vihara (the Sangha quarters) has been showing its age, along with the rest of the building. These works are necessary for the Society to adequately provide essential requirements for visiting teachers (notably bhikkhus and bhikkhunis). The anticipated cost is around \$8600 and any donations would be very helpful. These renovations are just one of the recommendations for maintenance upkeep to the vihara made by Ajahn Thitinyana just before he left. Further work is needed on the windows in the vihara and to repair the spouting and roof over the kitchen in the meditation hall. Volunteers to help with painting

when the renovations are finished, or to assist in building repairs and maintenance, would be gratefully appreciated.

Membership Renewals – All membership renewals are due on 1st January each year. Members and supporters are urged to renew on time. It is the income from memberships that maintains the temple (pays the electricity and gas bills, covers essential maintenance and upkeep around the temple and basically keeps the temple functioning from day to day). We have achieved a membership base of just over 200 last year.

Insurance – As a result of the Society establishing a Risk Management Strategy better insurance cover has been organized with a reputable company and at a much-reduced premium when compared with previous years.

New Members

The following new members are welcomed to the Society -

Gleb Adlivankin
 Kate Lawther
 Weerakoon Sarath
 Dr. Keen Hoo Soon
 Carole Steinlauf
 Raj Vankadara
 Michael and Santi Walsh
 Rodney Zivkovic

We hope they find that the Society is of real assistance in aiding their understanding of the Dhamma and of the value in permitting the Dhamma to guide our daily lives.

Qi Gong Classes

Qi Gong classes are held on Saturday mornings from 8:00 am to 10:00 am in Hedgeley Dene Gardens in Malvern East (*Melway* 59 J-10). These classes are free of charge. Those intending to come should write their names on the BSV notice board or send an email, including a contact telephone number.

Introduction to Buddhism

A beginners course of 8 lessons

Last year's successful course of an *Introduction to Buddhism* is being repeated this year. This course was an innovation for the Society as it was planned & led

by lay members, to provide a lay person's perspective on the Buddha Dhamma. Nonetheless, this concept was supported by both the Society's spiritual Advisor (Ajahn Brahm) and the Society's then-resident teacher (Ajahn Thitinyana). The format of each lesson is for a short presentation by the lay member leading that evening, followed by a discussion on the topics raised, particularly how they affect the daily lives of each one of us.

There are 8 sessions, each beginning on a Wednesday night at 7:30 pm, in the Society's temple in East Malvern –

16 February – The life and attainment of the Buddha

23 February – The Four Noble Truths

2 March – The Noble Eight-fold Path

9 March – Kamma

16 March – Rebirth

23 March – Buddhist ethics

30 March – Mindfulness and meditation

6 April – Compassion

These lessons are free and open to all. Neither booking nor registration is necessary and the presentations are specifically oriented to put newcomers at ease. For enquiries, contact either the Society (95716409) or Ian Chen (86270757).

This edition of *Buddhāloka* was edited by David Cheal (contact via the BSV or at rorippa@carringbush.net.au). The views contained within do not necessarily reflect those of the Buddhist Society of Victoria. Contributions and news are welcome, particularly from members.

***Whoever lives contemplating pleasant things,
with senses unrestrained, in food immoderate,
indolent, inactive, him truly Mara overthrows as
the wind overthrows a weak tree.***

Dhammapada 7

The *Dhammapada* ('Words of Truth') is a collection of 423 verses in Pali, uttered by the Buddha on some 305 occasions for the benefit of all. The stories about the circumstances in which the verses were uttered were added by the commentator Buddhagosa in the 5th century CE. It is generally believed that most of these stories associated with each *Dhammapada* verse have been handed down orally for generations since the days of the Buddha. The Buddha's teachings were not committed to writing until more than 400 years after his *Mahā Parinibbāna* (passing away).

Copies of the *Dhammapada* are available for loan from the library.

***Whoever lives contemplating 'the Impurities',
with senses restrained, in food moderate, full of
confidence, full of sustained energy, him Mara
overthrows not, as the wind does not overthrow
a rocky mountain.***

Dhammapada 8

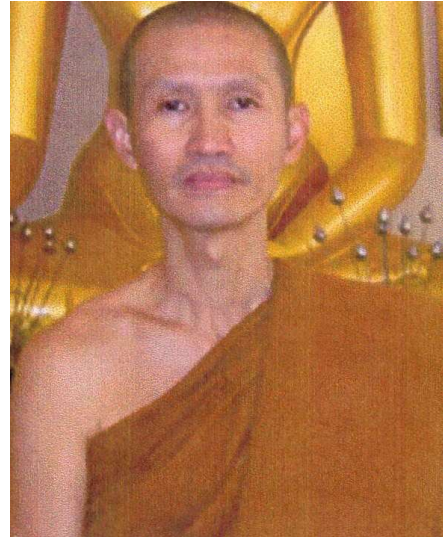
Retreat News

Ajahn Dtun will be conducting a meditation retreat in April this year. The retreat will be for 3 days (Friday 1st April to Monday 4th April – 15 places only) or for 9 days (Friday 1st April to Sunday 20th April – 30 places only). It will be held at Coastal Forest Lodge, corner of Forest and Gundrys Roads, Anglesea, 3228 (*Melways* maps ref – 196 K 1 and 511 D 9). Costs are \$120 for the 3 day retreat (\$100 for BSV members) and \$360 for the 9 day retreat (\$340 for BSV members). The application forms are on the following pages and should be sent to the Society. For further information please contact Greg Kleiman on 0418-369703 or 03-95127719 or at greg.kleiman@optusnet.com.au.

Participants are asked to observe the 8 Precepts for the length of the retreat (ie. the 5 Precepts plus (6) not eating after midday, (7) not reading, listening to the radio, watching television, singing or dancing, nor wearing jewellery, perfume, make-up or the like, and (8) not sleeping in a luxurious bed). Coastal Forest Lodge is a most suitable place to observe these 8 precepts. You will need to bring personal gear (including a bath towel), but no valuables as the bunk bedrooms have no doors.

Your own meditation cushion would be helpful, altho a small number is provided. A roster will be created for assisting the cook with meals and attending to the teacher's needs.

Ajahn Dtun was born in 1955 in the province of Ayutthaya, Thailand. Tan Ajahn grew up and studied in Bangkok, until completing a bachelors degree in economics in 1977. Shortly after this, in 1978, he decided to ordain at Wat Nong Pah Pong with the Venerable Bodhinyana Thera (Ajahn Chah) as his upajjhaya. Presently, Tan Ajahn Dtun is the Abbot of Wat Boonyawad in the province of Chonburi, where he has lived for the past 14 years. Tan Ajahn Dtun has been a monk for 27 years.



Tan Ajahn Dtun

Sayalay Dipankara's Retreat – a personal reflection

Well before reserving my place on the retreat in November, 2004, I had heard from a number of sources that Sayalay Dipankara was an extraordinarily gifted meditation teacher. Ajahn Thitinyana was just one who sang her praises. I understood that she travelled to all parts of the world teaching both lay people and Sangha the breathing techniques required to reach jhana. Certainly, I could observe from her demeanour and presence when she talked to us at the BSV something of the pervasiveness of her loving-kindness and compassion and perceive the clarity, purity and equanimity of a highly realised practitioner. But of her energy and determination as a teacher, that would only become clear when the retreat commenced.

Sayalay was totally convinced from the results of her previous teaching that almost all of us, on this retreat, would be able to purify our minds to the extent that we would see our nimitta, the symbol of pure mind. She stated this clearly at our first meeting on the first night of the retreat. I'm sure many times before, many have been set this goal and felt its enormity, if not impossibility, but I had not - at least in so many words! But neither had I previously experienced such clarity and detail of instructions, such determination and energy in the teaching, such active compassion and generosity.

For the first two or three days, however, I thought my practice was rather "dry", academic perhaps, even selfish. I was accustomed to practising some loving-kindness meditation or concentrating on compassion as an object, and here I was concentrating on a tiny spot on my nostril, with little variation, without allowing myself to relax into the compassion and calm that naturally can arise during meditation. I was to continue, seemingly "relentlessly" towards this goal. Even in walking meditation we were strongly recommended to follow our breath, not another part of the body or the movements themselves. And Sayalay would interview each of us each day – even more than once – if we so wished (and many of us did), so that we could recount, in detail, the particulars of our meditation experience and be advised how to continue along what was for her the clearly defined path towards absorption.

At some stage, however, her compassionate determination to help us, her own purity and generosity of mind, and the great spiritual lineage she embodied so completely, embraced us all and an extraordinary transformation seemed to take place. It was as if just being in her presence day after day created in our minds the energy and determination to work as intensely as we were able – and even more intensely! An extraordinary feeling of stillness and peace prevailed and no longer was our practice "dry" or just self directed. It was a practice now that encompassed all beings as though we were watching our breath out of love and compassion for the entire universe. She is truly a great teacher.

from Cora Thomas

REGISTRATION FORM
BUDDHIST SOCIETY of VICTORIA
 by
 Ajahn Dtun
 Friday 1st April to Sunday 10th April 2004

First name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

Tel (home).....(work).....(mobile).....

Email address.....

Are you a member of BSV? Yes No

Are you registering for 3 day retreat 9 day retreat?

Gender Male Female (required for room allocation)

Can you provide transport? Yes No

Do you need transport? Yes No

Enclose cash, cheque or money order (payable to Buddhist Society of Victoria) for full payment for retreat.

\$.....

Donations \$.....

(For retreat expenses and sponsoring.)

TOTAL \$.....

Please Note:

The Buddhist Society of Victoria does not have public liability insurance cover for this event because of the impact of the Sept 11, 2001 incident and other factors beyond its control. It will not be responsible for any injury or death or any loss of property suffered at the retreat. Retreat applicants please read and sign the form ‘Schedule 1’ (prescribed by the Victorian Government to be used in the ‘recreational’ activities) in order for the Registration to be accepted.

SCHEDULE 1

EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN RIGHTS TO SUE
Section 97A Goods Act 1958 and
Goods (Recreational Services) Regulations 2003

About this form

Under sections 91 and 92 of the Goods Act 1958 several conditions are implied into contracts for the sale of certain goods and services. These conditions mean that the seller named below is required to ensure that the recreational services it sells to you are—

- * rendered with due care and skill; and
* as fit for the purpose for which they are commonly bought as it is reasonable to expect in the circumstances; and
* reasonably fit for any particular purpose or might reasonably be expected to achieve any result you have made known to the seller.

If you sign this form, you waive your rights under sections 91 and 92 of the Goods Act 1958 to sue the seller for losses relating to death or personal injury if the seller's breach of these requirements results in your death or your personal injury. Signing this form does not affect any rights that you may have under other sections of the Goods Act 1958 or any other Acts or laws.

You should be aware that signing this form may have an effect on any insurance policy that covers you for death or personal injury. If you have any concerns about the effect of signing this form you should discuss this with your insurer or legal adviser.

Name and address of seller : Buddhist Society of Victoria, 71-73 Darling Road, Malvern East, Vic 3145

Description of recreational services sold : Meditation Retreat
At Coastal Forest Lodge, Cnr. Forest & Gundrys Rd, Angelsea, Vic 3228,
Friday 1st April 2005 to Sunday 10th April 2005

Steps taken by the seller to avoid the danger of death or personal injury : None
(for example, hourly/daily/weekly/monthly equipment inspections; only qualified staff used; certain staff/participant ratio; compliance with an industry standard, code of practice, code of conduct or accreditation scheme etc.).

If no steps have been taken, seller must insert the word 'none' in this section.

Declaration and signature of person about to use these services

I understand that the recreational services about to be sold as set out in this form may cause my death or my personal injury.

By signing this form I understand I waive my rights to sue the seller for losses relating to my death or my personal injury that result from a breach of a condition specified in sections 91 and 92 of the Goods Act 1958.

I understand that if the seller has not complied with any law about the proper completion of this form and how my signature is obtained (for example, if the seller has made a false or misleading statement in relation to the steps taken by the seller to avoid the danger of death or personal injury), or has acted recklessly, the seller cannot enforce this waiver.

Name _____ (Please Print)

Signature _____ Date _____

Address _____

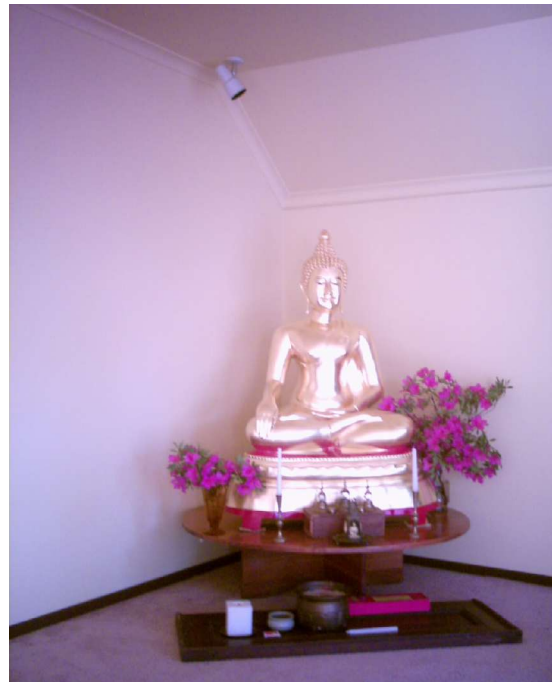
News from up North

O.k., where do I begin? The beginning, Russell, start at the beginning. I recently (early November last year) visited the monastery at Bundanoon in NSW for four days. *Santi Forest Monastery*, which in its previous incarnations has also been known as the *Bundanoon Retreat Centre & Citta Bhavana Hermitage*, has been up & running as a monastery for about the past 18 months. As a Buddhist place, the property at 6 Coalmines Rd, Bundanoon has been around for I think (& please correct me) about 10 years. The change in direction happened just before the Rains Retreat of last year. Basically there was a shuffling of monastics. Ajahn Ian of *Sanghaloka* went to the U.K. to take care of his father, Ajahn Khemanando who was resident at *Citta Bhavana*, was invited to *Sanghaloka*, Bhante Sujato who had recently arrived at *Citta Bhavana* stayed on and commenced to plan a change in direction. As things turned out, Ajahn Ian disrobed, Ajahn Khemanando is happily ensconced at *Sanghaloka* and Bhante Sujato is planning big things in Bundanoon.

The physical dimensions of *Santi Forest Monastery* are impressive. It sits on 75 hectares of mostly forested property. One boundary of the monastery is the Morton National Park and the monastery is easily the winner in the 'spectacular views category', *Bodhinyana* in Perth has views of the Indian Ocean, but they aren't as accessible as the views at Santi. This is sandstone country and the ravines visible from the house are just amazing, rock walls hundreds of metres tall. Sunsets are magnificent with the sun on the rust coloured sandstone. In some ways this is Forest Monastic heaven, as the sandstone has eroded into a number of caves that are useable as dwellings, indeed at least two of them are being used as just that over this coming summer. At an altitude of 700 metres, Bundanoon is a little too chill for outdoor dwelling in winter...it gets snow, though I do know a Bhikkhu who did just that this last Rains Retreat. We are training some tough monks it seems.

When I first began visiting a year ago, Santi was in the transition between Hermitage and monastery. There wasn't a lot of support from Sydney and the number of lay visitors was limited. Neither the monastery nor its new Senior Bhikkhu were all that well known. Consequently the monastery was very quiet. I visited again in January and March...for someone like myself the monastery is only a seven hour drive up the Hume Highway, easy to get to in other words. Things were beginning to get busier with Bhante Sujato building kuti in the forest. On this visit it was apparent immediately that things had changed significantly. For a start, the place no longer feels like a hermitage, it feels like what it is... a monastery. This is attributable to the simple fact that whereas the first Rains Retreat it was just Bhante Sujato & an Anagarika, this Rains Retreat there were three Sangha, an Anagarika & two Lay women staying in the monastery. Even the Kathina I understand was a much larger event with 75 people attending.

I found the Kathina quite intimidating. For the first two days of my visit the monastery was quiet, then on Sunday the 7th all these noisy, energetic people show up & fed us I chickened out & retired to my kuti to sleep off an



The shrine at *Santi` Forest Monastery*



Entrance to *Santi Forest Monastery*

indulgence in sweet sticky rice & durian & read a biography on Francis Younghusband (think British invasion of Tibet in 1904).

This is a direct result of the efforts made by Bhante Sujato in teaching the Dhamma in Sydney. Also the Thai community has realised that the monastery is there. There is growing support from the Anglo-Saxon Australian community as well...even a number of identifiable locals showed up for the day. A feeling of very positive energy exists in this the newest monastery of the Ajahn Chah tradition. As a result I love the time I spend there & honestly cannot wait until my next visit. Just a note, although Santi is the newest of the monasteries, it may not be for all that long, there is the distinct possibility that a monastery will be established outside Auckland NZ in the near future. An American monk, Ajahn Chandako spent the last Rains there & is talking of building things.

For those intending to visit, the lay accommodation is adequate & comfortable. The yurts are in a secluded environment & are really very nice. It helps if you are fit, as a lot of the accommodation is down hill from the main meals area. I would advise that you bring cold weather clothes, as the Southern Highlands like Katoomba is notorious for its fogs & cold spells, even in summer. Apart from this the rules & routine are no different from any other forest monastery I've stayed in. More information is available at : WWW.santiforestmonastery.com or ring the monastery on 02: 4883 6331 between 7 – 10 A.M.

from Russell Dunne

Buddhist Society of Victoria

Buddhāloka Centre

71-73 Darling Road, East Malvern 3145

tel: (03) 9571-6409

bsvmelb@vicnet.net.au or *www.bsv.net.au*

REGULAR PROGRAM

- Monday 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm Introduction to Buddhist Meditation led by Greg Kleiman
(Library open 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
- Tuesday 7:45 pm – 9:20 pm Silent Meditation
(Library open 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
- Wednesday 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm Introduction to Buddhism
(starting 16 February, finishing 6 April)
- Thursday 7:30 pm – 8:00 pm Meditation for beginners by Sayadaw U Pandita
8:00 pm – 9:15 pm Meditation for all by Sayadaw U Pandita
(Library open 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
- Saturday Qi Gong classes recommence on 22 January
Full moon days – *Sīl* observance (see notice board for dates)
- Sunday 8:30 am – 9:30 am Silent Meditation.
9:30 am- 10:30 am Dhamma talk
11.00 am Offering of dana to the Sangha followed by a shared meal. All are welcome to enjoy the food brought by members and friends. You may bring some food, as you wish.
(Library open 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm)

Dhamma School is held on Sunday from 9.30am – 10.30 am during the school term.
For enquiries contact Suzanne Palmer –Holton on 9776 4425.

All regular activities of the Buddhist Society are free and open to the general public. Non-members may not borrow from the library and do not have voting rights.



Buddhāloka
LIGHT OF THE BUDDHA

Newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria

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