



TUSHITA Meditation Centre

McLeod Ganj, India; Home-in-Exile of His Holiness the Dalai Lama



“He... described what he intended to build and where: retreat houses here and here ... a stupa over there...”

He declared that many people would come there to meditate, transform their minds, and eventually be of benefit to all sentient beings”.

**“BIG LOVE
in the LAND of JOY”,
pages 8 - 11
Reminiscences of
Lama Yeshe
at Tushita,
which was founded in
October 1972**



Director's Message

Dear Friends of Tushita,

Reflecting back on 2012 so far, the 40th anniversary year of Tushita has been so rich in Dharma and so full of activity. The season began in a series of special retreats based on Kalachakra and Highest Yoga Tantra, led by Andy Wistreich. This was an unusual beginning and immediately brought a sense of great depth and introspection to Tushita this year.

Following the motivation for the year “to beautify Tushita”, this has brought about a consistent effort to make physical improvements to the Centre. For example, Geshe Rabten and Geshe Wangdu’s stupas have been repaired and repainted. Most recently, an art student from the last 10 day Introduction to Buddhism course was so moved by his experience that he wanted to give something back to Tushita and offered to paint a mural in the main entrance. The mural has become a 40th anniversary celebration and welcome to Tushita (*pictured on the front cover*).

Tushita has been very blessed by two visits from Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche so far this year, in March and in May. During the first visit, Rinpoche reminded me of how important Tushita is in spreading “inner peace” across the world. Students receiving teachings here that change their minds, more inner peace coming which they then spread in and amongst their communities when they get back home.

Between 2009 – 2011, students from 78 different countries have attended courses – so this spread of inner peace reaches far and wide.

I spent part of this season viewing Tushita from afar, at home down the hill on maternity leave. I witnessed the immense service being given by Tushita Teachers, staff and volunteers during this time. This leads me to reflect not only on the beautification of the Centre, but also the inner beautification through service. In Rinpoche's precious teachings at Tushita this May, Rinpoche reminded us:

“WE ARE responsible to help sentient beings... we have the ARMS & LEGS and can run to help them.”

*“How DARE we not think of other sentient beings, when we have received EVERYTHING from others, every kindness.
How DARE we not think of them.”*

Warmest regards to you all,

Linda

The cover page shows images of Tushita in 1972 and 2012, courses in 1975 (led by Geshe Rabten) and 2012 (led by Ven Tony Beaumont), and our new birthday mural!

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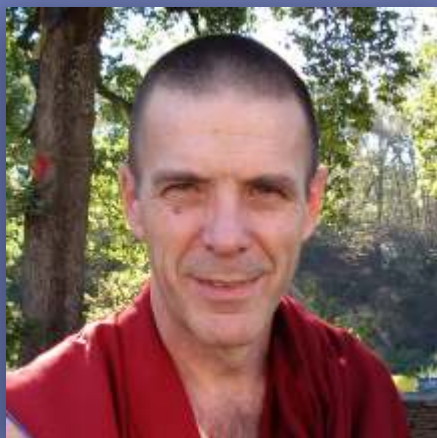
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Pictured above: Linda is introduced to the Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister of Tibet) and Kalon Pema Chinnjor (Tibetan Minister for Department of Religion and Culture) by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and his attendant Ven. Sangpo, here at Tushita on May 13th 2012.

Everything DHARMA

Q & A
with
Ven. Tony
Beaumont



*These Q & A's
took place
as part of an
"Introduction
to Buddhism"
course that Ven Tony led
here at Tushita from
July 3 - 12, 2012*



you wanted to know about but were afraid to ask...

Part of a series of excerpted Question and Answer Sessions held here at Tushita, between our amazing Teachers and our amazing Students!

Q. *How does Buddhism define the mind? How is it different from the brain? Does meditation affect the mind or the brain?*

A. Mind is not something physical, the brain is clearly something physical. The two are related in this life, we can see how the mind is influenced by the brain. Mind is described as that which is clear and knowing. It's not a physical thing. Brain is an organ within the head, electrical and chemical activity taking place. Meditation means to familiarise or acquaint the mind with something beneficial. Meditation will affect the mind in different ways. For example, meditation on the breath should subdue the mind, subdue anger, attachment, hatred and so on, things that are associated with mind. So meditation will affect the mind in that way.

Q. *If mind is not physical, how does meditation affect the mind?*

A. In a sense, all I can say to you is "sit and meditate". It is an experiential thing. Try, and see if during this period of time, doing this meditation, the meditation has a beneficial effect on your mind. If it doesn't have some effect on your mind, I'll give you a refund! This is the thing, making it an experiential thing.

Q. *I'm having difficulty differentiating the mind from the brain...*

A. Spend some time just sitting with yourself looking back over your life and bringing to mind your experiences, "I did this when I was such and such, I did that when I was such and such, I did that with these people." Remember those experiences. And then say, what are these? And ask yourself, are these experiences physical? Everyone has had experiences. Is experience something physical? Can you measure it with a machine, can you see it? Can you weigh it? What area does it take up? But it's existing, it is our personal experience.

So that is mind. And all the various emotions have a physical component, but the emotions themselves are not physical - *love* isn't something physical. Whereas very clearly the brain has chemical and electrical activities that can be measured and weighed and with machines attached to it, you can see. But with experience we can't do that, as far as I know... And yet for me, it's a very real thing, my experiences of this life, my memories, even though no-one else can see them.

Q. *But don't we store memories in the brain?*

Memory is a factor of the mind, a mental factor – there is a relationship with the brain of course, for instance when people get Alzheimer's, there is an effect on the brain which affects the memory. Brain and mind affect one other, but it doesn't necessarily mean that one *causes* the other.

Use meditation to trace the mind back, to examine the continuity of the mind – what is it that you're tracing back? Is the quality of *knowing* something physical?

Spend some time thinking about the notion that if you can't measure it, weigh it, see it, cut it, that means that it doesn't exist. Some people who say that would label themselves “scientific”. But is that scientific, or is that an assumption? To my way of thinking, that's an assumption.

Even before I got involved in Buddhism and I was skeptical about spiritual practice, even then I could see through this notion. That just because you can't measure weigh it, see it, that doesn't mean that it doesn't exist, that there isn't something else beyond this. I don't think there's any culture in the world that doesn't have some notion or understanding of this, that there is an existence to our being, apart from the physical. India is number one in this - it presented this notion to the world, it's the home of religions. But it's taking on the new religion – *technology*, and abandoning tradition. It would be a terrible pity if the people of India abandoned this heritage, this rich tradition that they brought to the world; of acknowledging this other dimension to our being.

Q. How can you not be attached be anything in life? It seems to me that this notion of non-attachment becomes an attachment in itself, that it's possible to get attached to non-attachment, to the idea of enlightenment.

A. I've heard it said that you can't be attached to Buddhahood, because you can't exaggerate the good qualities of Buddhahood...

Attachment is exaggeration. Certainly it's true that people can engage in spiritual practice with a mind of attachment, but it would have to be understood that if you really want to get out of samsara, the *process* of getting out of samsara and attaining your own enlightenment is to eradicate attachment.

Along the way if someone has attachment, and due to that energy, it energises them to do virtue, then OK, but it's like that example of an insect born inside a tree trunk; it can't get out so it eats the wood in order to escape. So perhaps if that person has attachment to their practice, that gives them the energy to abandon the mind of attachment. But we have to be practical, if it's not within your experience that attachment is a problem, then it probably doesn't make sense to try get rid of it. But when you can recognize that attachment to ordinary things is a problem, *then* spiritual practice is of benefit.

Q. Is there then a distinction between positive and negative attachment?

A. Maybe you're talking about aspiration, I don't know if there *is* a positive attachment... attachment is an exaggerated thing – it exaggerates the good qualities.

You can aspire for the state of Buddhahood, based on the benefits of recognizing the advantages of getting out samsara, and the disadvantages of staying in it, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it's attachment. That's aspiration, and we have to have that aspiration. By aspiring for attaining enlightenment, it's not just words, you're understanding that by engaging in the practices, you're engaging in generosity, abandoning harmful actions towards others, eradicating anger, developing concentration, wisdom, enthusiastic perseverance, many other things, based on your aspiration. So those aspirations are going to bring you the result of happiness.

Venerable Tony Beaumont is from Australia.

His first intensive contact with Buddhism was in Nepal and India in 1976 -77 and he has been ordained since 1991. Ven Tony has been Tushita's resident teacher in 2012, and hopefully will continue to be so for some time yet!



Ven Tony and Ven Namgyel

Projects News *Beautifying Tushita*

The Lama Yeshe Stupa Project

Since the last edition, Lama Yeshe's Stupa has continued to transform. Further developments took place during the winter break, from Dec 2011 to Feb 2012; uplifting and expansive changes were witnessed! The transformation of the outer kora path around the stupa from an uneven walkway to a beautiful riverstone path has opened out the whole area, making the stupa a lot more accessible. A new improved railing from the outer to inner kora has also been a very welcome step forward (*first two pictures below*). Ever-flowing thanks to Venerable Robina and all sponsors. The next step will be a new Ratnasambhava statue.

Inspired by the Lama Yeshe stupa transformations, one of our meditation leaders took it upon himself to fundraise for improvements to the stupa room, the precious room inside the stupa itself. Thanks to the meditation leader's carpentry skills and wisdom in calculating the best use of the space to serve retreatants, he designed new wooden furniture which has enhanced the room greatly (*third picture below*). Heartfelt thanks to all sponsors!



Geshe Rabten & Geshe Wangdu Stupas

Repaired and repainted, the stupas shine out across Tushita. We are now looking into having marble plaques carved, to celebrate the great Teachers in this 40th anniversary year. (*Geshe Wangdu's stupa is pictured top level, far right*)

The Lama Tsongkhapa Disciple Statue Project

3 and a half years since fundraising began, and donations from an amazing 121 sponsors, the two long awaited Lama Tsongkhapa Disciple statues arrived at the end of May. The 4 foot high statues of Gyaltsap Je and Khedrup Je were made in Kathmandu by the same statue makers as the 21 Taras that were consecrated in August 2010. We are currently arranging the filling of the statues and an extension to the current altar in the main gompa. However the statue projects do not stop here, as Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche recently gave advice for further statues, including Guru Rinpoche and Lama Atisha to flank the two new Disciples. (*Linda & Ani Wy unpack the new deliveries above*)

The Retreat Hut Project

We are currently applying for permission to re-build the three A-Frames, with a view to commence building either this winter or early spring. Please keep us in your prayers, that the permissions come through swiftly and easily so that we can embark on this beneficial project soon.

The Main Gompa



We are very happy to announce that the Gompa Painting project will launch in September! This July a series of key planning meetings have been held with the painting team led by Pema Dawa (*picture 1 above*), in order to explore Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's extensive advice for the project in detail, and how best to fulfil that within the limits of the space available in the main Gompa. A Tushita staff member was also able to visit the painters onsite at their current project in Bir and to take photos of their past and present projects (*pictures 1 - 6 above*). Thus, we have been able to learn more about how the painters work, the preparations they need to make and the equipment that they will need. It has felt at times like a giant jigsaw with more and more pieces falling into place.

Phase One - mid September 2012 to the end of February 2013

The painters will focus on the inside painting, so the Main Gompa will be closed during this time. Firstly, the walls will be painted with the traditional *shambu* design (*pictures 4 & 6*) along with other background painting work.

18 verses have been advised for the beams and small walls. The verses will be painted in both Tibetan and English. They come from a selection of texts which include Shantideva's "*Bodhisattva's Way of Life*", the *Lama Choepa* text, sutra verses and a verse by the 7th Dalai Lama. Lama Zopa Rinpoche has instructed us to emphasize verses on "Bodhicitta" and "death and impermanence".

There'll be the 5 Powerful mantras painted in Tibetan on the main beams around the Lama Tsongkhapa statue (*as in the picture right*), plus other mantras including those of Shakyamuni Buddha and the Heart Sutra - painted for protection.



The ceiling sections will be filled mainly with mandalas. Most of them, such as Vajrasattva, Medicine Buddha and Tara (*picture 5*), will be painted by Pema Dawa's team, while others (such as Namgyalma and Kalachakra) will be made abroad. Lama Zopa's own Elephant Chakra design will also feature (*picture 7*).



Phase Two - March to June 2013

Will take advantage of the dry spring / summer months and focus on the exterior painting. In 2010, Lama Zopa advised that the 21 Taras be painted along the ground floor archway and the 8 Medicine Buddhas along the first floor archway outside the Tara room.

Please note that the painting details are still subject to change.

Painting Project



Many merit-making opportunities await - verses and mandalas still available for sponsorship!

SPONSOR A MANDALA

Sponsor a small mandala for 40,000 INR

Amitabha - Mitrugpa - 16 Arhats - Lion Face Dakini

To be painted outside in the main entrance ceiling.

Full sponsorship is available for the 16 Arhats and Lion Face Dakini mandalas.

Part sponsorship is still available for the Amitabha and Mitrugpa mandalas.

Sponsor a large mandala 150,000 INR

Tara - Medicine Buddha

These large mandalas will be painted in two of the main ceiling sections inside the main Gompa.

SPONSOR A VERSE

One verse in English & Tibetan for 15,000 INR

This chronic disease of cherishing myself,

Is the cause giving rise to my unsought suffering.

Perceiving this, I seek your blessings to blame, begrudge,

And destroy the monstrous demon of selfishness

A Sample Verse from Lama Choepa

Rinpoche has advised for each verse painted to “be very clearly readable, very good writing in English and Tibetan”. The English will be in larger letters, with the Tibetan smaller. There is a total of 7 verse sets, containing 1 - 4 verses from each text.

SPONSOR A MEDICINE BUDDHA

For 15,000 INR

Only one still available for sponsorship!!

SPONSOR ONE OF THE 21 TARAS

For 15,000 INR

17 Taras currently available for sponsorship



This is a brief summary of the current sponsorship details. However, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s painting vision for Tushita’s gompa is both vast and extensive. His amazing vision includes paintings of:

Interior: 5 Highest Yoga Tantra mandalas <Gyalwa Gyatso, Heruka (16 Deities), Guhjasamaja, Yamantaka (part sponsorship remains), Kalachakra (sponsorship complete)>, The 12 Deeds of the Buddha, 5 Aspects of Lama Tsongkhapa, Maitreya Pureland with Maitreya, Manjushri & the Lineage Lamas below. **Exterior:** The Wheel of Life, Mantras for the window surrounds, Dakas & Dakinis from the Lama Choepa merit field.

If you would like further details about this project, please contact Linda at director@tushita.info

Big Love in



*Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe
on Tushita's front porch, 1973*

A selection of stories about the early days of Tushita, excerpted from *“Big Love”* by Adele Hulse, the forthcoming biography of Tushita's founder, Lama Yeshe.

Printed with kind permission from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, in celebration of Tushita's 40th birthday in October 2012.

LAMA YESHE BUYS HIS GURU'S OLD HOUSE

1972: Lama Yeshe left the meditation course at Kopan (*Nepal*) suddenly to go to Dharamsala to take teachings from Trijang Rinpoche. While in Dharamsala that time, he also bought a house.



When he left Nepal, Lama had flown to Delhi with Jhampa Zangpo where they took rooms in a hotel close to the airport. “Lama was carrying \$5,000 in American banknotes, donated by Piero Cerri,” said Jhampa. “We went to see the money-changers, who told us to meet them on the street outside the hotel. A taxi pulled up and we got in and drove down the street a bit.

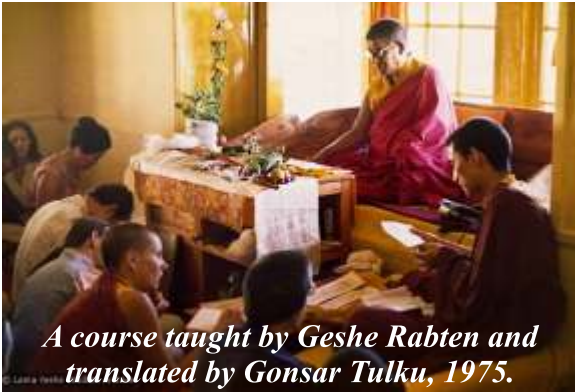
The money-changers gave me a wad of rupees and I gave them a wad of dollars and we started counting. Lama was muttering mantras and laughing, being his usual self, as I counted this huge pile of rupees. Eventually, I finished and they drove off, leaving us on the street six blocks from the hotel with all this money. “The next morning we took a taxi to the bus depot, and after a long hard bus ride to Dharamsala, we went straight to Nowrojee Villa, or Nowrojee Kotee (*pictured in 1972, above right*), as the house was called,” said Jhampa Zangpo.



The four-acre property had previously been the temporary home of Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche (*Lama Yeshe's Guru, they are pictured together here in 1976, left*) after the Indian government had allowed the Tibetan government-in-exile to move from Mussoorie to Dharamsala starting in May 1960. Just below Nowrojee Kotee was a building known as the Old Palace, where His Holiness the Dalai Lama had stayed while his permanent residence was being built. Geshe Rabten had also stayed in a small house close by and Kyabje Ling Rinpoche's house was just a few hundred yards away on the other side of the hill.

Lama could think of nothing more wonderful than buying his guru's old house. “Oh Lord, what a run-down old house!” thought Max (*“Mummy” Max Matthews*) when he brought her there for the first time. “But Lama just loved the place, which was on a good piece of land. He brought his own lawyer up from Delhi and negotiated the whole deal himself,” said Max.

the *Land of Joy*



A course taught by Geshe Rabten and translated by Gonsar Tulku, 1975.

The house was owned by an old Parsee family, the Nowrojees, who owned and ran the general store beside the bus stop in McLeod Ganj. Mrs. Nowrojee was a consummate businesswoman and the deal did not come cheap. Lama registered the new owner of the house as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as no entity yet existed to hold the property and Lama did not wish to have it in his own name.

Some other students were already staying at Nowrojee Kotee, which had been renamed Tushita Retreat Centre, when Lama arrived to fill the silent nights with his glorious laughter.

Grabbing one student by the arm, he led him round the property and described what he intended to build and where: retreat houses here and here... a stupa over there... He declared that many people would come there to meditate, transform their minds, and eventually be of benefit to all sentient beings.

“The front room is perfect for meditation,” said Lama Yeshe. “You need an expansive view for that. We can make some heavy dark curtains so there is no distraction.” He wanted his students to have a different kind of expansive view. There was also a big room that had been Trijang Rinpoche’s own room. Lama took that (*pictured above*).



RENOVATING TUSHITA

Peter Kedge had never worked so hard in his life. He had arrived at Tushita late one evening and had had to climb the hill through heavy snow. Over the course of the next six months, using Tibetan and Indian masons, carpenters, plumbers, and electricians, Peter managed to replace the entire slate roof, build retaining walls, paint the walls of every room, lay water pipes, and install toilets.



Geshe Rabten and Lama Yeshe in Dharamsala, 1970

While doing all this, Peter also did the shopping and cooking, served the retreaters already accommodated there, cleaned the place, and managed the workers who arrived every morning. “Building supplies were very difficult to come by,” Peter recalled. “Cement was especially precious, and one usually had to travel to a town some hours away and then bring it back on the top of the bus. I marvelled at the skills of the people who worked with us in those days. The stonecutters would show up with only hammers and chisels, and from the big boulders on the place they made beautiful piles of stones of equal size, ready for use.



“Tushita was truly a place for retreat, with Ling Rinpoche and Geshe Rabten as neighbors and other Geshes living on the property itself who were engaged in retreats for years at a time. These yogis, for that's what they truly were, would come and collect water from the tap near the kitchen. Others would come to visit or to make puja.

Big Love in the Land of Joy



Lama Yeshe in the main Gompa, 1983

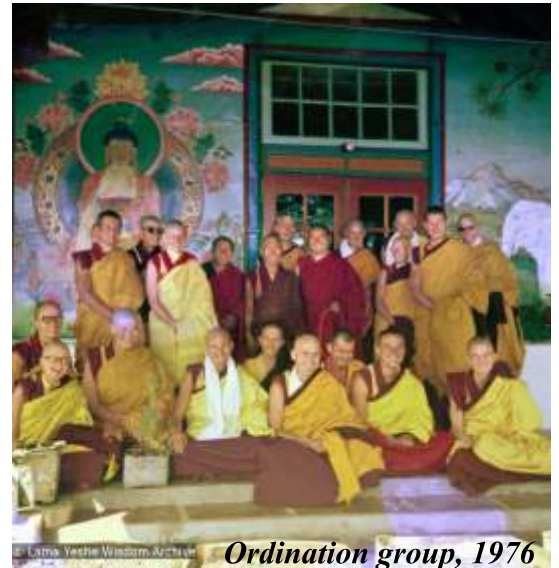
“One of my duties as manager at that time was to ensure that everyone on the property was doing proper retreat. Lama Yeshe insisted that I go around to everyone, both the Westerners and these great Tibetan yogis, with a register. I was supposed to ask them what the subject of their retreat was and to explain that they were not allowed to go down to town or to do only pujas. I felt rather awkward doing this, but all the yogis were extremely kind. They took the query seriously and told me that they were meditating on the lam-rim.”

Peter continued, “I hadn't discussed finances with Lama at all. Of course, the income from

those engaging in retreat was certainly not enough to cover replacing the roof, building toilets, bringing in water, and building yet another retaining wall to stop the front garden from sliding away. I was frequently under the impression that Lama Yeshe was going to visit, so I borrowed money, having spent all of mine... This went on for three months. I had to go back to Ling Rinpoche's manager several times for more. One day I found that I had only two rupees left and no more avenues for borrowing. I spent the rupees on bus fare to Dharamsala and at the State Bank of India found that my good friend Harvey Horrocks had sent me \$150 from Australia. It was always a struggle, but somehow it always worked.”

One day, when Peter was just about at the end of his tether, he received a telegram from Lama Yeshe that read, “You come a long way, baby, but you still got a long way to go.” Lama had adapted this expression from an advertisement for Virginia Slims cigarettes. “That telegram was a huge relief,” Peter recalled. “I knew then, as I had experienced before with Lama Zopa, that Lama Yeshe knew exactly what I was going through, even though he was in Nepal at the time.

“Nevertheless, I felt this debt as an enormous weight, and I think that this contributed to my falling ill with hepatitis around June 1973. All I could do was lie on Tushita's balcony and look at the view. When Lama Yeshe eventually arrived, he sat with me in the evenings while I lay sick and I remember him saying to me on one such occasion, 'It's so sad the way in samsara everything is impermanent and everything changes.' Lama spent a lot of time with me through that period. That year was the happiest of my life. The air was pristine and the view over the rolling foothills of the Himalayas was spectacular. The best time that year was in the winter when most of the Tibetan community left to sell sweaters on the plains, retreaters stopped coming, and the mountain was quiet and still. Although I didn't have time to study at the Tibetan Library as most of the other Westerners did and didn't have much time to meditate, still my mind was light and exhilarated.”



Ordination group, 1976



Lama asked Chris Vautier, an architect, if he would come to Tushita and help with building plans for some A-frame houses (*pictured left*). “Lama wanted these little houses to have Western toilets. I explained that they needed running water in order to work. I had some difficulty working out how much I could resist my guru, but he was insistent that he wanted a comfortable Western look... clearly he wanted his Western students to have standard Western amenities, no matter what the cost. Lama was never impressed with hippie dreams of “roughing it.” Simply being in India was generally rough enough.



“There was no money around then and the food was absolutely minimal, right down to eating rice with boiled fern fronds. One day I walked into the dining room to find him wearing a red woollen woman's dress that someone had left behind. It had a zipper up the back, a tapered waist, long sleeves, and a long skirt. It actually fit him rather nicely. 'This is very good quality, dear. No point in wasting,' he told me.

The message I got was that everything is useful, that we shouldn't let our preconceptions get in the way.

Lama Yeshe usually spent Losar at Kopan, but in 1979 he enjoyed the Losar holiday in Dharamsala. Max Redlich (*Ven Thubten Gelek*) also followed Lama to Tushita. “I always felt that Lama would take care of me forever. He would regularly perform a series of protector pujas at that time and every night I played the big drum for them.

“One afternoon Lama told me that I didn't need to attend that day's puja. I felt a little left out and went off to my room. Suddenly I knew something was going to happen. I could hear the puja starting up, the drums going, but I just sat there, completely tense. Suddenly, Maureen came running in and said, 'Quick, someone's trying to set fire to all the building materials for Lama's new house!' I raced off and caught a guy just about to set fire to a pile of woodshavings, but I managed to talk him out of it. I'm sure Lama had foreseen this, which was why he didn't want me to be in the puja.”

THE LAND OF JOY

In May, when the teachings were over, Lama Zopa Rinpoche went off to Lawudo to lead a nyung-nä retreat, while Lama Yeshe stayed on at Tushita Retreat Centre. He loved being in Dharamsala, where the Dalai Lama and Trijang Rinpoche were just down the road and where he was under less pressure than at Kopan or in the Western centers.



The Lamas with Song Rinpoche 1982; with Ling Rinpoche 1973; Ordination group with Trijang Rinpoche 1976

Later, as Centres developed around the world, Lama always insisted that they be structured in a manner that ensured they would outlast both himself and Rinpoche, as well as any other individuals. “Lama was always encouraging us to think far into the future, beyond ourselves.

It was Lama's foresight to provide such a facility where teachings could be internalized, and this remains true even today. Lama Zopa Rinpoche has said that many of us have received more teachings and initiations than most geshe in Tibet ever did. What we need is to do retreat in order to integrate and internalize all we have been given. This is the essential purpose of Tushita.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche is pictured right at Tushita in 2011, circumambulating the Stupa of Lama Yeshe, who passed away in 1984.



Many thanks to Adele Hulse and the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive for assistance and permission, particularly Dr Nick Ribush. Thanks also to John Herrett and Ina van Delden for use of their photos.

A Taste of Tushita

The birth of the year!! – January to March 2012

After the heaviest snowfall in decades, we re-opened from our Winter Break in February, beginning 2012 with a series of courses related to the Kalachakra initiation that HH the Dalai Lama conferred in Bodhgaya in January.

March 8th was one of the most auspicious days of the Tibetan year, known in English as "*The Day of Miracles*". As well as HH the Dalai Lama teaching that day down in town and our own calendar of special events, Tushita's Director Linda gave birth to a healthy son, who Linda and her husband Jamyang have named Norbu (*pictured to the right*). A miraculous day, and start to the year!



Just after Lama Zopa's departure - Late May

Denpa Lochoe Rinpoche gave a Chenrezig Initiation on May 18th & 19th, as preparation for our series of eight Nyung Nay retreat, which ran until June 5th.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche asked us to offer a room to Geshe Choklyi (former abbot of the monastery and nunnery in Tsum, Nepal), who was very sick and had requested to die at Tushita. He stayed with us for around 2 weeks until he passed away here on May 22nd. After spending 3 days in *Tukdam*, Geshe-la was cremated on the morning of 25th of May, closely following the personal instruction of Lama Zopa

Rinpoche. Geshe-la's passing and cremation had a very powerful impact on the many students who were resident here during this period. It was an honour for Tushita to have been part of Geshe-la's final days.

Before the Rains - Early June

Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo gave a public talk here at Tushita on June 1st. This 2-hour talk was entitled "*Thinking Outside the Box*". Around 300 people attended, many sitting outside because the Gompa was filled to capacity (*pictured right*).

H.H. the Dalai Lama's June 7 - 9 teachings in McLeod Ganj were the first to be requested and sponsored by a group of Indian students. In service to His Holiness, and in recognition of the kindness India has shown to the Tibetan community, Tushita provided accommodation to around 70 members of the Indian sangha group, many of whom may otherwise have been unable to attend these precious teachings. The expectation is that these teachings will become an annual event, and Tushita would be honoured to be a part of making this happen.



Monsoon events - June to August

In preparation for our 3-month Vajrasattva retreat, Dagri Rinpoche led events on June 24th and 25th. On the first day, he conferred a Vajrasattva Initiation (*pictured left*) and the next morning he returned to give the Eight Mahayana Precepts. It was also our incredible fortune to have the translator extraordinaire - Geshe Kelsang Wangmo!



We were very sad to hear that Geshe Tsering (*pictured right, here in 1979*) passed away in Nepal on the 16th of August. A puja was held for him here the following day. Geshe-la was the half-brother of Lama Yeshe and lived at Tushita for 30 years. He will be remembered here with enormous affection.

Lama Zopa in Residence

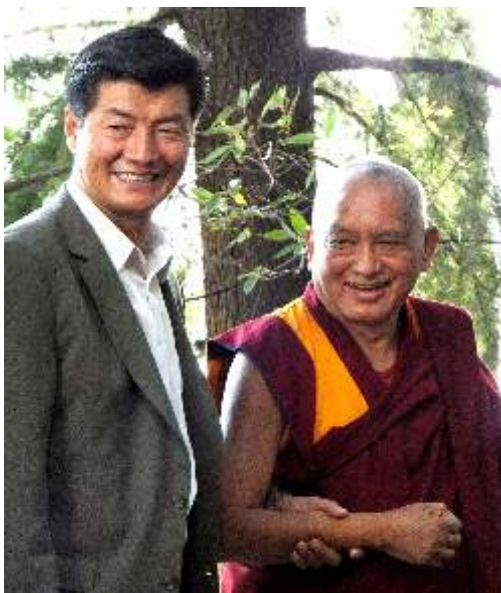
March to May 2012



Our spiritual director Lama Zopa Rinpoche was in residence here for much of our early 2012 season, arriving on March 12th. This was intended to be a quiet time for Rinpoche, but anyone familiar with Lama Zopa's style will know to expect surprises! The last few days of Rinpoche's first stay this year were packed - an incense puja with LZR and Khandro-la (*pictured above left*), and Rinpoche leading a Guru Puja and giving our course students an extensive talk on emptiness and compassion.

After a few weeks away, Lama Zopa returned for a very eventful fortnight of public and private teachings, pujas and practices and host to a number of very special guests! On the 10th of May, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche came to Tushita (*pictured above centre*). Lama Zopa Rinpoche was keen to show Ling Rinpoche around the centre, and a laughter-filled journey commenced, much to the amusement of the students. LZR asked Ling Rinpoche to say a few words to the students as they stepped out of the main Gompa to greet everyone. Ling Rinpoche said "*Be happy. Eat well. Eat like an elephant! Sleep well. But don't fall asleep during the course!*".

Then on May 13th 2012, Lobsang Sangay, the Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister of Tibet) visited Lama Zopa Rinpoche here at Tushita (*pictured below left*), along with Kalon Pema Chinnjor (Minister for Department of Religion and Culture). They had a private meeting in Rinpoche's house, after which Lama Zopa Rinpoche took the Kalon Tripa on a guided tour of the centre, causing an enormous amount of excitement among our students - and most especially for our Tibetan staff (*pictured below right*) - our kitchen has been blessed by many holy beings and international political figures this past year! The Kalon Tripa returned the next day for another private meeting with Lama Zopa Rinpoche.



On the 13th and 14th of May, Rinpoche led a Lama Tsong Khapa initiation and the next day he asked for all 100 Tushita students to gather together so that he could give them a piece of the Torma (ritual cake) from Khandro-la's retreat (*pictured above right*). Rinpoche told the students it was called "Tibetan Ice-Cream"....!

Lama Zopa left for Nepal on May 16th, and us all exhausted! We can only hope to emulate Lama Zopa Rinpoche's tireless service to sentient beings!



Our Mandala

Venerable Lobsang Namdrol

I was born in Lhasa, Tibet around 1928, so I'm 84 years old now. I had 6 brothers and sisters. One sister is still alive but the others have already died. I became a monk when I was 6 years old. It was our culture for parents to send one or more of their children to a monastery, so it wasn't unusual and I was very happy to become a monk.

I was sent to Drepung, which was the largest Monastery in Tibet; there is a Tibetan expression which says that it had "7,700 Monks", but actually it had many more. At Drepung we were given everything we needed and I had a very happy childhood, the only difficult part was doing my homework and learning all the texts!

Later, the political situation in Tibet became very bad and I escaped in 1959, when I was 31. My only emotion in leaving was sorrow, how could I feel anything else? We had hoped that we would be able to return, but I have now been in exile for 53 years.

The crossing from Tibet over the Himalayas to India was very difficult and we had many hardships, we didn't have anything to eat for many days together. But when we arrived in Arunchal Pradesh, the Indian police took very good care of us. We were later moved to Assam, and then to Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh. Dalhousie later became a large refugee town, but we were among the first Tibetans there.

For about a year we did nothing in Dalhousie, and then we found work embroidering shawls. Later I was taught carpet making, which I did for the next 20 years or so. I made carpets and then taught carpet making in Dalhousie, then in Dehradun, and Nepal and for several years back in Assam. I had to work hard, so there was very little time for Dharma practice during these years.

One of my sisters was living in Delhi and sometimes old friends from Tibet gathered at her house. On one of these occasions I met my old neighbor, Lama Yeshe. You had heard a rumour that Lama Yeshe and I were brothers? No, we were not related, but our fathers were best friends, and we grew up in the same community, like brothers. I was a little older than him, and then I went to Drepung, he went to Sera. When I met Lama Yeshe again in Delhi, he invited me to live at Tushita; he said "come and I will make a place for you". Lama also asked me to make some carpets for him! I think that he sent some to other centres around the world.



I arrived at Tushita in 1982. Lama had these huts built for me and the other monks, and I've stayed here ever since. Lama Yeshe asked Lama Zopa to look after us after he died, and Tushita has taken very good care of me. Do I have any advice for Tushita? No, I don't have any advice. Tushita is doing everything very well, especially the last few years, so many improvements.

You would like me to teach? Oh no, I don't know enough about Dharma! I studied from the age of 6 until I was 31, then because I had to leave Tibet, my life was only work, I had no time for Dharma. So I am very grateful to Tushita for giving me this place to practice in, I have everything I need here.

Meet the People
of Tushita



Venerable Namdrol is the longest term resident of our "Meditator's Huts".

We don't have many opportunities to speak to him, as he focuses on his daily practice and doesn't speak any English, so we very grateful to learn more about him through an interpreter - and to clear up rumours about his being Lama Yeshe's brother!

A series of interviews
with members
of our
community

What's IN LATE 2012

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM COURSES

July 25 - August 3

August 7 - 16

August 21 - 30

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will teach locally from September 4 - 6!!!

September 8 - 17

September 20 - 29

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will teach locally from October 1 - 4!!!

October 6 - 15

October 18 - 27

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will teach locally from October 29 - 31!!!

November 7 - 14 (8-day)

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will teach locally on November 20 & 21!!!

During the teaching days of our Introduction to Buddhism courses, experienced teachers explain Buddhist philosophy and meditation from a modern perspective.

Topics include: the mind and emotions, karma, rebirth, love and compassion, and the nature of reality. The daily schedule combines teachings with various styles of meditation and discussion groups.

10-day courses end with a 2-day intensive meditation retreat to give you the chance to familiarize yourself with and gain insight into the topics that were covered in the teachings. Most importantly, you will learn how to apply these Buddhist techniques to increase peace and happiness in your daily life!

PLEASE NOTE:

*All phenomena
are subject to change!!*

On this Season?

WE ARE HAPPY TO OFFER THE FOLLOWING COURSES AND RETREATS

Intermediate Level Courses

For those who have already taken our 10-day Introduction course (or equivalent)

FROM SELF TO OTHERS

*How to Free The Mind From Self-Centredness
with **Onky Willson***

SEPTEMBER 9 - 17, 2012

Using *The Eight Verses of Thought Transformation* text, this course aims to examine our ordinary view, to develop the extraordinary practices of Bodhicitta and Wisdom that free us from our mental obsessions.

FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY... in 37 Steps

*with **Onky Willson***

OCTOBER 19 - 27

This course will take as its inspiration the living example of the Dalai Lama and *The 37 Practices of a Bodhisattva*. This wonderful text is a clear guide on how to nurture the mind so that it will ripen into the fruits of Bodhicitta and Wisdom.

Dharma Teachings by a Very Special Guest

An amazing opportunity to study with a great Lama

LOJONG (MIND TRAINING)

AUGUST 31 - SEPTEMBER 2

*teachings by **Dagri Rinpoche***

From 3pm - 5pm each day

Annual Tantric Retreats

These group tantric retreats are most suitable for those who are Buddhist and have received the relevant Initiation. However, this year's Retreats are also suitable for those who might not be ready yet to make the commitments usually involved with a tantric retreat.

CHENREZIG / TONG-LEN RETREAT *with an Introduction to Tantra*

OCTOBER 7 - 15

*Led by **Jimi Neal***

This retreat will consist of five practice sessions of the Chenrezig Yoga method per day.

MEDICINE BUDDHA RETREAT

NOVEMBER 5 - 14

*Led by **Venerable Tony Beaumont***

"You can use the Medicine Buddha practice for ANY purpose, ANY problem" LZR
This retreat will consist of four sessions of Medicine Buddha practice per day.

Short, Non-Residential Course

Meditation course held in silence. The schedule runs from 9am - 5:30pm.

INTENSIVE LAM-RIM RETREAT *with Ven. Tony Beaumont*

NOVEMBER 17 - 19

A 3-day Non-Residential course for those who have previously taken one of Tushita's Introduction to Buddhism courses (or Lam-Rim equivalent).

www.tushita.info

Ongoing Drop-In Events

From February to November

DAILY GUIDED MEDITATION OUR EXCELLENT LIBRARY

Monday - Saturday

9:15 - 10:15am

Led by an experienced student, followed by an optional Q & A. All welcome, no need to register!



Monday - Saturday

(Office Hours)

We welcome you to our excellent library, with books and items for loan and sale.



MOVIE DAYS

Mondays & Fridays at 2pm

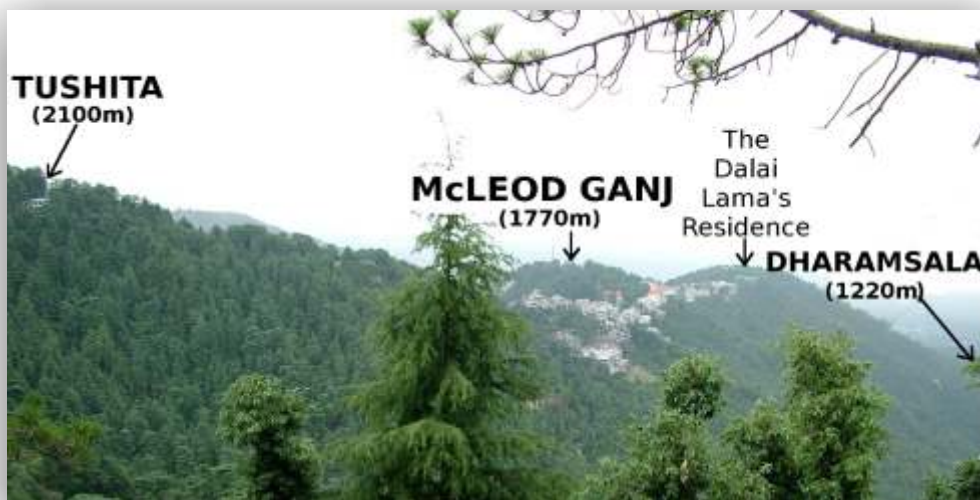
On Mondays & Fridays at 2pm we screen movies and documentaries of Buddhist interest, followed by chai and optional discussion.

You don't have to register, just come and enjoy!

On Mondays, we show 2 titles from the FPMT's "*Discovering Buddhism*" series, while on Fridays we show a variety of Dharma movies.

Titles we often show include: "*The Unmistaken Child*", the documentary tracking the discovery of Geshe Lama Konchog's reincarnation; "*Kundun*", Martin Scorsese's bio-pic of the early life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama; "*Brilliant Moon*", a beautiful documentary about Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche; "*Cave in the Snow*", a documentary about the 12-year Himalayan retreat of British Nun, Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, and many more.

See our online calendar of events for specific schedule information.



We hope you can join us soon on the blessed hill!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Office & Library Opening Hours:

9:30 - 11:30am

a break for lunch, then...

12:30 - 4pm

(Closed Sundays)

Or visit our very
informative website:

www.tushita.info

