

LOOKING AHEAD

No 18

News from Amaravati Summer 2014 MANUSSA

'Respect and mettā for one another fosters close bonds and ties ... and thus the spiritual qualities and Dhamma can arise and grow.'

'All of you have come here ... because you see the benefit ... because this gives rise to our cultivation of these spiritual qualities, which is the true benefit that we can derive from this manussa, this human life of ours. This being manussa, human beings, means we have these natural resources within us which are of great value; we have the capacity to grow spiritually. Being manussa, we have sati and paññā, to know what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. What is appropriate and of value, those things we should develop and cultivate because that will be of benefit for those that follow in our footsteps ...'

Extracts from Luang Por Liem's Opening Address at the IEM, May 26th 2014.

Entering vassa at Amaravati, it is striking just how diverse the sangha here is. Of the thirty-four or so members, there are twenty-three distinct nationalities from several continents, men and women ranging in age from twenty-five to seventy-five. Correspondingly, the representation of nationalities, cultures and interests amongst the lay visitors and guests to the monastery is also broad; traditionally Buddhist families mingling with spiritual seekers and people who have only recently come into contact with the tradition or with Buddhism; monastery devotees, regular meditators and visitors, tourists and the merely curious. The coming together of difference.

The international gathering of Elders at Amaravati in late May really did feel like a harmonious coming together of differences, when the context of just being together was a cause for joy. In the opening reflections, Luang Por Liem, the abbot of Wat Pah Pong in Thailand referred to the qualities of being '*manussa*' in the Pāli scriptural language, a human being. Looking around the temple when the sangha and lay community gathered for the meal blessing chant, one could not fail to notice the diversity, but equally one could not fail to notice how we are all connected both by our human condition, the reality of birth, ageing death and difference and by the extraordinary human potential to be awake, to express and cultivate the love of the good.

Harmony often does not seem so easy to come by. So much of what we see and experience seems to be characterized more by conflict and unease, rather than this coming together, recognizing our common humanity and innate capacity for goodness. It takes a certain discernment to see through the endless likes and dislikes arising in response to the diversity of the world and people; it takes strength of mind to not automatically follow the pull of feelings and influences; strength to avoid the conflict that arises from unthinkingly expressing delighting in this and being turned off by that, being happy about this, unhappy about that. But likewise, when one has a sense of inner balance, because of having a love of the good, the heart naturally expresses the spiritual qualities, respect, kindness and gratitude, generosity, honesty.

Human beings have an innate capacity to develop the resilience and strength to not be moved or swayed away from this love of the good into acting on negative thoughts, to not react to unpleasant feelings which lead to conflict and disharmony inside and by consequence with one's fellow beings. There is a certain kind of confidence, of uprightness that is needed and is immediately noticeable in those that have it. This confidence comes from knowing what is conducive and following that, knowing what is not conducive and not following that. This in turn leads to harmony in the human family, in the community and ease within oneself, and further developing the capacities we all have as human beings.

In July, the Sunday talks resume (see full schedule on page 2) and we welcome the many events of the summer; Luang Por Sumedho's eightieth birthday and Amaravati's thirtieth anniversary, the Family Camp in August, many visitors. During this time, the sangha members will also meet often to study their respective disciplines, the 227, 150 rules and ten or eight precepts, and spend time in personal and group retreat. Indeed, a time to explore and cultivate what is means to be a human being.

Inside: Dates for your diary, Sunday talks schedule, latest retreat info ...

Calendar July – Dec 2014

Vassa Sunday Talks Schedule

2.00-4.00 pm in the Sālā

Date	Speaker	Title
13 th July	Aj. Amaro	Marananussati — contemplations of death
20 th July	Aj. Sundarā	Believing in assumptions versus reality
27 th July	Luang Por Sumedho	The way it is *
3 rd Aug.	Aj. Amaro	The blessings of this human life
10 th Aug.	Aj. Amaro	If you truly love me, don't create me in your mind
17 th Aug.	Aj. Kalyāno	Wisdom & samādhi
24 th Aug.	Aj. Sundarā	How to stop thinking
31 st Aug.	Aj. Amaro	Work & the path
7 th Sept.	Aj. Bodhipālā	I am the owner of my kamma
14 th Sept.	Aj. Nyānarato	TBD
21 st Sept.	Aj. Sundarā	Letting go versus getting rid of
28 th Sept.	Aj. Amaro	What is the best religion?
5 th Oct.	Aj. Nyānarāto	Gratitude to parents

The afternoon includes an approx. one-hour Dhamma talk followed by a Q&A session with a break for tea in between. The talks are held in the Sālā (Meeting Hall).

* Will be held in the temple

Notable Dates

- 11th July (Fri.) – Āsālhā Pūjā
- 12th July (Sat.) – Vassa begins
- 13th July (Sun.) – Sunday Talks start
- 23rd-27th July (Wed.-Sun.) – Luang Por Sumedho's 80th birthday celebrations
- 1st Aug. (Fri.) – Amaravati's 30th anniversary
- 30th July (Wed.) – Luang Por Sumedho leaves Amaravati for Thailand
- 5th Oct. – Gratitude to Parents Day
- 8th Oct. (Wed.) – Pavāranā Day (end of Vassa)
- 2nd Nov. (Sun.) – ABM Kathina attended by Luang Por Sumedho

Luang Por Sumedho's Eightieth Birthday Celebrations & Ācariya Pūjā

Wednesday 23rd - Friday 25th July

5.00 am	Morning Pūjā in Temple
9.00 am	Luang Por Sumedho offers a Dhamma reflection Morning Group Practice (Walking/Sitting)
11.30 am	Meal Offering
Afternoon	Open Schedule (Individual Practice)
7.30 pm	Evening Pūjā

Saturday 26th July Wan Phra (Uposatha Observance Day)

9.00 - 11.00 am	Temple is closed for the Patimokkha recitation
11.30 am	Meal Offering - Anumodanā (blessing) in temple
2.00-4.00 pm	Meditation workshop
7.30 pm	Evening Pūjā, Dhamma Talk & midnight vigil

Sunday 27th July

7.15 am	Breakfast with Luang Por Sumedho in sālā
10.15 am	Ācariya Pūjā in Temple
11.30 am	Meal Offering - Anumodanā (blessing) in Temple
2.00-3.00 pm	Sunday Talk 'The way it is' by Luang Por Sumedho followed by tea and a Q&A session

Saturday Meditation Workshop

Saturday afternoon 2.00–4.00 pm in the Temple

Sitting & walking meditation instruction for beginners led by a member of the Sangha, with the opportunity for questions and dialogue.

You can come for all or part of the session. There is no fee and no booking is necessary.

Note that the Saturday night Dhamma talks will not take place from 12th July until October

Retreats & other events at Amaravati Retreat Centre

Monastic Retreats (led by a monk or a nun)

No.	2014	Duration	Teacher & Theme/Title	Retreat Status
R7:	1 st – 3 rd Aug.	Weekend	Ajahn Ahimsako	☀
R8:	8 th – 12 th Aug.	5 Days	Ajahn Ānando	☀
R9:	5 th – 17 th Sept.	13 Days	†Ajahn Amaro	☀
R10:	26 th – 28 th Sept.	Weekend	Ajahn Mettā	☀
R11:	10 th – 12 th Oct.	Weekend	Ajahn Candasiri & Brother Nicholas – <i>Buddhist/Christian</i>	☪
R12:	24 th – 26 th Oct.	Weekend	Ajahn Amaro & Ajahn Ratanavanno – <i>Thai Language retreat</i>	Places available for men & women
R13:	7 th – 11 th Nov.	5 Days	Ajahn Nyānarato	☀
R14:	21 – 30 th Nov.	10 Days	Ajahn Sucitto & Ajahn Mettā ☸	☀ / Waiting list open for men only
R15:	12 th – 14 th Dec.	Weekend	Ajahn Dhammanando	☪
R16:	27 th Dec. - 1 st Jan	6 Days	Ajahn Sundarā	☪

☀ Fully booked – waiting list in operation. ☪ Full for women – places available for men. ~ Full for men – places available for women. ☸ We request that you complete a shorter retreat, either at Amaravati or elsewhere, before attending this retreat.

† This retreat is for experienced meditators only who have previously attended a 10-day retreat at Amaravati or elsewhere.

Further information about booking retreats: A policy of only accepting bookings six months before a retreat is scheduled is now in place. Any booking form sent early will not be processed. You will have to reapply once booking is open. This is being introduced to give everyone a chance to fully commit to attending a retreat once a place is offered.

For bookings and information please visit <www.amaravati.org> (Retreat Centre), email <retreats@amaravati.org> or ring 01442 843239. Bookings are only accepted on receipt of a completed booking form which can be downloaded from the website, or requested from the Retreat Centre. Please send your booking form by post to the monastery address c/o The Retreat Centre. No booking fee is required. Donations are welcomed at the end of retreats.

The retreat centre managers only deal with bookings for the monastic retreats. Contact details for the ALBA, BWN and Family events are listed separately below. The 2015 Retreat Schedule will be made available late Autumn.

Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association (ALBA)

Retreats and Days of Practice (led by an experienced layperson).

For bookings and information please visit <www.buddhacommunity.org>

19–23 Sept. 5-day Retreat
18 Oct. Day of Practice
1 Nov. Day of Practice
20 Dec. Day of Practice

Buddhist Women's Network (BWN)

Retreats and Days of Practice (led by an experienced laywoman).

For bookings and information please contact Shirley McDonald at <shirleymcdonald@hotmail.co.uk>

29–31 Aug. Weekend Retreat
19 Oct. Day of Practice
21 Dec. Day of Practice

Family Events

For bookings and information please contact Joy Love <joy.love@virginmedia.com>

14–16 Nov. Young Persons' Weekend (Age 13–18)
5–7 Dec. Adults Creative Weekend (Age 18+)

Useful Websites

Sangha

A portal to the international branch monasteries of the Luang Por Chah sangha:
<www.forestsangha.org>

Lotus Volunteer Group

Information on opportunities to volunteer to support the sangha at Amaravati:
<www.lotusvolunteergroup.amaravati.org>

Books and audio

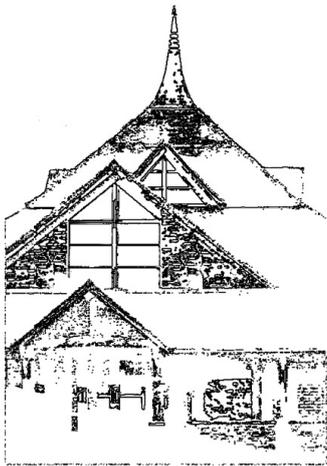
Free distribution teachings in the Theravada Buddhist tradition of Luang Por Chah: <www.forestsanghapublications.org>

Lay community

The website of the Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association (ALBA): <www.buddhacommunity.org>

Amaravati Family Events

<www.family.amaravati.org>



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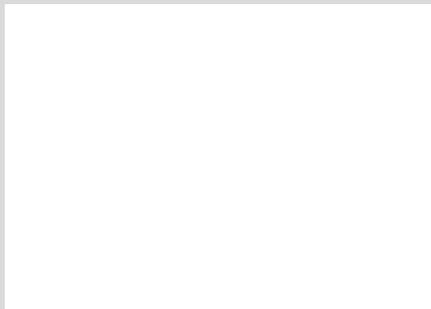
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Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 3BZ, UK

Monastery Contacts

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

St Margarets,

Great Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead,

Hertfordshire, HP1 3BZ

Office: +44 (01442) 842 455 Fax: (01442) 843 721

Retreat Centre: (01442) 843 239

Website

www.amaravati.org

Stewards: *The English Sangha Trust*

The English Sangha Trust is a registered charitable trust which stewards funds to support the sangha at Amaravati and Cittaviveka monasteries.

Contributions can be made to the English Sangha Trust c/o Amaravati or online via:

www.amaravati.org » Support

Staying Overnight

If you wish to stay as a guest, contact the Guest Nun (guestnun@amaravati.org) or Guest Monk (guestmonk@amaravati.org). More information about staying as a guest is also available on the website at <http://www.amaravati.org/participate>

General Monastery Enquiries

For general enquiries such as arranging school visits, please write to the monastery secretary at the address above or email monasterysecretary@amaravati.org

For enquiries about giving dana, the kitchen and what is happening in the monastery on a given day, please contact the office.

Lunar Observance Days 2014

July	● 4 th (Fri.)	○ 11 th (Fri.)
	● 19 th (Sat.)	● 26 th (Sat.)
August	● 3 rd (Sun.)	○ 10 th (Sun.)
	● 18 th (Mon.)	● 24 th (Sun.)
September	● 1 st (Mon.)	○ 8 th (Mon.)
	● 16 th (Tues.)	● 23 rd (Tues.)
October	● 1 st (Wed.)	○ 8 th (Wed.)
	● 16 th (Thurs.)	● 22 nd (Wed.)
	● 30 th (Thurs.)	
November	○ 6 th (Thurs.)	● 14 th (Fri.)
	● 21 st (Fri.)	● 29 th (Sat.)
December	○ 6 th (Sat.)	● 14 th (Sun.)
	● 20 th (Sat.)	● 28 th (Sun.)

On lunar observance days, there is a pūjā at 7.30 pm, followed by a Dhamma Talk and midnight vigil.

8th Oct. – Pavāranā Day - end of Vassa

2nd Nov. – Amaravati Kathina

Looking Ahead is a newsletter from Amaravati. You can pick up a copy at the monastery or receive it directly by email or by post. Please send your email and/or home address to: abmnews@amaravati.org or post it to Amaravati. Please indicate whether you wish to receive *Looking Ahead* by email or by post.