

—Portobello Buddhist Priory—



A Temple of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives



*Sangha members at Rev Master Jiyn's Memorial Service
Portobello Priory, 12th November 2016*

Newsletter & Calendar of Events January-April 2017

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— Welcome to all —

Portobello Buddhist Priory, a ground floor flat in the Portobello district of Edinburgh, opened in 1998. It is one of a handful of temples in Britain which are affiliated to the Community of Buddhist Contemplatives. The training monastery of the Community at Throssel Hole near Hexham in Northumberland was founded in 1972 by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, an Englishwoman who trained within the Soto Zen tradition at one of its main monasteries in Japan. The resident Prior at Portobello is one of the senior monks from Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey.

The purpose of the Priory is to offer lay training within the Serene Reflection Meditation tradition (Soto Zen) to anyone who sincerely seeks to undertake it, and the prior's role is to support such training. The prior and members of the congregation are also involved in activities such as religious education, hospital and prison visiting.

All are warmly invited to join in the Priory's programme of lay practice, the purpose of which is to come to know and live from our True Nature, whose expression is our wise and compassionate living.

With kindest wishes from Rev Master Favian, Prior

(For details of the day-to-day schedule at the Priory, please see back page)

- Weekend events at the Priory -

January 2017

Sunday 8th	Renewal of Precepts	11am
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February

Sunday 5th	Renewal of Precepts	11am
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March

Sunday 5th	Renewal of Precepts	11am
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April

Sunday 2nd	Festival of Great Master Dogen	11am
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The Priory is open to visitors as well as trainees every day from
6.45am - 9.15pm

except Mondays, Thursday afternoons, and Sunday pm.

*(Visitors—please phone beforehand, and please note when the Prior
is holding retreats elsewhere: see inside back page)*

Newsletter

55th edition
December 2016
(& 15th e-edition)

— Prior's Notes —

Most of us are familiar with a version from the life of the Buddha, that tells how when he was still living with his family, he slipped out of the home and witnessed the 'sights of impermanence', old age, sickness and death and as a result became a truth seeker. And perhaps like me, this was one of those familiar teaching stories that we assume, yes I've got it, and file it away somewhere into memory, failing to connect to its deeper resonance within our actual lived experience.

The other day I was walking along the sea front and came across the familiar sight of a group of infant children, all in a line wearing reflector jackets, holding hands and being led by adults front and back, along the promenade. Walking on up to the High Street I then saw a group of concerned people gathered around

an elderly man lying still on the ground. A blanket was produced and an ambulance called for. After he was taken to hospital I continued on to the Priory past the local church, where a hearse was just pulling up and a group of mourners were supporting each other outside the entrance.

Reflecting on this, back at the Priory, I was struck at how on an ordinary morning, within an hour, I was witness to the archetypal story of the Buddha. The whole movement of our lives, from childhood through age, sickness and death, not as an abstraction but as a visceral encounter that can shake us out of a kind of habitual sleep walking. What also struck me was the way memory loops the events into a sequence, on a time line, while the actual en-

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counter in real time, stood out as a complete ‘now’ moment, where in meeting each ‘arising’ there was a human conscious presence expressing a witnessing compassion, that by its nature could only take place in the here and now.

How easily in my daily life, these signs, these wake-up calls to turn towards the moment with an open heart, become obscured by the habits of distraction and self-concern. What a shame to miss those dharma moments in life where the mundane can be realised as the sacred.

Dogen reminds us: ‘Already you are in possession of the vital attributes of a human being. Do not waste time with this and that – you can possess the authority of Buddha’ *(from Rules for Meditation)*



Hut sitting – considering impermanence

Sometimes as I sit in the hut thoughts and memories of how it came to be come up. I think of how all it is made of came together and how even now it is in a state of change. I use the hut as a way to consider change and flow. In these thoughts I am aware of their occurrence but sometimes ease off and return to flow.

A good friend, who is an accomplished builder and green woodworker, my son and I built this hut over most of one summer. My friend had the skills and we were the brawn, learning as we went. This coming together of the three of us changed and shifted our conceptions of each other as we worked together and allowed each of us to grow in each other's company, each day's interactions different to the previous and each of us learning how to be around each other.

The hut was designed to be a workspace and tool store separate from the house where I might think, read, write and meditate. We had a vague plan as to how it might be and gradually that



plan evolved as we built and considered the materials. My friend was recovering from a stroke and this work helped him size up what he was now capable of doing, my son was a little stuck in finding a way forward for his life and I was fast approaching retirement and considering what that might mean. We were all embarking on something that we hoped might lead us into a next phase of life or give us some clues as to what that might be.

The hut was to be as 'green' as possible – built with a douglas fir frame and local green larch cladding, a curved green roof and insulated with sheep's fleece. As we worked I was increasingly aware of change – of how the materials we used were shaped and altered, how, each day, each moment

offered something different and how our moods and relations shifted and changed, as did the weather. As separate materials were shaped and formed into the hut there was change in action...what had once been a weedy piece of ground was now gradually taken over by the construction.

As I sit and consider this now I am aware of the many parts that have made this seeming whole. In memory I am attached to that summer, to my boy then, to my friend and I, to how I now 'remember' how we came together and made it happen. But there was not a particular then and now. There is change and flow, continuous change and flow – in fact I can never really know the totality of how all of this came to be. I consider how larch and douglas fir grew from seed in a continuous process that stretches thousands of years back, how all was effected by climate and weather, by funghi, by pollination and by growing in an ecological niche, how the steel for the nails was forged, plaster board was formed, and of all those processes and people in a gradual, often random flow with karmic action in each instance. I consider how we three came

to be there together that summer and how we are now different, changed, from what we were then and I now think of all that continues to happen with this construction – how the wood has begun to discolour, how spiders and insects have moved in, how wasps built a nest, how a wood wasp feasted on larch sap, how the boards and gutters creak and groan as they expand under the heat of the sun and how break down and decay (a few words that are scarcely adequate to describe the multiplicity of actions and ongoing events that are occurring) is gradually happening, each thing in relation to the other. It is all part of flow – one day all of this will be parts of something else, all still in flow.

And as I sit there, on my cushions facing the wall and let go of these considerations or even when I consider them, just sitting moment by moment, I am just in it, in that flow. Sometimes jolted into fuller presence by a pigeon shifting rocks on the roof or by the sharp crack as a gutter warms up in the sun.

Jerry Simcock



In Love and Death

Tonight my heart takes a tumble as I notice a dog bowl in the dark of the garden, while a plane leaves a streak of silent white across the night sky between the stars.

Our dog Bella gradually lost the use of her back legs through a painful spinal condition and her suffering was compounded by other emergent health issues. We suffered too, not knowing how she felt, unable to interpret the look in her eyes and watching her deterioration was difficult to witness.

She was a big dog and when she could no longer manage the stairs at home we carried her up and down to the garden. We could see her condition steadily getting worse, but at such close quarters, it appeared incremental, just little things, she was still eating and could wag her tail and it seems that we found it difficult to accept that soon she would die.

How can we make the decision to end the life of another being? Are we not bound to cause no harm, to do only good to others? I struggled with this moral dilemma, half hoping that our dog might die in the night and we would be spared making such a choice. 'It's too soon', 'she might stabilise', 'she still has life in her', 'we could reorganise our lives around caring for her'. These were the thoughts swirling amongst us. But we knew in our hearts that the inevitable was waiting for us and we began to think what had previously been unthinkable - we would need to arrange a date for the vet to come to our house and end the life of our dog. Such a cold stark thought, it felt cruel, calculated and a betrayal.

When we brought Bella into our lives as a puppy, we took on the responsibility to care for her and to make the right choices for her. Although it felt bad when considering how we might be merciful, we finally accepted that we had to trust that we would make a compassionate decision based on love.

Finally we did the harder thing and Bella slipped away very peacefully in our arms, with our other dog Lolli close by. We were numbed by our grief and spent the next days in tearful remembrance. We spoke of the joy Bella brought to our lives and how grateful we were to have shared all of her life.

In our suffering we came to know that grief is not divisible, nor separate from

love, just as light is held in darkness. Without death there is not beauty, without beauty, we have no love and how can we have life without love.

David Campbell



Bella

Now Is The Time —

We're always in some kind of mood. It might be sadness, it might be anger, it might be not much of anything, just a kind of blur. It might be humor or contentment. In any case, whatever it is, that's the path.

When something hurts in life, we don't usually think of it as our path or as the source of wisdom. In fact, we think that the reason we're on the path is to get rid of this painful feeling. In this way, we naively cultivate a subtle aggression against ourselves. However,

the fact is that anyone who has used the moments, days, and years of his or her life to become wiser, kinder, and more at home in the world has learned from what's happening right now. We can aspire to be kind right in the moment, to relax and open our heart and mind to what is in front of us right in the moment. Now is the time. If there's any possibility for enlightenment, it's right now, not at some future time.

Pema Chodron

(Excerpted from "The Pocket Pema Chodron")



Resting in the grace of the world –

Rev. Master Haryo, the Head of our Order, gave a very fine talk¹ on 6th November at Shasta Abbey on the 20th anniversary of Rev.

Master Jiyu's death. This was two days before the US Presidential Election, and at the end of his talk, RM Haryo made some brief remarks about the election, which I will return to.

In recent times, it's been difficult to avoid feeling that in the West at least, there's been a significant shift in the political and social context. Difficult to pin down exactly but for me personally, I can't deny that events have raised a degree of uneasiness. It's as if some sort of consensus about how we normally go about things is in danger of being lost, a feeling of metaphorical pit-props being knocked away. Things that had been taken for granted now no longer can be; sets of conventions have been overturned, and there feels to be an inability to predict the future with any degree of confidence, at least in a political or social sense.

When I talk to people from other parts of Europe or the United States, I realise this sense is quite widely shared. Opinions vary, of course, on the particular votes or changes that have been made; but there does seem to be a relatively pervasive sense that big change is underway, that old certainties can't be taken for granted, and there is a perceptible degree of fearfulness about that.

It seems that we human beings are very attuned to potential threat, and sensitive to danger of all sorts, including that which comes with change. It would be surprising in terms of our evolution if that sensitivity to threat wasn't innate within us. And so it becomes quite easy to be drawn into a slightly doom-laden, even catastrophist frame of mind.

But there feels to be a bigger context. For example, I am reminded of the environmental poet Wendell Berry's beautiful poem, 'The peace of wild things':

When despair grows in me
and I wake in the middle of the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake

rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting for their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

A moving description which touches a deep part of us. Nature does lead us into a wider, more spacious context. Who has not taken a measure of serenity and stilled mind from spending time in the beauty of nature?

But that final phrase, ‘resting in the grace of the world’, does seem to point to a deeper truth, about how we should orientate ourselves to life and whatever conditions we find ourselves in.

RM Haryo’s concluding remarks at the end of his talk, modestly and very simply put, and two days before the Presidential election, seem to bring us close to that:

“If you are yet to vote, I wish you luck with all that. I believe that as a general rule, perhaps not an absolute rule, the role of religion is to help people find answers to certain questions within their own hearts and not tell them what they should find there. Especially since doing so can turn people away who might have different views and who after all have come here to find something within themselves much more significant than political affiliation.

Life will go on after Tuesday, and Wednesday will be a good day if we’re being grateful to be alive on our sparking blue planet, and for encountering the dharma which shows a way to have a still and peaceful heart throughout the changeableness of life.”

Willie Grieve

¹ The talk can be found at — <http://shastaabbey.org/senior-teachers/>

Thoughts on Zen and the Art of Sailing —

Frankly my thoughts were very woolly. I decided to look for nautical references in Reverend Master Daishin's 'Buddha recognises Buddha' as a way to anchor my thoughts. Pardon the pun.

But first the context. Me and my husband, Martin own a 26ft yacht, which sleeps two comfortably and three at a push. She is a racer/cruiser. This means she goes reasonably fast, but is much more comfortable than a racer, which is stripped bare for speed. We have a toilet, a one ring cooker and a cool box. We do not have a fridge, a shower or central heating. These are found on more expensive boats. We are not very experienced, but both of us have our day skipper certificates.

In the last two years we have sailed our boat through to the west coast; one of the best sailing areas in the world. Our boat is called Silver Lining and she is moored in Granton Harbour. She is our passion.

Back to 'Buddha recognises Buddha'. On page 27 there is a long passage about a boatman. To paraphrase hugely; - *'The life of the boat is the self that rides in it. There is no boatman without a*

boat and no boat without a boatman. There is something utterly whole and timeless about the boatman. He lacks for nothing.'

I am going to take this image further. There is no boatman without the sea. There is no boatman without the tide. There is no boatman without the wind. To sail a boat is to accept all of these forces. The skill is to sail within the present conditions. You trim the sails to take advantage of the wind. Go against the tide and at best you will go very slowly; at worst you will go backwards. The challenge of the west coast is the utter unpredictability of the ever-changing conditions. Sailors go to the West to learn how to sail. It's a bit like an advance driving test.

Last summer we sailed for four weeks to the Isle of Muick and Kyle of Lochalsh. This was much further than



Tobermory harbour

we had been before. We passed certain milestones. We made it to Tobermory at last. We experienced 'the rush'. Most days Tobermory harbour is completely full by 4pm. Around 2pm boats speed into the harbour and start jostling for a mooring. It can be scary. We sailed past Ardnamurchan and anchored at Mallaig. We went through the Kyles of Rhea, which is a tidal race where the land narrows and the water flow speeds up. We experienced a sudden storm while on the pontoons at the Kyle of Lochalsh. I was so seasick that at midnight I literally crawled (it was too dangerous to stand up) off the pontoons and begged for a refuge in a local hotel. They gave me a room – I was so grateful. On the whole the weather was truly terrible, but we coped with it and we are now better sailors.

After four weeks we started to head home. We left Tobermory aiming for the beginning of the Crinan Canal, which would eventually bring us into the Clyde. We were sailing in company. You stay in your own boat, but sail alongside others. It's fun and it's safer. There were only two boats: ours and our friends Tracey and Mark in their wooden boat, Quintet. The journey would take 6 – 7 hours. We set



Quintet outside the Crinan Sea Loch

off on a grey rainy day and made good progress down the Sound of Mull.

The bottom of the Sound is a difficult area as three bodies of water converge. So there is always troubled (rough) water. With Duart Castle on our right, we turned South East to Crinan.

I am not normally scared at sea, but I was anxious that day. We usually have 3 methods of contacting the land. 2 mobile phones, a hand held radio and a proper, licensed, ship to shore radio. But the mobile phones had no signal (normal), the hand held only transmits over a mile and we had a problem with the ships aerial, which meant that we could hear but not transmit.

Anyway, as we turned towards Crinan the wind ramped up very quickly to a force 6, which is called a Yachtsman's gale. The sea state was rough and boat was crashing through the waves. This slows the speed considerably. We went from 4 knots to ½ a knot in sec-

onds. Small leaks that Martin had fixed opened up and became worse. Our lovely Silver Lining was being stretched and pummelled by the sea. We were really battling and we were soaking. The four hours we had left to do, would now take 16 hours and we would have to sail through the night! I knew that if the sea got worse and we needed help we couldn't contact the coastguard. However we were able to contact Quintet with our hand held radio. All of us agreed that we should head for Oban for shelter, even though Oban was now behind us. But it was closer than Crinan and the weather was worsening. So we turned both boats 180 degrees. And then something amazing happened. Instead of battling with the waves, we were lifted high and swept forward in the most beautiful, powerful, movement. It was great.

But these were the same waves and the same sea that had been battering us. Only now we were going with the waves and not against them. Instead of barely moving we were now doing 8 knots! Our boat can only do 5 knots; the other 3 knots came from the sea pushing us forward.

We made it to Oban and sheltered with all the other boats looking for a



A mement of bliss at Crinan

safe harbour. We were stuck there for two days before the weather lifted enough for the four of us to set sail again. We arrived too late to enter the Crinan Canal, so we anchored for the night outside in the sea in a beautiful sunset.

I will be the boatman any day. For me it is the easiest place to be fully present and on a boat, I do indeed lack for nothing - except a cup of tea and a biscuit.

Pam Strachan

A Long Overdue Trip

As the first leaves of Autumn began to turn, I decided it was time to take a long overdue trip to the monastery.

As my visit was out of retreat time, I was immensely grateful for the space, and the chance to return to doing what was right in front of me, without the distractions of work or study.



I spent some of my time working between the kitchen and lay trainees graveyard, both of which I enjoyed. Staring into a six foot grave can be somewhat

sobering, but actually it felt very natural. I was delighted to be part of the small team preparing the area for the family and loved ones to come and say goodbye to the deceased for a final time. It felt really special.

The photographs were taken on renewal day. During my walk I stumbled upon a couple of adorable feral kittens, but they were too quick for me to capture with my camera (or to put in my bag and take home!) Thanks again to my monastic family for supporting me in my training.

Debbie Sheringham



Somebody goes to Throssel —

Fortunate as I am to live relatively near to the Portobello Priory, it soon becomes apparent that a visit to the mother ship is needed before things will really click with Soto Zen. As someone who tends to rush through life always hurrying to the next level, the discipline of just sitting has already had some beneficial effects. But not enough to deter from persuading Rev Favian that I didn't need to do an Introductory Visit, I could just go straight to the Precepts Weekend. I'm not sure how much encouragement the Guest Department needed to accommodate my enthusiasm but soon everything was arranged.

A few days before I was due to leave there was a good dollop of snow on the high ground so I hastily arranged for the winter tyres to be fitted to my campervan. I had agreed to arrive before lunch to have a little more time to settle in as a newbie and needed to leave by 8.30 at the latest. The city bypass was busy but moving and before long I had turned on to the A68. By now the sun had risen low in the sky, blindingly bright. I balanced sunglasses on top of my spectacles and managed to stay on the right left side of the road. Approaching Jedburgh a warning sign indicated an accident and road closure ahead. As I slowed through the town sure enough the po-

lice were out stopping cars and the road south was closed. I turned around and consulted the atlas although the policeman seemed to think I should go via Kelso and then cross country to the A1.

I like a challenge so opted for minor roads, country lanes and high passes guided by the GPS which I'm sure has a sense of humour. The roads were icy in parts, slippery with melting snow and quite isolated. I hurried on wondering if I could still arrive before lunch. After an hour of excitement I finally crossed the border on a tiny forest road but the scenery had been



quite magical. Somehow the effort to reach Throssel enhanced my anticipation. I called to let them know I was delayed but

did arrive by noon. The van thundered up the muddy track but I managed not to knock a monk off his ladder as he clipped a hedge. I had wanted to arrive all calm and composed but by now I was high on mountain air and felt I was still on top of the world.

It didn't take long to be shown around, unload my stuff and have lunch. But I was beginning to realise that this wasn't going to be like any other weekend away I had previously experienced. I thought I had my head around the form of monastic life and would have little difficulty in adjusting

to the calm, quiet precision afforded every task. However, an inner rebellious child surfaced within me whose suppression was causing some personal anxiety. Despite not sleeping well amongst some very noisy sleepers, I did manage to be ready on the mat by 6.15 in the Ceremony Hall. The day unfolded into tasks and meals interspersed with more meditation. My knees started to groan, I fidgeted and squirmed; I wasn't just sitting like RM Daishin's pudding but had become an Eton Mess. I asked for some spiritual guidance, mostly to try and avoid the afternoon sitting so I could go for a long walk.

Gently and kindly I was assured there would be time

for both, walk first then sitting. I soon had my boots on and was scampering up the hill accompanied by some huge rabbits. I reached a road and turned down the hill. The dull winter palette of the undulating moorland felt reassuring as it enveloped me in its folds. I passed a stone wall; it reminded me of the layers of my life flecked with spots of pain and passion yet solid, each slab in its place. Tiles and stones are a favourite metaphor of Dōgen's in the



Shōbōgenzō as they remind us that the 'whole universe, and this alone, is what constitutes the mind. It is the tiles and stones of our walls and fences'. Being out in nature had as usual helped my muddled head.

Back in the Ceremony Hall it eventually dawned on me that the stool was too high which was easily rectified by finding one with shorter legs before the next sitting. As the day progressed at various times I received cautionary advice as the inner child either suggested better ways to do the allocated

work or asserted itself in some other unhelpful way. I struggled on to the evening, sitting as the only woman in the common room with four silent men. Three were

reading appropriate Buddhist texts but the other seemed to be in charge of the escape committee as he was busy with maps. I made some calming herb tea and slept like a log, too tired to go on with the inner fussing, fractious child.

During the night something shifted, it must have because in the morning I felt quite calm and far less certain that I was never coming back. I made a better job of sitting, morning service

and working in the kitchen. Before lunch there was another Q & A session on the Precepts and the group were a little more confident with their questions. During the discussion with Rev Elinore she mentioned that early in her training a senior monk had suggested that it is better to just be nobody when first adjusting to monastic life. Reflecting on her comment and remembering RM Daishin's advice in Sitting Buddha on

the assumption competent professionals can make that sitting is just another skill in which to become expert, I realised that

we do have 'to be willing to fall apart, not in the sense of a psychological disintegration, but in the sense that we let go of all our self-images and come to a real spiritual poverty. It is in such a place that the true nature is found'.

***'Somebody had
indeed gone to
Throssel — '***

Somebody had indeed gone to Throssel, confident that they would and could easily manage all that was required only to find that all that puff and certainty was best left on the moor. To be no-one was curiously liberating yet peaceful. Now I was sure I would be back but it was time to load the van and for nobody to head up the road. Again the GPS selected a direct route over the hill roads where on the

way across the moor from Hexham another metaphor appeared. The rainbow seemed to be a fitting image for the weekend; the soli-

tary path may appear isolated but rainbows can be seen through the clouds. Since coming home I find myself just sitting for the time being.

Veronica Adamson



Welcoming oneself —

[This is a reflection addressed to a group of people including myself from someone in France; I thought I would share it at this point in time and hope my translation will give it justice:]

Welcoming oneself (s'acceuillir), we are hearing about this a lot lately, during a chaotic time.

Welcoming ourselves where we really are, which is not where we would like to be or where we see ourselves in the near future. But really where I am in the Now moment whatever the emotion or feeling, doubts, uncertainties, questioning, unpleasant sensations.

Fully accepting this experience of living this moment, diving into it, on order to find some gentleness within.

We can do so by allowing ourselves to breathe deeply, everyday in our belly and breathe while particularly welcoming and be fully present to any state of mind.

It is indeed in full acceptance of where I am now that kindness and attention can permeate presence - the space where everything can be lived fully, a space of contemplation.

All right, right now is where I am, I am feeling this way, this is what is being experienced within. I accept it, I welcome it, I dive into it, I acknowledge the needs underpinning this state.

I can then respond accordingly and heal things requiring to be healed because they have the right to be there, to be seen and most importantly felt.

There is no need to contract, to be harsh, to shut oneself off, to protect oneself from, to cut oneself off one's emotions. To be guilty. Ah the good old guilt, how quick an escape!

How to be still in any circumstances?

Precisely by accepting to dive into one's vulnerability, contemplating oneself in the welcoming present.

Here lies one's true potential, one has welcome all aspects of oneself, within, in the eye of the storm, therefore by entering the storm.

"Action? He said, but this is only a way out towards which laziness pushes us running away from the dream." (Jacques Spitz)

We all dream to feel free, happy and fulfilled. Trendy 'wishful thinking' and

‘noodle’ Age creative thinking: visualise, imagine, feel, depict and illustrate your aspirations...

A good amount of discernment is required here regarding all that which takes us further away from being: dream big, all is well, amazing energy, increasingly flowing, you only need to imagine and create the life you wish to get.

Actually, there is nothing to do, let alone to wish. The creative drive comes from full presence to all that we are.

Because as long as we have not completely welcomed and accepted the phase we are going through right now, kindness towards ourselves and respect for our own evolutionary needs cannot emerge.

The real commitment is just that, to take care of oneself moment to moment.

Take good care of yourself at a time when it is very likely that our capacity to welcome and be present gets more and more essential.

An invitation to breathe a little bit more in mindfulness each day.

Christele Geuffroy



Head of the Buddha carved in 9th century, Java

The Buddha in Glory

Centre of all centres,
Innermost core,
Almond sweetening in its self-embrace.
All of this, out to the stars, is the fruit of your body.
We greet you.
You feel how little clings to you now.
Endlessness is your shell, and there too, the strength.
It is summoned by the radiance of the full and glowing suns that wheel around
you.
Yet those stars will be outlasted
by what you have begun.

Rainer Maria Rilke
(New Poems)

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labour in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Robert Hayden



*Thank you to all the contributors to this issue of the Newsletter.
Deadline for next issue is mid-April 2017*





- Events elsewhere in Scotland with the Prior -

February 2017

Friday 24th	Aberfeldy evening retreat	7.30-9pm
Saturday 25th	Dundee morning retreat	10am-1pm
Sunday 26th November	Aberdeen morning retreat	10am-1pm

March

Friday 24th	Aberfeldy evening retreat	7.30-9pm
Saturday 25th	Dundee morning retreat	10am-1pm
Sunday 26th	Aberdeen morning retreat	10am-1pm

April

Friday 21st	Aberfeldy evening retreat	7.30-9pm
Saturday 22nd	Dundee morning retreat	10am-1pm
Sunday 23rd	Aberdeen morning retreat	10am-1pm

For further details please phone :

Aberdeen -	Bob McGraw or Joyce & Gordon Edward	(01330) 824339 (01467) 681525
Aberfeldy -	Robin Baker	(01887) 820339
Dundee -	Elliott Forsyth	(01333) 451788
Highland -	Ann Milston	(01309) 696392 or hgz@inbox.com

— Day-to-day schedule at Portobello Buddhist Priory —

Daily (Every day except Mondays, Thursday afternoons & Sunday p.m.)

MORNING

7.00 Meditation
7.40 Morning service

EVENING

7.30 Meditation
7.55 Walking meditation
8.00 Meditation
8.30 Evening office

Early morning practice

You can come for early morning meditation, followed by short morning service.

7.00am –
8.15am

Evening practice

Meditation, walking meditation, meditation, evening office.
You are welcome to stay on for tea.

7.30pm –
8.45pm

Introductory afternoons

- are usually (but not always—please check dates below) held on the second Saturday of each month. A short talk will be given about Buddhist practice and the Serene Reflection Meditation (Soto Zen) tradition, with meditation instruction and discussion.

Saturday 11th February, Saturday 11th March, Saturday 8th April

2.30-4pm

Wednesday and Friday evenings

Midday service and meditation, followed by tea and a Dharma talk /discussion, evening office.

7.30pm–9.30pm

Sunday mornings

Meditation from 9.30am onwards, followed either by a Ceremony, Dharma discussion or Festival at 11am. It is fine to arrive or leave at 10.45am

9.30am–
12.30pm

Festival mornings

Priory open for meditation from 9.30am, or come at 10.45am for the ceremony.

*Portobello Buddhist Priory is Scottish Charity no. SCO31788
Prior: Reverend Master Favian Straughan*