

Open Secret

Zen Open Circle newsletter

No 8 December 2006

President's Report 2006

Coming to the end of another year of our Sangha. I guess this year has been the year of new places.

I am referring to our move to Summer Hill and want to extend my thanks to Craig and to Jacqui for their welcoming and warmth and suppleness in adjusting to this new mob, all their zafus, zabutons and cotton bales.

I am also referring to our sesshin at a new venue Vijayaloka retreat in Minto where we adapted to a different set up of youth camp and red flag and enjoyed the beauty of the Georges river.

Our new venue has been the home to our Sydney activities

The regular Friday night sits that is often the tasting of Zen practice for newcomers. I want to acknowledge the people who drive a long way over bridges and under tunnels to support the practice, for others as much as for themselves.

Three Sunday gatherings one Zazenkai earlier in the year and two Koan creativity workshops.

Talking of creativity, a lot of us have also enjoyed the calligraphy exhibition (thanks to Ricardo for new leaflets!)

And the film pyjamas party with a warm and joyful crowd of yoga and Zen practitioners lying on futons or sitting on chairs and relishing Totoro and the other great films - thanks to the choosers - and great soups and other yummys - thanks to all the helpers, to Michael the technician, and special thanks to Jacqui and Craig for the hospitality and work involved. That was a great success that all seemed keen to see happen again, may be at the end of the year.

We've also had a number of ceremonies -

Tying the red thread



Nigel and Nicolette held their Zen wedding ceremony at the dojo on 6 October

Live in simple faith...
just as this trusting cherry
Flowers, fades and falls

Issa

now and Zen

DIARY NOTE:

2007 ZOC Calendar available now on the website: and do print out a copy for your fridge door.

Zen Open Circle sits every **Friday** from 6.30-8.30pm at the Art of Yoga, 80 Smith Street, Summer Hill
T: 9799 7108

Sitting for 2007 starts again on 2 February

Slow deep river retreat at Vijayaloka, near Minto, 26-28 January 2007 (registration forms available now). Join us for silent sitting and discussion, as well as art and swimming meditation. Register by 31 December 2006

Koan Workshop day
March 11 2007

ZOC council meeting to be held afterwards. All welcome

Zen Open Circle is a member of the Buddhist Council of New South Wales Inc.

Name giving ceremony for Wunda Mae and Ryan
Wedding ceremony for Nigel and Nicolette
Jukai ceremony for Nell and myself
And to that I'll add the welcoming of Felix and Neve into the world.

Beside these, 05 - 06 has been very a busy year:

Three sesshins - the one just mentioned at Minto, Easter, and recently a magnificent full 7-day one. With a great thanks for all the people contributing to make it possible with very special thanks to Ann for doing all the registration, practicalities, etc. and to Susan for the intense teachings during sesshin

Other times out of Sydney were the end of the weekend in Mittagong where we all enjoyed a lot of silent meditation with a homely atmosphere and times to chat and walks in the bush there. Another big time was the hosting of the Diamond Sangha Teachers Circle a very full week of meetings for the teachers with cooks and helpers around to keep them going and social times - meals, talks, Gorricks Run.

On the more practical and worldly side - we are incorporated!!!! Thank you to the people working on that - Patrick and Iona - and Patrick is not off the hook yet still working at finding the best way for us to get insurance for our strange activities...

Part of that process of facing some of the realities of this world has been to get up or further up to standard with risk management - thanks to Michael Campbell who did a lot of work on that and the team who finally spend a whole day and more writing our specific risk management plan and trialling it at the last sesshin... [We have not debriefed on that yet.]

And we have purchased Zafus, made about 20 Zabutons needed because of the change of venue [still more to come with cotton and buckwheat and shells waiting in Mittagong]. Thank you to all the cutters, pinners and sewers and ironers who joined it for a day of fun and work in Mittagong..

One issue of Open Secret, deeply appreciated, knowing how busy Ann has been.

The website live and working well - I think we have planted a huge lot in our garden....

So thank you to all council members - especially to the big jobs of secretary (Jacqui) and treasurer (ongoing) and to all of us to keep ZOC going in that way. Special thanks to those leaving their position - Chris McCormack earlier this year who had been the first president and kept at it for several years, Julie Jenkins for accounting for the moneys going in and out, Michael Campbell our vice-president.

Cecile Barra

How are you?

How's our sangha? I miss all of you, in a lovely bittersweet way. It's all good.

Life here is much easier than I thought. Busy and socially quiet and an easy place to build a practice. So I'm up at 4 (or more like 4:30 if I'm tired... working on that), meditate, exercise, breakfast, then walk through an empty grassy field for about a kilometer, as the sun rises behind me. Cup of tea, email, then work kicks off at 6am. Work 12 hours in an on/off stream of intense busyness intertwined with alarmingly quiet spells.

It's the sharpest and most focused I've been for a long time. Now to find something more useful to do with said sharpness. Hmmm..... much thought there.

Example - I like the fact that I'm here, helping industrial activity pollute less and use fewer non-renewables. But the whole thing is unsustainable, and still uses more

than its fair share of resources, so what am I achieving, exactly? Is this like insisting a homicidal maniac only use a smaller pistol? It's not a comfortable place, the region of those thoughts. Lucky thing I'm trained for sitting patiently with uncomfortable thoughts.

I loved your koan workshop notes that Jacqui sent. I was struck by Yen-tou's water pail - "ceci n'est pas la lune?") Even more than that, I was struck by the ones I. Just. Didn't. Get. I like them - they're simmering away, just outside of thoughts.... then they jump out with an "ah, but..." when I least expect them.

Also found the bibliography on the web page. Noticing "The one book for a hermitage on a desert island", I've ordered The Blue Cliff Record. Looking forward to it. It's a bit like a desert island here.

Jason Turner [working in Western Australia]

On Healing: The Integrative Medicine building at Duke

I

Healing is like kissing; it can be done mechanically
on the way to somewhere you think is more interesting,
but it's best done for its own sake—
like breathing, like looking at the one in front of you
as if they are the only person in the world,
which they are, at this moment.
Healing we've often thought, is the whirring of beautiful machines
and that's fine, but I think it means a change of heart:
we stop and don't rush about so much.
Healing means a question, too: something like,
'Granting the difficulty of this world, what do I really want?'
and the answer turns out to be: Everything—
children running, the owl calling at midnight
the white, perfumed narcissus pushing up through snow,
the afternoon blue and then a thin translucent yellow,
this evening that we have together;
I want what's happening now—
what I want is for the world to kiss me back.

II

There's a story that we came here from the stars—only here can we fall in love, lose things,
try to understand, grieve, feast, be jealous, read, run, bleed, set the alarm clock, hear the
sound of running water, tell the story of where we came from, and we can only do these
amazing things if we forget where we came from.

And if, and if indeed we came here from the stars, diving like swimmers into a night pool,
forgetting ourselves, we would have left clues lying about in case we needed to call home.
You would recognize it as a clue because it made no sense in an ordinary way. Healing
might contain a clue—it is done without thinking of what it will get you.

And speaking of clues, we should watch out for certain places too, places built for
mysterious reasons at the edge of the woods, places where our bodies would be tended and
our hearts set to rest, where the doctor with a thousand hands and eyes puts down her
phone and the other 999 gleaming instruments, lets go of the door handle and meets you as
if the two of you are the only people on this earth, which at that moment you are. We
ought to watch out for places like that, places where, just by breathing, we begin the long
process of remembering who we are.

III

Harvest comes with Autumn's end and the sight
of gold squandered in the streets
the leaves
take to the air like sailors setting out on a long voyage
and healing too begins
with stripping away, the loss that tells you that you are full of love anyway;
the confused passions and the idea of the machine inside us—
all this gets simplified.
Cooking, making up rhymes—love, dove, shove—listening,
eating together are remedies;
we are also sick because our hearts are weighed down.
Building things is interesting, as interesting as kissing
and a new building
thinks of all the springs to come:
the drunk blossoms,
the trees holding up their skirts and dancing,
the pale leaves like swimmers breaking water
after holding their breaths through the cold time.
And if you wanted to find a way home,
a mile post that points the way,

you might thank the trees, the leaf light, and the makers
who made this building for those yet to come,
thank you is a place you would look for the way,
as the last brown leaves cut loose from the tree and set out for home.

End of Autumn 2006
John Tarrant

Everyone is welcomed to the Summer Hill dojo at 3pm Sunday 17 December to meet John Tarrant, hear him read from his latest book and share a pot luck supper.

October sesshin



Front: Jacqui, Cecile, Susan, Deborah, Nell
Middle: Rose, Gayle, Charlie, Ben, Merran
Back: Michael, Imelda, Helen, Michael, Shannon, Annie, Kynan, Daniel, Peter, David



After the silence: Daniel, Nell and Rose (above left) and Daniel and Deborah

MU [A Funny Story]

There's a lot of talk in Buddhism about suffering. We've all heard the story. And honestly, I don't actually know about this suffering business. Obviously, no life comes into being, or passes through, without spilling blood. Blood is spilt. Everyday, blood is spilt for us, and we spill blood everyday.

I can't but see this as a fitting intensity for *this*, where we are, where we find ourselves. It seems to fit. We may be the only species obliged to live consciously with this, to live conscious of this. We can't be sure about that, but things point to this possibility. We are certainly the only ones behaving as if we were conscious of this. All of our neurotic behaviour points to such consciousness, or more precisely, points to our desire to escape from it. And I don't see other animals behaving dramatically, unless you put aside certain cats and dogs. So we have to live conscious with this and we have to try to do better - find a better way to live with it than 'poor me'. 'Poor me' is just not compelling enough, not equal to the *this* (slap) just not equal to it in any way. 'Poor me' is not enough, so what do we do instead?

There are other even more elaborate escape attempts available called things like 'consumer culture', perhaps; even an elaborate theory of 'Buddhism' can be that. It's not enough, or perhaps it's not simple and direct enough. And when we exhaust all possibilities of escape attempt we finally come down to the fact, the quiet fact, that the deeper anguish is the escape attempt itself. That escape attempt is the sense of things not being satisfactory, of not belonging, of not knowing quite how to be at home, or being able to see where we find ourselves.

How do we find how to be at home? How do we fit? What is it that makes us not fit completely? Makes our consciousness bump into things and jar with our condition? In a way, all of this is a wonderfully funny story - tragicomic - along the lines of "There's no way out!" - but there is an extraordinary path, an extraordinary freedom that runs not out but right through the middle of this 'no way out', the path exactly of the 'no way out'. Right there, at the middle of the

middle of that, if we sit still enough and stay with ourselves long enough, we touch that *undivided*. But it is a funny story, our dilemma, it has to be conceded that this is a funny story that we find ourselves in the middle of.

It's like the one told at the end of 'Annie Hall' : "Doctor, Doctor. We have a big problem. My brother thinks that he's a chicken. He's always jumping up on the kitchen bench and flapping his wings and squawking. What can we do?" "Oh," says the psychiatrist, "that's very serious. But I think I can maybe help your brother. Send him to me." The man is not as pleased as you might think. He looks pained. 'What's wrong?' asks the doctor. "Well it's like this, doctor. You see, we need the eggs!" It seems we humans can easily come to feel our lives depend on our neuroses - that they will be in danger of serious collapse if we were to disturb the old ways of living by damage.

There is a wonderful story about Shunryu Suzuki when he had passed on. His wife was still living in America, packing up her things. Her story about this was, 'I'm like the cicada, I'm leaving all my stuff behind like an old shell, I'm going back to Japan.' This was the time that David Chadwick who went on to write the quite wonderful book about Suzuki's life, 'Crooked Cucumber', came to see her on that subject. Now David is a big bear of a man, and she was very tiny. She winced every time he spoke because his voice was too big, and she didn't have very good English and he did not have very good Japanese. So they bumped into each other quite a lot. He came to tell her he was thinking about writing about the life of Suzuki, but that he had some trepidation about it. He felt concerned, that other people might not be happy with him doing this—writing about this man who was loved by so many and held very high by so many. And she said "David, when I speak to you now I speak in his voice, Shunryu says you must write this book, and when you do, tell many funny stories about him." David said, "Oh, well, right." And he started to describe his arrangements to go to Japan to do so, and she immediately looked pale, and said "If you come to Japan you must speak very quietly." And the conversation went on like this and she gave him a frog, a metal frog, for some

reason that was a bit of the cicada shell that she was leaving behind that she felt should belong to him. So he took his metal frog and was holding it and then she said, just as they were about to say goodbye, "But why are you concerned? Why not write this story?" And he said, "Well, there are many people who believe Shunryu was a truly great teacher, held very high, and one who knew all of the deep and high states of meditation." And she said, "There! There's your first funny story!" Right there!

So what I want to do today in this first teisho for Sesshin is to touch that funny story which is the case 'Mu'. Many of you know it, but it's always appropriate to give it again. It goes like this:

A monk asked Chao-chou, "Does a dog have Buddha nature?"

It's almost a set question really. It's a question about the monk's Buddha nature, your Buddha nature. It's asking, "What is it?"

Chao-chou responded, "Mu."

And this 'Mu' in Japanese, or 'Wu' in Chinese, is a properly strange word. It means even less than 'no'. It has the quality of 'no' but it is like the particle of negative matter attached to anything that makes it 'un'. Un-anything. It undoes everything, this 'Mu'. And 'Mu' is also the move of not saying no, not saying yes. Please don't be misled by this 'no'. It is a very mysterious 'no' and one that we need to investigate far, far beyond whatever 'no' might seem to mean.

That 'Mu', that form of 'No', aligns with the very kernel of the Buddhist teaching; this teaching about how to be natural and at ease. Really its teaching is this: 'Everything changes. When we resist, we suffer'. And really, what more do you need to know? But I will go on a little further.

So everything changes. That's either good or bad news, depending on your current condition. But it doesn't mind what your current condition is because everything changes. It changes anyway, and the powerful secret that we uncover quite quickly, quite early on—even if we lose it and then find it and lose it and find it, but we do touch it quite quickly—is that meditation shows us its secret and that you can join with this 'everything changes'. You can join it. You can join

with what flows, with what is always in flow, as an alternative to bumping into it quite painfully. It's a pretty interesting alternative and it saves us endlessly saying that very costly 'no', the form of 'no' to our own lives that costs us so much. It's like becoming the 'no' - no resistance, no separation, no me as opposed to not-me.



We're on a blue-green planet whose very name really is mutability. Everything changes. Which means everything is unfolding from everything else. The original rocks of this planet already contain Mozart's music. Everything changes. Day becomes night becomes day. You can't move outside this great flow. Oceans know it, clouds know it, the grass knows it, flies know it. Everything makes it clear. Even the rocks are flowing and the mountains are just passing through. These old cliffs are here only very briefly. So the deal here is mutability, isn't it Felix? And as my friend Martin Prechtel says, "The revolution is composting". The revolution is becoming intimately clear that the flow is what we are, and letting go. Becoming rich with possibility.

So how do we do this? How do we live well with this? How do we compost ourselves into this great flow, this change that we need not resist? And you'll already know how, a little bit, from those moments when you have not resisted. You'll know from that. Just a moment's experience of letting go teaches you so much; teaches us so much about the costliness of not letting go, about how that flow itself is extraordinary. It doesn't need resisting. It is our gift here. We're a gift to it and it's a gift endlessly to us. Our very precariousness is alive and a great gift. And when we touch that precariousness as ourselves, not separate from us, not our enemy, not the thing we're a victim of, or that is waiting to

bite us badly, but as us, as what we are, not intellectually but as the whole burning knowing of the heart, then we realize what does not change. We realize the unchanging, the undivided at the heart of all things in change, beginning with us. Some have called this the Tao, some have called it God, some have called it Mu or emptiness, or Buddha nature. Sometimes it's called Felix, Kynan, Charlie. Sometimes it answers to tomato, grass or stars. It answers even more profoundly when we have lost all sense of names.

So, recognizing the intimate relationship between what changes and what doesn't: that's wisdom. And actualizing it: that's love. Our Buddha figure on the altar is that kernel of actualized love, compassion, in the robes of wisdom, the robes of Buddha. The entire Buddha's life is inscribed in those robes. Kuanyin in the robes of the Buddha. Yet another funny story and the funniest part of the story is that if you don't agree, it doesn't matter because life clarifies itself. Just stay uncomfortable enough; really be with what is without seeking to escape until it teaches you, until it teaches you yourself.



So, Chao-chou, in order to make this whole matter as inescapable as possible, to make it more likely that we will pass through this barrier of ourselves, of our ordinary, low-grade perpetual 'no' that we might be tempted to offer to life -- this 'no' of unsatisfactoriness, of separation, of me and mine. 'Me and mine' is almost always under threat from something 'out there' or even 'in here', so it is not the most calm and easy place to live. Chao-chou offers us the possibility of resolving ourselves back conclusively into it all, just as it is, through this one word 'mu'. He offers a kind of medicine, which is really the koan of all meditation. It anticipates by at least a thousand years what Einstein later said, 'You cannot

solve a problem with the same kind of thinking that created it'. 'Mu' is an absolute demand that we radically change our ground to resolve the problem of our selves, to dissolve the barrier of ourselves. There is no other way to catch a glimpse of who we really are.

We can't catch a glimpse with the mind that created the problem, or at least the seeming 'problem', of self. We can't glimpse it with that kind of mind. It's the self that seems to subtly lock us out of the real world, out of our genuine life. So really we can't solve that problem—really *resolve* the problem—of our self nature without challenging the ground of the self. We have to recognize what Buddha called the 'builder of the house of pain'. We have to find out who that is.

So the peculiar problem—the one that demands a path of crooked wisdom, and path with a lot of heart and humour and nothing too holy—the peculiar problem is this; *there is no way to it*. No way. That's the force of 'Mu': no way to that self nature. No way. And also no way out of it.

So that's the dynamic field of enquiry that we sit in here. The only obstacle is yourself, myself, ourselves. And the only recourse is understanding that one. So what did Chao-chou do? He took that ordinary 'no' that plagues us endlessly like flies plague us, and says let that be the gate of liberation.

You can take up this 'Mu', take it deeply and pointedly to heart. You need to know it is not a negative word, but a word of radical liberation: No Barrier. It is the 'un' that undoes every lock in the heart. It unpicks the locks. It gradually sees through and takes away the little, uneasy self that stands in front of everything and blocks our own light. All you can do with the koan 'Mu' is to resolve it as yourself, to let it join up with everything and so resolve yourself -- that genuine, unlimited, unimpeded, great wind of the self that has always been blowing and cannot stop. Cannot begin. Cannot stop. You can take up the koan pointedly, or you can just become the koan by sitting. You can just sit *shikantaza*, which means that you do it anyway. You take up the question of yourself and you let every breath soften every fixity that you have ever had about this self. So *shikantaza* is watching and breathing, and listening and

breathing, and noticing and breathing, never taking your heart off the keen point of life and death that is each moment.

I think we have agreement [from the wind] with this proposition.

So the method is keeping the heart open, and not moving off. It's the heart open in the most simple and natural way. It's nothing special. It's nothing holy. It is your most natural condition. Quiet. I don't underestimate how difficult it is to become really quiet and let the mobile mind become more still, but when it starts to happen you taste how natural it is and you just find your subtle way to not step out of that. It is not a special holy state. It is what you are. The heart open and brave enough to not move off from the offer of each moment, and just choosing the consoling and sweet rigour of staying present, and letting go, and not doing the self. Here's where the 'un' part comes in, *not doing the self*. Finding all the ways to not do the self, which is, of course, a gradual wising up, or sobering up, into the no-self, the self that is big.

So we are speaking of the offer of freedom from, freedom within, within the very marrow of our condition, just as we find ourselves. So *shikantaza*, just sitting, just sitting, just breathing, just being in the most open way, like an open hand, the whole body is like an open hand. [*Shikantaza*] begins like the word itself with a kind of 'shhhhh', and that is a kind of 'shhhhh' to the mobile mind, the one that is always throwing up the next thing, the next thing, the next thing, the next thing, endlessly turning things up.

By the way, this is probably as a human species our greatest survival mechanism. It is probably why it is so tenacious, so perfected in us, so much our default mode. Please don't regard it as your enemy to hate or to kill off. That is unwise and impossible and the attempt would only make it stronger. Remember the Buddha says, 'offer each thing a friendly regard', an unlimited, an unconditioned friendliness, offer that even to the nature of mind itself. That's how it will open wider, and stop holding us always just a little way off from what really is. The distance of that tiny little bit off is the distance between heaven and hell.

So let the great silence continue. As you look into it, it looks into you and it will begin to help you see what is when you don't move off, to love what you don't understand, to understand less and less, and to grow and include more, as you grow roomy, and then to bring this more roomy mind forth in the simplest things that we do, the simplest human actions.

You might say that the Heart Sutra is another funny story. You know, "no old age and death, and also no ending of old age and death". And all the other 'no's throughout the Heart Sutra that so rigorously light up the path through the middle, the path into the middle of the middle. These 'no's, the 'no's of the Heart Sutra, in a way are like honing a blade, the blade that we walk, the blade we must walk, a sharp blade, with a nether world on each side. "No old age and death" is just as much a nether world as "no ending of old age and death". Choosing either one, a nether world. The blade where we walk is not one or the other. It's not 'yes' or 'no'. It's not 'life' or 'death'. It is the blade, really, of 'not two'. Not two. Mu. It is the practised mind that zazen un covers in us that meets this 'not two', and discovers that we are even less than one. That's our business here. "Form is exactly emptiness, emptiness exactly form". [bang bang] Not two. When you empty the self, the wind blows through. The moon rises. There's no complaint.

So 'mu' is like the great out breath, the great out breath purr of the universe coming into being. It's actually also the silence that precedes it, and it is this breeze, right here now, this slightly bossy breeze. So when you empty yourself the wind blows through and then even your fanning—I talked this morning about fanning your practice—even your fanning, your ardent practice, is already a great wind finding nothing in its way. It's always been blowing. Never bumped into anything. Our human condition, our treasure is that we need both. As human beings, we are the species of 'not two'. That's our glory 'not two'. We need to know about the great wind and the lowly human fanning and the suffering that provokes it into being. Our suffering, you could say, is simply our intense life, our great opportunity. Like the flies, these opportunities, they never, ever stop arriving.

So somehow, perhaps this is our final funny story, that it never stops opening. Our very lives provide the means for that. That's the great joke on us. We need suffering to realise no suffering, we need to know how we are caught to realise nothing catching anywhere at all, and all of this is our original glory, and our first and last funny story. Nothing is wasted, nothing can fall outside of Buddha nature. So, happy composting!

Susan Murphy Roshi
Sesshin Teisho 8 October 2006,
Gorrick's Run

Photos in Susan's Teisho by Maya Ward

24-hour peace vigil

The 24 Hour Vigil for the International Day of Peace was very beautiful.

At 10.00pm, on Thursday 21st September, about a dozen Buddhist Peace Fellowship people, bringing lanterns they had made, joined a dozen more Quaker people, who wanted to stay and meditate with us, for our half hour shift, at the top of the stairs, where Victoria Park meets the entrance of Sydney University.

We all formed a circle and made a deep bow, a gassho. Gus read a Peace statement including the Buddha's words:

"In this world
Hate never yet dispelled hate.
Only love dispels hate.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.
You too shall pass away,
Knowing this, how can you quarrel."

Peace is every step.

We all read the sutra of Loving Kindness, one round of slow walking meditation, and then Gus led a guided meditation practice on Metta (loving kindness).

The peace statement and the guided meditation Gus offered were very beautiful, Gus's little being shone.

I had walked through the park and the university many times in invisible private kinhin, and had stood on that very spot, looking up at the night sky, just all night sky. And as a student I had been involved in so many protest marches and rallies, I wasn't expecting anything unusual, the difference took me by surprise.

The huge monolith of reason and intellect, Sydney University, looming behind us, I suddenly felt wary, with the

ino's bowl from our zendo in my hands, chanting the sutra, and meditating, my robes felt no longer invisible and I felt as if I was wearing my heart. In forming a consecrated circle of practice, as we did, it was as if the spirit of the whole dojo had come with the bowl, the hands, the voices, and come alive. If you could see it, I think it would have looked like a shimmering little temple carved of warm light at the top of the stairs between the park and university.

Walking home, through the world, with the bowl in my hands, it was as if the dojo was walking with me, a little stream of strong sacred energy, walking me home. Very beautiful.

Jacqui



Hand made lanterns lit the peace vigil

A monk asked, 'All of the Buddhas and all of the Buddha dharma come forth from this sutra. What is this sutra?'

Qinshan said, 'It never stops turning.'

He does not know the last word

Live in joy,
In love,
Even among those who hate.

Live in joy,
In health,
Even among the afflicted.

Live in joy,
In peace,
Even among the troubled.

Live on joy,
Without possessions,
Like the shining ones.

The winner sows hatred
Because the loser suffers.
Let go of winning and losing
And find joy.

There is no fire like passion,
No crime like hatred,
No sorrow like separation,
No sickness like hunger,
And no joy like the joy of freedom.

Health, contentment and trust
Are your greatest possessions
And freedom your greatest joy.

Look within.
Be still
Free from fear and attachment,
Know the sweet joy of the way.

How joyful to look upon the awakened
And to keep company with the wise.

How long the road to the man
Who travels with a fool.
But whoever follows those who follow the
way
Discovers her family and is filled with joy.

Follow then the shining ones,
The wise, the awakened, the loving,
For they know how to work and forbear.

Follow them
As the moon follows the path of the stars.

The Dhammapada
(translated by Thomas Byrom)
Published by Rider 1976



Like someone in the midst of water crying out in thirst - Rastus, a friend of the editor, put it to the test (Photo: Felicity Crichton)

Membership of ZOC is open to everyone for an annual fee of \$50. Membership forms are available from our secretary, Jacqui Godwin.

ZOC website



www.zenopencircle.org.au

Open Secret is edited by Ann Williams with ZOC. Please send your words, random thoughts, stories of the way, jokes, puns, suggestions and pictures to:

Ann Williams email (with ZOC in the subject line) annwilliams52@bigpond.com.au or ring 0414 500 456

If you would like to be on our email list, please send an email to jacquelinegodwin@pacific.com.au and put ZOC Mailing List in the subject line.