



Hampshire Buddhist Society

April 2021 Newsletter

The object of the Hampshire Buddhist Society is to make known the principles of Buddhism and to encourage the study and practice of those principles.

Obituary ~ Eric Cheetham

1924-2020

Based on an article by John Ellinghouse in *The Middle Way* Autumn 2020



Eric Cheetham, who died a week before his ninety-sixth birthday, was one of the greatest Western expositors of Indian Mahayana Buddhism. He was able to read the French translations of Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan writings on Buddhism, by such authors as Etienne Lamotte and La Vallée-Poussin.

Eric was therefore able to gain a great understanding of the 'Gradual' Way of the Bodhisattva, including the application of the first six of the paramitas and the main Indian Mahayana sutras. This understanding was put to exceptional use in his outstanding books on the subject. These were designed to enable lay Buddhist followers (householders) to understand and thus fully engage in following the Dharma, as opposed to monks and nuns, or followers of the 'Sudden' schools; an approach that was in accord with the message contained in the *Saddharma-pundarika* sutra (the Lotus Sutra).



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Owing to the quality of his books and the inherent doctrinal integrity of his expositions, Eric was able to expound in great detail on the structure and practices required to enable anyone who was so inclined to begin the process. He sought at all times to ensure that his writings were soundly based on Indian Mahayana sutras.

Eric Cheetham was born on 31st August 1924 in the East End of London. After passing the eleven-plus, Eric continued his studies, including French, which was to prove very useful in future years. On leaving school, Eric worked in transport at J. Lyons Tea Company.

During World War II he was called up for service in 1943. Eric volunteered for the RAF as a rear gunner in Lancaster bombers. He recalled how, after his training, he was advised unofficially that the life expectancy of a rear gunner was ten days. Despite a fatality rate of over fifty percent, Eric completed the allocated thirty tours and was demobbed in 1947 when, in his own words, he was feeling lost and bewildered. He did, however, resume working for J. Lyons and it was during this time that he met and married Enid Turner, who worked as a secretary for the managing director.

With the aid of a few friends, Eric spent several years studying until he discovered the Dharma in 1950 and joined the Buddhist Society a year later, where he studied under two teachers of Indian Mahayana, professor Richard Robinson and Dr Edward Conze, whose translation into English of the *Prajnaparamita* Sutra became a lifelong study. In particular Eric saw the opening verse of this early sutra as constituting the essence of the Bodhisattva Process (see below).

To this end, Eric wrote booklets that laid out the initial paths of what he called Mainstream. His reading of André Bareau's *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit vehicule*, published in 1955, showed him that there were originally sixteen schools of Buddhism. Of these, only the Theravada remain. It was, however, from these sixteen schools that Indian Mahayana was established and developed. Eric was a keen follower of the 'Gradual' school of the process for 'sons and daughters of good families' to follow the '*ekayana*', the One Way as expounded in the Indian Mahayana sutras.

With the tremendous support of the late Venerable Myokyo-ni and the imprimatur of The Buddhist Society, Eric wrote four booklets on the *Fundamentals of Mainstream Buddhism*. In these, Eric outlined the Mainstream Dharma, and having completed these early studies, Eric delivered a series of twelve lectures given at the Buddhist Society, which showed the further development of Indian Mahayana Buddhism. These lectures were later expanded into a further four booklets (again with the support of Venerable Myokyo-ni and the Buddhist Society), which were followed by Eric's book, *The Great Way: The Bodhisattva Process in Indian Mahayana Buddhism*.

Eric's interest in Indian Mahayana led him to examine the impact of Indian Buddhism when it was introduced into China, a topic on which he lectured at the Buddhist Society, which was later published as *The Wheel and the Dragon*. This showed how the Chinese modified the Dharma to make it more applicable to existing conditions, including the earlier traditions of Taoism. Eric's understanding of Indian Mahayana allowed him to show what he regarded as the inherent differences between the Tathagatagarbha of Indian Mahayana (as set forth in the *Prajnaparamita* Sutra) and the Buddha Nature as developed in Zen teachings.



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Eric's writings strove to place the practices and procedures of the Bodhisattva Process in their rightful position within the wondrous design conveyed by the great Bodhisattva Maitreya to Asanga which resulted in the Indian Mahayana system known as the Yogacara Vijñānavāda. It was Asanga's inspired explanations which showed how ordinary people, whether possessed of special qualities or not, could set out on the 'Great Highway' to full and perfect enlightenment with confidence in the Buddha's promises.

Following the death of his wife Enid in 2002, and because of increasing blindness due to macular degeneration, Eric was greatly assisted in his Dharma work by Margaret and Paul Devitt. They undertook the important task of collating and publishing much of his written work in book form, including *The Wheel and the Dragon: the transformation of Buddhism in China* (based on his lectures at the Buddhist Society), two volumes of *Main Doctrines in Indian Buddhism, Kumarajiva and Chinese Buddhism*, and *Mahayana Today and the Authentic Teaching of Kumarajiva*. In addition, Eric wrote *Further Stories from the Old Silk Road*, published by the Buddhist Society and featuring marvellous illustrations by Roberta Mansell.

It was Eric's practice in his latter years to have read to him three of the Indian Mahayana sutras. It was this writer's privilege to do these readings, in particular the *Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita* Sutra, in both prose and verse forms.

At the time of his death, Eric was writing a personal work based on his life, in which he sought to outline his own understanding of the Dharma. Note: The first verse of the *Prajnaparamita* Sutra on which Eric based his life is translated as follows:

Call forth as much as you can of love, of respect and of faith!
 Remove the obstructing defilements and clear away all your taints.
 Listen to the Perfect Wisdom of the gentle Buddhas
 Taught for the weal of the world, for heroic spirits intended!

Extract from *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and its Verse Summary* translated by Edward Conze, first Indian edition, Delhi, 1994.

John Ellinghouse 29 August 2020

A Personal Reflection by Roberta Mansell

Eric was a dear friend and generous enabler. He introduced me to The Lotus Sutra in 1989 and nine years after, when I started to illustrate and copy the Lotus Sutra, he was always available on the phone or in person to help me decipher obscure verses or strange or odd translations. As a friend he was always interested in our family and children and grandchildren, happy to hear family anecdotes and news.

He was part teacher, part elder brother and good friend.

I miss him.



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The Heart Rolls with the Ten Thousand Things

Steve Mansell



Venerable Myokyo-ni

My old teacher, Venerable Myokyo-ni, was fond of quoting “The heart rolls with the ten thousand things. This rolling is truly mysterious.” I never heard her say where it came from. I like to know the sources of quotations so this was a bit of unfinished business for me.

In one of our Zen group online meetings last year, we were discussing a text and somehow the quotation “The heart rolls ...” came up and I said that I would ask Sogen and Myosui at Fairlight Zen Buddhist Temple if they knew its source. Venerable Sogen said, “it comes from Master Rinzai but not directly because he quotes an unknown 'old master' - page 47 in Shambhala edition. Later Venerable Myokyo-ni always preferred 'rolls' instead of 'turns’.”

Master Rinzai was the founder of our school of Zen Buddhism. “Rinzai” is the Japanese form of his Chinese name “Linji”. He lived in the 9th century. A little book known as the Rinzai Roku in Japanese is all that survives of his teaching. Venerable Myokyo-ni, under her pre-ordination name of Irmgard Schloegl, translated the Rinzai Roku into English as 'The Zen Teachings of Rinzai' in 1975. Section 22b says:



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Followers of the Way, what should a real man doubt? Who is he who freely functions right before your eyes? Seize and use him — but do not slap a name on him. If you name him, he becomes a mystery! If you see it like this, there is nothing to be rejected. An old master said: “The heart turns with the ten thousand things; its turning is truly mysterious. Following the current, recognizing one’s nature, there is neither joy, nor is there any sorrow.

‘Heart’ was Venerable Myokyo-ni’s preferred translation of the Chinese/Japanese word Shin, itself a translation of the Pali/Sanskrit word Citta. Others sometimes translate it as ‘mind’, ‘heart-mind’, etc. ‘The ten thousand things’ is a traditional Chinese term for the teeming multiplicity of the world we live in.

About a month later, Penny Lawrence came across a later version of it in a 1997 edition of Zen Traces (the journal of the Zen Centre):

‘The natural way of the heart is to flow, as is said in the Diamond Sutra, ‘The heart flows with the ten thousand things. This flowing is truly mysterious.’ This flow is not resisting anything, does not stem itself against anything, It just flows.’

Venerable Myokyo-ni misattributed the quotation to the Diamond Sutra. This was not unusual for her and gives source hunters like myself a bit of extra work to do! So we have three versions of her translation — the heart turns, the heart rolls and the heart flows — over a period of 22 years, all attributed by Master Rinzai to an unnamed “old master”. I assumed that this would be the end of the matter.

Recently, Roberta and I have joined a weekly Zoom class run from Fairlight. In one of his talks, Venerable Sogen read a passage from Trevor Leggett’s book ‘Zen and the Ways’:

There is a verse of Manorhita, the twenty-second Zen patriarch in India:
The mind turns in accordance with the ten thousand things;
The pivot on which it turns is verily hard to know.

I nearly jumped out of my seat! Surely, this must be “the heart rolls with the ten thousand things”.

In our tradition, the Dharma is passed down directly from master to student, starting with the Buddha and gradually expanding like a family tree down to the present day. This transmission has been partially documented in a number of works. Chief amongst these is ‘Records of the Transmission of the Lamp up to the Era of Great Virtue’. This documents the transmission from the prehistoric Buddha Vipashin (Bibashi Butsu in Japanese) up to Song Dynasty China in the 12th century. Randolph Whitfield, a long time member of our national Zen group, produced the first full English translation of this work and published it in eight



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volumes. Volume one includes a short account of the life of Manorhita (Manura Sonja in Japanese), which includes his death gatha:

I have the peerless Treasure of the Dharma; you should listen and take it in,
so as to use the coming opportunity,' said the Master, and then recited a gatha:

The heart flows with the cycles of the ten-thousand things,
These cycles are truly mysterious.
Follow the flow and know,
The True Nature is without joy or sorrow.

The Master sat cross-legged on his cushion and peacefully entered transformation.

So the quotation comes from Manura Sonja, whose name I have chanted so many times over the years, without knowing the connection.





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Theravada Group meetings online

The Theravada group is continuing online meetings by Zoom on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 19:30 (see our calendar for the exact schedule) If you would like to join please email us for the Zoom link and to let us know to expect you.
hampshirebuddhistsociety@gmail.com.

Cittaviveka also known as Chithurst Buddhist Monastery

Even with some changes made to the national lockdown on 29 March, until further notice Cittaviveka has decided to remain closed. With the arrival of British Summer Time, the monastery's meal-offering changes to 11.30am. Now the drop-off of offerings is allowable from 11-11.15am. They will gratefully receive food prepared at people's homes.

They have recently increased their presence on the Internet by the live-streaming events. The monastery will be offering Guided Meditation live streams every Wednesday from 7.30-8.30pm. They also intend to live-stream the Lunar Observance Night Dhamma talk, on the full and new moons. Please visit [the monastery YouTube channel](#) to link to this weekly live stream event and/or subscribe.

News From Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

Although the nationwide lockdown has ended, the Amaravati close-knit community remains vulnerable to infection, and coronavirus levels are still too high to allow visitors.

The back gate remains open for deliveries. The Saturday meditation workshop continues online. Paritta chanting, refuges, and precepts are live-streamed on Sundays beginning at 10:30 am. See the [calendar](https://www.amaravati.org/calendar/) <https://www.amaravati.org/calendar/> for details of these and other online events.





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The Buddhist Society Summer School

There are provisional dates for Summer School 2021 (Saturday 21st - Saturday 28th August), but due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it is highly unlikely that there will be a Summer School 2021. Please check the website for the latest update:

<https://thebuddhistsociety.org/page/buddhist-society-summer-school-2020>

The Buddhist Society Zen Sundays



Free online monthly classes through Zoom For link to join check here:

<https://thebuddhistsociety.org/page/zen-sundays>

Zen Sundays are for newcomers wishing to learn more about Zen Buddhism and seasoned practitioners alike.

These classes are open to all, but are designed for those unable to attend during the week, allowing them to engage fully in the Zen training programme.

Dates for 2021:

30th May

27th June

25th July

26th September

31st October

28th November



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An update from Shobo-an and Fairlight Zen Buddhist Temples

Saturday Meditation and Zen Practice – Online Event



Next date: 1st May 2021
 Shobo-an Zen Temple
 58 Marlborough Place
 London NW8 0PL

We are using Zoom for our online events.

If you don't already have the Zoom programme we suggest you install it before the meeting.

This a monthly session to introduce Meditation within the context of Zen Practice.

Newcomers with no previous experience are most welcome.

Please register via Eventbrite (link will be available nearer the time) if you wish to attend and we will send you a link to join the meeting.



For anyone who missed the talk by Daiko Osho-san 'Opening the Eyes of the Heart' on 14th March, or would like to replay it, a recording is now available on the Shobo-an website at:

<https://rinzaizencentre.org.uk/video-talks/>



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Paths on the Way

Recently I went to the woods to see the bluebells and came across what seemed like a contradictory sight. It was a sign that said “No footpath” next to a very clear path. What the sign was aiming to communicate in an enigmatic way was that this was not a right of way. The thought struck me that in Buddhism also there is a path and there is simultaneously no path because there is no where to go. At the ultimate level there is no question of rights involved since the Way is open to all. All are the way.



1. Searching for the Bull

The search for what? The bull has never been missing, But without knowing it the herdsman estranged himself from himself and so the bull became lost in the dust. The home mountains recede ever further, and suddenly the herdsman finds himself on entangled paths. Lust for gain and fear of loss flare up like a conflagration, and views of right and wrong oppose each other like spears on a battlefield.

The path of the Middle Way is not always obvious. In a recent Dharma talk (14th April) Martin Goodson considered the verse that accompanies the first bull-herding picture, ‘the herdsman finds himself on entangled paths’. The experience is made more difficult by facing in different directions with his feet and his head. The apparent oppositions in the image and text serve to show how he feels not part of, at one with the landscape, internal or external. He is picking and choosing.

The feeling of being torn between directions is conveyed powerfully in Robert Frost’s poem, ‘The Road Not Taken’. It was written partially to gently tease Edward Thomas who was struggling intensely with a choice between a path leading to join Frost in America entailing relative safety to concentrate on creativity, and the path he saw to fight for his country in the First World War.



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Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
 And sorry I could not travel both
 And be one traveller, long I stood
 And looked down one as far as I could
 To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
 And having perhaps the better claim,
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
 Though as for that the passing there
 Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
 In leaves no step had trodden black.
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
 I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
 Somewhere ages and ages hence:
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
 I took the one less travelled by,
 And that has made all the difference.

Thomas's choice brought him an earlier death on the battleground, but it also brought him an intense period of writing poetry that still resonates a century later. Who is to say what the alternate history would have been had he taken the other path. The point here is Frost is saying perhaps there is no need to sigh about what has not been, his humour aiming to unfurl the grip of both indecision and the attachment of regret.

On other occasions the path seems evident. Robert MacFarlane, who is fond of both walking paths and words about them, notes that there is a Spanish palindrome on the subject of pilgrimage in which the first letters mirror the last ones

'La ruta nos aporto' otro paso natural'
 'The path provides the natural next step'

How we feel about and how we take up the opportunities to walk have been highlighted during the COvid-19 pandemic. As we all continue to walk whatever steps we take I hope that rather than dispersal the physical contact of our feet continues to keep us composed together internally and with our external worlds, town or country.

Penny Lawrence

MacFarlane, R. (2012) *'The Old Ways'* London: Penguin p.17



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Contact Details

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Theravada Group meetings:

Currently meeting online
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Theravada Group day retreats:

hbs-day-retreats@gmx.co.uk

Zen Group meetings:

Currently meeting online
hbs.zen.group@gmail.com
023 8049 6315

Chithurst Buddhist Monastery

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www.cittaviveka.org

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

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The Buddhist Society

58 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PH
www.thebuddhistsociety.org
020 7834 5858

The Zen Centre

58 Marlborough Place, London, NW8 0PL
www.rinzaizencentre.org.uk
020 7624 4987

The Zen Gateway

www.thezengateway.com

Annual General Meeting

On 22nd April the Annual General Meeting took place. Angela Cotton is standing down after twenty years as Chair of the Hampshire Buddhist Society. Thank you to Angela for her kindness, persistence, generosity and integrity that has ensured the continuation of the Theravada Group.



Contributions to the newsletter are welcome.

Please send them to us by email to
hbs.newsletter.editor@gmail.com

If you would like to be removed from the mailing list,
please tell us.



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Programme for Spring/Summer 2021

NEW on Monday 28th June the Zen and Theravada Groups will join together on Zoom for a Hampshire Buddhist Society evening 7.30 – 9pm. You are welcome to join at any time. Please email hampshirebuddhistsociety@gmail.com if you would like to be sent the Zoom invite link.

At the time of writing our regular face-to face meetings are currently suspended due to the Corona virus/Covid-19. However, the Zen group is meeting weekly at 7.25 online with phone access.

The Theravada Group meets online by Zoom 7.30 on alternate Tuesdays. The Calendar and Blog pages of the HBS web site may contain information about events arranged after the publication of this newsletter.

May 2021

Mon	3	Zen	Zazen online
Tue	4	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	10	Zen	Zazen online
Mon	17	Zen	Zazen online
Tue	18	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	24	Zen	Zazen online
Sun	30	Zen	Zen Sunday, The Buddhist Society, London online
Mon	31	Zen	Open Meeting online

June

Tue	1	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	7	Zen	Memorial Soko Roshi online
Mon	14	Zen	Zazen online
Tue	15	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	21	Zen	Zazen online
Sun	27	Zen	Zen Sunday, The Buddhist Society, London online
Mon	28	HBS	Hampshire Buddhist Society evening on Zoom
Tue	29	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online

July

Mon	5	Zen	Zazen online
Mon	12	Zen	Memorial Sojun Roshi online
Tue	13	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	19	Zen	Zazen online
Sun	25	Zen	Zen Sunday, The Buddhist Society, London online
Mon	26	Zen	Open Meeting online
Tue	27	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online

August

Mon	2	Zen	Zazen online
Mon	9	Zen	Zazen online
Tue	10	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	16	Zen	Recess
Mon	23	Zen	Recess
Tue	24	Theravada	Meditation & Dhamma online
Mon	30	Zen	Open Meeting online