



ASA NEWSLETTER

A representative body for monks and nuns of all Buddhist traditions

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

2018 ASA AGM AND CONFERENCE DAY

Tuesday 13 March 2018



Photo: Monastics who attended the 2018 ASA AGM at Jhana Grove Retreat Centre in W.A.

The 2018 ASA AGM held in Western Australia was a great success with thirty-five monastics and a number of lay people from around Australia attending. If you would like to listen to the ASA AGM 2018 or access information about the topics discussed during the ASA Conference, simply go to the **ASA in WA 2018 – Resources & Links** page accessible from www.australiansangha.org/. There you can find information on:

- Chaplaincy in the Australian Defence Forces
- Navigating Insurance Renewal for Buddhist organisations/temples
- A Proposal to the ACNC for donations to Buddhist groups to be tax deductible
- A link to listen to the ASA AGM



Photo: Ven. BomHyon Sunim presenting on Chaplaincy in the Australian Defence Forces

As well as successfully trialling livestreaming the AGM on Mixlr, two other new initiatives included holding discussion groups and conducting a nuns' Vinaya training day.

This year attendees had an opportunity to break into **discussion groups** to talk about issues they identified as important to them. Groups met to discuss Buddhist chaplaincy services; conducting a survey of Australian Buddhist monastics; and Bhante Sujato led a group in which he spoke about his recent projects, the launch of SuttaCentral and translating the four Pali nikāyas.

Since 2004 Bhante Sujato has been working with an international team of scholars to develop the website <https://suttacentral.net/>. Their focus is on the Pali Tipiṭaka as well as texts in other languages that are similar or related to these. They have gathered over 70,000 texts, including original texts in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan, and translations in over 30 modern languages. Bhante Sujato has also completed a modern English translation of the central Buddhist scriptures, the four nikāyas. It is released into the public domain, completely free of any copyright claims. It has been published on SuttaCentral and print editions will be produced in due course.



The day after the AGM Venerable Pasada (pictured on the left) from Dhammasara Nuns Monastery facilitated the **nuns' Vinaya training day** which was well attended by twenty nuns (from all three traditions) and five monks. There was a great deal of lively discussion about various aspects of the Vinaya and a number of nuns requested we conduct a similar event next year.

At this year's AGM we highlighted the **ASA's Policy Papers** which can be found on the ASA website, and in particular the new ASA statement on "Eliminating Violence and Discrimination: With a Special Emphasis on Women and Children" To find out more go to www.australiansangha.org/policy-papers

The two-day AGM and Conference event was a great success due to the efforts of many, in particular the hard working Jhana Grove volunteers! **A big thank you** to all who assisted and to all who attended. We hope to see you at next year's AGM and Conference day which will be held on Tuesday 12 March in Melbourne.



Photo: 2018-2019 ASA Committee members

Front row from the left – Ven. Thich Quang Ba (Vice Chair); Ven. Ajahn Brahm (Treasurer); Ven. Hasapanna (Chair); Ven. Drolkar (Secretary). Back row from the left – Ven. Ven Wattedgama Dhammasa; Ven. BomHyon Sunim; Ven. Bodhidhaja; Ven. Sujato; Ven. Dongnyi; Ven. Chokyi. Ven. Hōjun Futen is absent.



Photo: Stephen Mayers presenting on insurance renewal for temples and a proposal to the ACNC for donations to Buddhist groups to be tax deductible

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING (cont'd)

MEETING WITH MINISTER

12 April 2018

Ajahn Brahm (representing ASA), Cecilia Mitra (representing FABC) and Boon Tan (representing BCWA) met with the Hon. Alan Tudge MP, Minister of Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs; Ms Samantha Patuto, Regional Director West, Home Affairs; and other team members from skilled migration, labour agreements and border security. Other community leaders were also present.



Pictured from the left: Boon Tan, Hon. Alan Tudge, Samantha Patuto, Cecilia Mitra, Ajahn Brahm

There was a question and answer session followed by conversations with the Minister and the government representatives and good connections were made.

MEETING WITH APRO

24 April 2018



Photo: Bhante Sujato (back row) with other APRO members

Recently Bhante Sujato attended a meeting of the Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations (APRO) on behalf of the ASA. The ASA, along with the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils (FABC), has represented the Buddhist community on APRO for more than a decade.

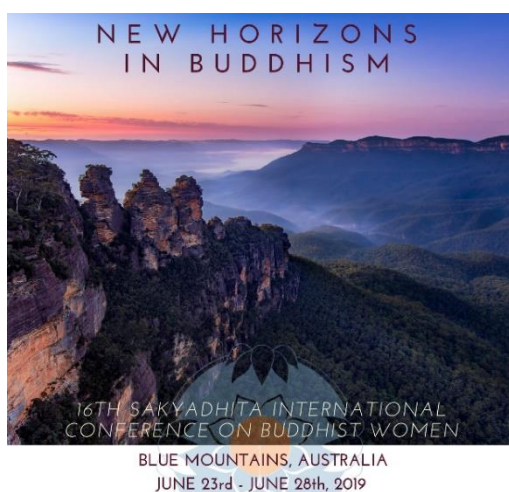
The main focus of this meeting was preparation for a forum later this year. The title of the forum will be "Building Relationships" and it will focus on fostering positive community harmony in the face of hate and extremism.

We will update you on further details of the forum as they are settled. Other issues discussed include the new child safety legislation pending in most States; the political influence of minority religions; and the influence of foreign governments on local religious communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAKYADHITA AGM; & NEXT CONFERENCE IN OZ!**13 May 2018**

Everyone is warmly invited to attend Sakyadhita Australia's AGM and Conference day on Sunday 13 May at Quang Minh Temple, 18 Burke Street, Braybrook Victoria. Registration is from 9.30am, lunch (provided) is at 11am and the AGM commences at 12.30pm. Straight after the AGM there will be two guest speakers, Ven. Bodhicitta and Dr Anna Halafoff. Nuns can stay at the temple if required. Please RSVP your attendance to sakyadhitaoz@gmail.com

23-28 June 2019

The 16th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women will be held in the Blue Mountains near Sydney from 23-28 June 2019. The event will include inspiring talks, workshops, meditations and discussions led by women from around the world. The theme will be “New Horizons in Buddhism” which looks at the changes happening nowadays in Buddhist circles in Asia and the West.

Conference organisers are calling for proposals for papers, posters and workshops, for more information email paper@sakyadhita2019.org.au workshop@sakyadhita2019.org.au

and poster@sakyadhita2019.org.au respectively. Until the Conference website is finalised, for general inquiries email info@sakyadhita2019.org.au

ILLUMIN8 – FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AND PEACE**Friday 18 to Sunday 20 May 2018**

ILLUMIN8 celebrates peace and harmony inspired by Buddha's life and is held annually at The Great Stupa near Bendigo. This year is also particularly significant as it welcomes home the internationally known Jade Buddha for Universal Peace. On Friday 18 May there will be special Buddhist activities and the consecration of the Jade Buddha. This is open to the public 9am – 5pm and is available on donation. To find out more information and/or to purchase tickets go to <https://www.stupa.org.au/illumin8/>



UPCOMING EVENTS (cont'd)

NAN TIEN BRIDGE OPENING

Saturday 28 July 2018

All ASA members (and non-members) are warmly invited to attend the inauguration ceremony of Nan Tien Temple's new bridge on Saturday 28 July from 10.30am to noon. A light lunch will be provided.

The Nan Tien Bridge and Learning Plaza will link the Nan Tien Institute and Cultural Centre to the iconic Nan Tien Temple—the largest Buddhist temple in the southern hemisphere. Nan Tien is located in Berkeley on the southern outskirts of Wollongong, NSW.

Please RSVP before 15 June by going to

<http://www.nantien.org.au/en/upcoming-events/official-launch-nan-tien-bridge>



QSA BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY COURSES

Buddhist chaplaincy has been practised by monks and nuns since the time of the Buddha. Lay people are also being trained to undertake Buddhist chaplaincy work. If you are interested in undertaking a Buddhist Chaplaincy course, Queensland Sangha Association (QSA) offers courses ranging from Certificate to Diploma level.

For the information pack on their courses go to

www.sanghaqlld.org/index.php/services/educational-services For further information email infoqsa@gmail.com



KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE ASA

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in supporting Buddhist monks and nuns in Australia, then you might like to consider:

- joining the ASA – see below for more information
- making a donation to the ASA – go to <http://www.australiansangha.org/donate>
- contributing to the newsletter or FaceBook page – see below for more information
- taking on the role of preparing the Newsletter
- or perhaps you have other skills you would like to share?

If so, please email The Secretary at asasecretary@gmail.com

JOIN OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

If you'd like to know what the ASA is doing and keep up with relevant events and news then join our Face Book page. Simply go to www.facebook.com/AustralianSanghaAssociation/ and click on 'like' and 'follow'.

JOIN THE ASA – IT'S FREE!

Becoming a member of the ASA benefits you and the wider monastic community, and it is free to join! Ordinary (full) membership is open to any Sangha member (ordained and celibate) who lives in Australia and is from a recognised bona-fide Buddhist monastic tradition. Associate membership - anyone who supports the ASA is welcome to apply.

To find out more or to apply via the online form go to australiansangha.org/membership



PRIME MINISTER'S VESAK MESSAGE



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

VESAK DAY 2018

I send my best wishes to everyone observing Vesak, the annual celebration for the birth, enlightenment and passing of the Buddha.

Rich in symbolism and spiritual significance, this is a time for Buddhists around Australia to unite in faith and fellowship, to contemplate Buddha's teachings, and to reaffirm their commitment to the Five Precepts.

Our whole community wishes adherents well at this time of celebration, and acknowledges the special contribution that Buddhist traditions make to the multicultural fabric of our society.

The particular values and insights of Buddhism—such as equality, respect and understanding—not only inspire Buddhists from all walks of life, and of every nationality and background, but have meaning and relevance for all Australians.

We are fortunate to live in a nation where we are free to express our opinions and beliefs, where difference is celebrated as a strength and not a vulnerability. The shared commitment of all our citizens to friendship, inclusion and peace is what lies at the heart of our success.

With these thoughts in mind, I once again send my best wishes to everyone observing Vesak, and hope you are inspired and uplifted by these special celebrations.

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister of Australia