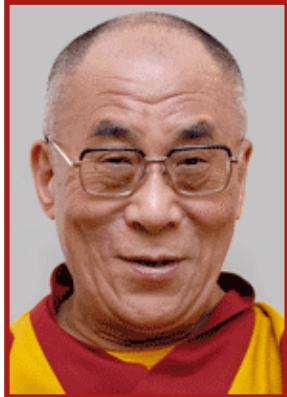


# Cham-Tse-Ling

A Buddhist Group in the Nalanda Tradition

Patron: His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet

Newsletter: Summer 2014



All suffering in this life and others is created by the unsubdued mind. Similarly, the basis of all the practices of the six paramitas, such as generosity, moral discipline, and so on, is the mind. Nothing is more important than guarding the mind. Let us constantly keep watch over the wild elephant of the mind, curbing it with mindfulness and vigilance. This is how to avoid being influenced by different external conditions. But even in retreat in a very secluded place, if the mind is not kept under control, it will wander all over the place. Even completely alone, we can have an enormous amount of negative emotions.  
How are we to guard the mind? We should use attentiveness to watch our thoughts and use mindfulness to judge whether we are acting correctly. With these two we have the means to annihilate all adverse conditions. But without them, we will not see whether our thoughts are positive or negative or whether we are doing right or wrong, nor will we then be able to use antidotes as necessary.

From *For the Benefit of All Beings*, page 40

## Tse Ling News

Cham Tse Ling's history of websites hasn't been a good one, due to the group's distinct lack of expertise in that department, so we were delighted, when Lynda's son Richard offered to help. We spent several meetings discussing how we wanted ourselves represented, and everyone contributed ideas; hopefully it will soon be up and running, and will be useful for information about visiting teachers, extra events, cancellations etc. In order to make ourselves a little more known in the community, Jonathan has been working on a logo, and flyer. We have always been a small group, and feel it would be good to make sure everyone knows we're here, we feel that in being very open, non-sectarian, and encouraging discussion, we are probably quite unusual.

We were thrilled that Eileen felt well enough to come back to the group before we paused for the summer, she has written: "Thank you so much for keeping in touch with me these last few months - your kindness means a great deal to me. A big lesson I've had to learn is patience - patient acceptance. I think I'm getting better at it - I hope so! I've now stopped shouting at the cutlery drawer for spilling its contents onto the kitchen floor after I'd tugged away at it!"

## Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche

*As in previous years, Pat and I had the opportunity to attend teachings given by Mindrolling Khandro Rinpoche when she visited the Palpung Centre in Wales. As before, I*

*helped in the kitchen during those hectic few days, with Mark and Sunny, Palpung catering regulars. When I heard that Mark had a background in journalism, I asked him if he would write an account of the visit for the newsletter. After protesting that no-one would want to read his account, he was persuaded to write this piece!*

More than 100 people filed into Palpung Wales for the third annual teachings by Her Eminence Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche.

The renowned female master continued her series of teachings on Creation and Completion, otherwise known as deity or yidam practice, taking Vajrasattva as her example and offering the Vajrasattva (or Dorje Sempa) empowerment to those who wanted it.

The event was well attended, despite happening at the same time as the historic visit of HH Karmapa to Germany.



Khandro Rinpoche packed a lot of detail into the two days and I for one was very glad to know that the talks were being recorded and that I would have the opportunity to listen to them repeatedly later on to assimilate the vast amount of information she was providing us with.

But Rinpoche is never boring, always enlivening her presentations with flashes of humour and keeping me on the edge of my seat, not knowing when she is next going to prick the bloated bubble of my ego with a fresh insightful remark.

I sometimes think of her as a spiritual machine gun, shooting a rapid stream of well-aimed dharma bullets at us – not a very Buddhist analogy, perhaps, and one which doesn't bring out the great love and caring which is the foundation for everything Rinpoche does.

Khandro Rinpoche praised the patience and dedication of the resident teacher, our very own Chöje Lama Rabsang, and said she noticed that Palpung Wales was becoming more settled and established with each passing year.

Next year Rinpoche has promised to give us the Minling Dorsem sadhana for Vajrasattva, accompanied by a commitment of 100,000 mantras for those who receive it. I for one am really looking forward to this – but conscious that I'm going to have to bolster my learning by listening to those recordings quite a few times before then!

*Mark Downing*

Loving kindness is the sincere wish for all beings to experience true happiness, no matter who they are, or what they have done, or how much one disagrees with them.

*Khandro Rinpoche*

### **An Undeceived Eye:**

The Adventurous Life of Alexandra David-Neel (1868-1969)  
a talk by Alexander Maitland  
at The Buddhist Society, London on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

I was fortunate to attend this talk about the amazing opera singer and explorer who was the first European woman to meet the Dalai Lama and, in 1924, crossing over the Trans-Himalayas in midwinter to reach the forbidden city of Lhasa.

She wrote 30 books about her extraordinary experiences and encounters saying “I think adventure is the only reason for living”.

She was born in Belgium to a Protestant father ( a distant relative of the artist David) with Huguenot sympathies and a mother who was a Catholic convert. The family inherited money and moved to Paris where they survived the Siege of 1870 when the Parisians were forced to eat everything including the poor elephants at the zoo. This early brush with danger may have sparked her adventurous spirit as she began her travels by running away aged 17 to the Theosophical Society in London. She reached an understanding with her parents and began to soak up many influences from occultist, anarchists, Freemasons and North African Hash smokers.

Travels through Sri Lanka and to Benares introduced her to Yoga but when her family lost their money she needed to work and joined an Opera - Comique company travelling through

French Indochina performing Carmen at the Hanoi Opera house. She went on to sing at the Casino in Tunis where in 1904 she married Phillip Neel a railroad engineer. During the following 37 years they only spent 5 weeks together but managed to remain close with affectionate letters.

Phillip sent her back to India for a year to improve her languages and work as a journalist . She found Madras's poverty deplorable and with life becoming difficult as India's Independence movement gathered momentum she was followed and spied upon by the suspicious authorities and she moved to Sikkim becoming the Maharaja Kumar Sidkeong's confidante and spiritual sister. He tragically died in pain poisoned in 1914. Here meeting with the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama twice in 1912. He respected her understanding of Buddhism and told her to learn Tibetan. She then turned to the Gomchen of Lachen became a nun and took up her practice in a cave with the 15 year old monk Yongden as her cook; he became her adopted Lama Son, travelling companion and co- author remaining together for the rest of his life.

Alexandra seemed to magically learn Tibetan, tumo and occult practices.

The British authorities were unhappy with foreign nationals in their protectorate as the world was heading for a calamitous confrontation across Europe. Alexandra was expelled in 1916 and travelled to Japan with Yongden. From here they travelled through monasteries in Burma, Korea and through China to Kumbum Monastery in Amdo which had some 3800 monks at the time compared with around 400 today. From here the exceptionally dangerous trip to forbidden Lhasa dressed as a mendicant beggar and magicians widow on pilgrimage began. She had an early form of hair extensions made from yak wool, which she stained along with her skin using mud, coca and tea. Travelling in disguise she had virtually no supplies or equipment enduring considerable hardship.

On arrival she attracted some attention as the only person in Lhasa who went to wash herself in the river; a strange practice to the locals who did not like to disturb the grime as this only attracted more lice and other wildlife to their body.

When the Second World War broke out she remained in a medical mission in China and received pay of F30,000 from the Vichy Government to report on the Sino –Japanese conflict. She probably thought of this as a continuation of the linguistic and journalistic observations which she had carried out throughout her life and having remained at a distance from the conflict in Europe did not see this as a problem. It was unlikely to assist France's enemies in the War.



Varanasi

“The World is my country, all mankind is my brethren, and to do good is my religion”

Thomas Paine

In 1946 at the age of 76 she and Yongden returned to France. Lawrence Durrell interviewed her at her home in 1965 in Digne in the South of France calling her “the most astonishing woman of our time”. After her death in 1969 aged 100 her ashes were combined with Yongden’s and dispersed in the Ganges at Varanasi.

Jonathan Eyre

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## Changes to Teachings



We are very much looking forward to Ven Mary Reavey's visit this month, but whereas we had previously hoped for a weekend, Ven. Mary is only able to teach on the Saturday 13th September. Ven Mary will continue the teachings on Shamatha/ Vipassana that she gave last time, and everyone is welcome, Mary's teachings are particularly clear and accessible, and always full of humour! We shall meet at 10.15 for a 10.30 start, and finish around 4.30. Please bring some vegetarian food to share. we are holding this teaching at the home of a sangha member, so please ring 07779 273980 if you would like to come and need directions.

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Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso sometimes teaches using dohas, spiritual songs of realisation, which are quite inspirational. He uses ones he spontaneously composes himself, as well as those of Milarepa, Gotsangpa, and Saraha. Though I have not been fortunate enough to receive teachings from Khenpo, I bought CDs of some of the songs that I play in the car. They are wonderful ‘teachings in a nutshell’, and are great to sing along to!

### The Problem with Self

Wherever there is a self, there's a sense of other too;  
With self and other, anger and attachment follow too.  
And, through complete involvement with everything like this,  
All the problematic states in all their guises manifest.

*Verse from the commentary on ‘Valid Cognition’ by Dharmakirti.  
Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso (trans. Jim Scott)*

More information about Khenpo and recordings of some of the songs are on his website [www.ktgrinpoche.org](http://www.ktgrinpoche.org)

**Cham Tse Ling Buddhist Group** meets on Thursday evenings at 7.15 for 7.30 in Room 308, Harrington Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston.  
For information: Eileen Maher 01772 726481 or Anne Walmsley 07779 273980  
If you have articles for the newsletter, please send to: [ae.walmsley@gmail.com](mailto:ae.walmsley@gmail.com).