

REACHING OUT:

*A history of and contemporary look at the
Centers, Projects and Services of FPMT*



Lama Yeshe supervises building of Kopan Gomba extension, 1976



FPMT pioneers: Peter Kedge, Lama Yeshe, Sister Max' and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, 1982

We make the ocean and the fish will come.

– Lama Thubten Yeshe

pi-o-neer:

1. **One who ventures into unknown or unclaimed territory to settle.**
2. **One who opens up new areas of thought, research or development.**

Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935-1984), founder of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), was many things to many people. What seems a constant impression from those who knew him was that Lama Yeshe was big. “Think big,” “big love,” – these are catch-phrases commonly attributed to Lama. Some students even claim he often appeared to physically grow far bigger than his 5 ft 6 in (167 cm) frame.

He insisted that end results were to be carefully visualized before plans and details. After all, how can you reach a destination without first knowing exactly where you’d like to go? When students expressed an interest in starting a center he didn’t encourage them to start off following a traditionally conservative model by raising a couple of years worth of funds, working out all budget and program details, securing investors and starting slowly. He instructed them to find “a place,” a physical location *first*. “We make the ocean and the fish will come,” he’d advise.

¹ Sister Max was one of Lama Yeshe’s earliest students and strongest benefactor of early activity.

And funding? Lama Yeshe was brutal in his insistence that centers and students be self-sufficient and often encouraged them to start businesses. Lama’s early students were made up of those from the anti-establishment generation and many had been quite proud to cheat on their taxes, accept welfare payments, shoplift or sell marijuana as methods to remain on the fringes of society. Lama insisted that his students “do what society people do” and function as professional members of the world. Breaking the law or following the “hippie” notion that money and capitalism were necessary evils would get them nowhere. It was one’s motivation that corrupted ventures in commerce, and since his students were engaging in business practice to be of benefit to others, no way could this be corrupt.

“Thinking big” was not simply a cute expression that Lama used to impress his students. Thinking big meant breaking free from all of the small, narrow, tight thinking that had kept his students cycling in the irresistible misery of samsara for countless lifetimes.

A pioneer in every sense of the word, Lama Yeshe was fearlessly charging into the new territory of Western Buddhism with a crystal clear understanding of the dominant Western modes of thinking. Lama Yeshe believed that Buddhism, once stripped of the traditional Eastern cultural trappings, would speak easily to the science-centered Western mind with its focus on logic and proof. Lama encouraged his



students to “check up” on all of his “blah blah blah” before they trusted even a single word.

At the time of Lama’s passing, after fifteen years of teaching this big approach to life to his hundreds of (mostly Western) students, Lama Yeshe’s organization had established thirty centers and twenty projects in fourteen countries. And nearly all of them (plus hundreds of new initiatives) are still thriving twenty-five years later.

Admittedly, Lama Yeshe didn’t begin teaching Westerners with the intention of starting centers all over the world: this was rather a natural phenomenon.

His students found their way to India and Nepal in the late 1960s and early 1970s in a variety of ways. A common thread linking these students was their interest in finding meaning in their lives. And even those who weren’t necessarily searching for something, found it when they met Lama Yeshe and his heart disciple, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, at the Kopan meditation courses in Nepal.

When Lama Yeshe passed away in March of 1984, FPMT was in crisis. Lama was gone. Hundreds of devastated students were stunned like motherless children. Lama Zopa Rinpoche encouraged the students to stay focused on the long-term aims of the organization and keep everything together. “Carry on and don’t let things fall apart,” Rinpoche advised.

Initially, Rinpoche attempted to offer the organization to his gurus, but they didn’t accept. His Holiness the Dalai Lama said it was better if Rinpoche himself ran the organization. This was Rinpoche’s time to emerge as the new spiritual guide of FPMT.

Under Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s care and protection, the organization has flourished in ways that could never have been anticipated or conceived of forty years ago when the Lamas’ first Western student turned up on their modest doorstep in India.

After Lama Yeshe passed away, Lama Zopa Rinpoche made enormous continuous effort over many years to stabilize and develop the organization. We’ll tell the story of Rinpoche’s incredible journey with the organization in our January-March 2010 issue.

Today, FPMT is made up of 154 (and growing) centers, projects, services and study groups stretching over thirty-three countries and sustained through the efforts of thousands of devoted individuals.

FPMT had to grow and evolve into the organized, international, multi-purposed outfit it is today. The organization was born from the dedication and determination of just a few handfuls of pioneer students and the incredible kindness of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Without those early students, and thus, early centers, the Lamas’ teachings could not have spread to be as widely accessed and cherished as they are today. And this pioneering tradition lives on as ambitious students continue to bring FPMT to their home countries.

The organization that started in India and Nepal, then spread to the home countries of the first Western students, can now be found all across the Asia Pacific, North and South America, Europe and Russia.

Here, we take a look back at the development of these activities: the students, the stories, the ingenuity and the big love that has kept it all together through the years.

WHY WE HAVE ESTABLISHED FPMT

By Lama Yeshe



Lama Yeshe with FPMT pioneer, Anila Ann McNeil

What we are trying to do is to help people discover their own totality and thus perfect satisfaction.

Why have we established the FPMT? Why are we establishing these facilities all

over the world? I think we are clean clear as to our aim – we want to lead sentient beings to higher education. We are an organization that gives people the chance to receive higher education. We offer people the combined knowledge of Buddha’s teachings and the

modern way of life. Our purpose is to share our experiences of this.

Now, the way we have evolved is not through you or me having said we want to do these things but through a natural process of development. Our organization has grown naturally, organically. It is not “Lama Yeshe wanted to do it.” I’ve never said that I want centers all over the world. Rather, I came into contact with students, who then wanted to do something – expressed the wish to share their experience with others – and put together groups in various countries to share and grow with others.

Personally I think that’s fine. We should work for that. We are human beings; Buddhism helps us grow; therefore it is logical that we should work together to

facilitate this kind of education. And it is not only we lamas who are working for this. The centers' resident geshe and the students are working too. Actually, it is you students who are instrumental in creating the facilities for Dharma to exist in the Western world. True. Of course, teachers help, but the most important thing is for the students to be well educated. That is why we exist.

When we started establishing centers there was no overall plan – they just popped up randomly all over the world like mushrooms, because of the evolutionary process I've just mentioned and the cooperative conditions. Now that all these centers do exist, we have to facilitate their development in a constructive, clean clear way, otherwise everything will just get confused. We have to develop properly both internally and in accordance with our twentieth century environment.

Now, the way to bring Dharma to the Western world is to bring the nuclear, essential aspect of Dharma. Of course, you can't separate the essence from the Eastern cultural trappings immediately: "This is culture, this isn't." However, what you should do is take the practical points of Dharma and shape them according to your own culture. In my opinion you should be making a new kind of Dharma dependent upon each different place and its social customs. Since we are Mahayanists we have a broad view and don't mind if Dharma takes different shapes. To bring Dharma to the West we should have a broad view.

Because we have so many centers I can no longer direct them. Of course, at the beginning I had to direct the centers because the students were always asking, "Lama, what to do?" and we were small enough for me always to be in direct communication with them. But eventually we reached the point where I had to ask myself the question, "Am I a businessman, a Dharma teacher or what?" Hundreds of letters were coming in from all over the world; I had to say, "What is this? Should I spend my life answering letters and running centers?" I thought it was wrong for me to spend my life in business because this was not the best way to serve my students. I thought that the most realistic thing to do to benefit them and make my life worthwhile was to take the middle way instead.

So I began to cut down on administrative work. I even wrote to all the centers telling them that they were responsible to make certain decisions, that I couldn't decide everything, and that it was too complicated and far too slow to have all the correspondence coming through Nepal. Therefore I said we should have a central office as the centers' business point. Of course, I could still be consulted on important matters and could still make decisions on

anything. I'm part of the Central Office; I can give my opinion. But it was not necessary to rely on me for everything. That's why I established the Central Office.

However, to some extent I am still responsible for whatever happens in our centers. I have not let go of all responsibility and said let whatever happens happen. Therefore, I have to know something of what's going on in the centers: what the problems are, how serious they are, what benefits the center is offering and so forth. The point is, I am not going to let the centers go completely so that they become totally nonsensical, non-beneficial to others and just some kind of ego-trip. I don't believe that should happen. So I don't want to close myself off; I like to look at and reflect upon what's happening, but at the same time I don't want to have to spend my whole life writing letters. Thus taking the middle way meant setting up the Central Office, which has reduced my administrative work-load and given me more time to spend teaching Dharma. I haven't done it because I'm lazy ... well, perhaps I am lazy, but at least I have to pretend that I'm not!

Quite apart from the fact that I don't have time to do all this administrative work, there are many things to do with running a center that you can do far better than I. You can communicate with people from your own cultural background much better than a simple Himalayan monk can. All the legal and financial work: I can't do that. Also, there are many positions to be filled in a center; the right people have to be selected for the right job. You students should do these things yourselves.

We have to be able to focus and integrate our energy and store information in a clean clear way so that it can be readily accessed. We should make a structure so that we all know what information is there and how to get it. Without a proper structure we'd go bananas! Even a couple living together needs to be organized so that their house is clean, there is the food they need and so on. In the centers we are involved with hundreds of people's lives; for some reason Dharma has brought all these people together. We are responsible to ensure that we don't waste people's energy; therefore we have to get ourselves together. This is why organization is very important.

Let's say, for example, that one of the older students and I have started a center. We are impermanent; we're going to die. What happens when we're dead? We established the center; it's never been organized properly; it should die too? No, of course not. Even though our very bones have disappeared, the center should continue to function. But for people to be able to carry on its work there should be clean



clear directions as to what it was established for.

If you think about it from the point of view of culture, Buddhism is completely culture-orientated: a complete culture, or way of life, from birth to death. Therefore we are dealing with a very serious thing; we are giving people something that they should take very seriously in their lives. It is not just a one-week or one-month trip. We are offering something that utilizes Buddha’s method and wisdom in the achievement of everlasting satisfaction. That everlasting peace and happiness is what we are working for.

Also, it is important for directors to have great vision; they should not neglect their center’s growth. They should have a very broad view in order to be open to people. In many of our centers we find that already the facilities are too small. Of course, to build adequate facilities takes time and energy, but we should have a broad open view. ... Having a broad view is not pushing but simply saying that if we have the opportunity to do various things, we’ll do them.

You never know when someone might come up to you and say, “I’d like to do something beneficial

with my money.” At that time you can reply, “Well, we have this project ready to develop,” and show that person your plans. If, however, you feel suffocated with what you already have and don’t have any vision of how to expand, you can’t show potential benefactors anything. Therefore you should plan ahead with great vision and have everything ready to show people how you want to expand and improve your facilities.

So we have a very important job; it is not just one person’s thing. For that reason I have to say openly to all our center directors that they should not feel they are working for Lama Yeshe; that’s too small. I’m just a simple monk; you’re working for me? One atom? You are working for something much bigger than just one man. You are working for all mother sentient beings. That is important. You should think, “Even if I die, I am doing all these things for the sake and benefit of all mother sentient beings.” That is why it is so important for us to have a clean clear structure and direction.

Excerpted from a talk given to the CPMT meeting at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, Italy, in January, 1983. Edited by Nicholas Ribush and further edited for space here.

HOW THE FPMT ORGANIZATION STARTED

By Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Any good thing the FPMT organization has been able to offer and the numberless sentient beings have been able to receive – every understanding of Dharma we have and every Dharma practice we have done so far, every purification we have done and every merit we have collected – comes first by the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and second by the kindness of Lama Yeshe, whose holy name is difficult to express. First, we exist basically by the kindness of His Holiness, the only object of refuge for all sentient beings and the source of all the happiness of sentient beings. Second, Lama Yeshe, who is kinder than all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times, is the founder of this organization. Even though many of you didn’t meet Lama or hear teachings directly from him, he started the centers...The purification of every single negative karma, the collecting of every single merit, the planting of the seeds of enlightenment, and every understanding of Dharma received from this organization ... also came from Lama, from Lama’s kindness...

It was started with the good heart. The students found the lam-rim, the heart of the 84,000 teachings



FPMT pioneers: Harvey Horrocks, Jeff Nye, Lama Lhundrub, Lama Pasang, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Marcel Bertels, Paul Bourke, Ven. Yeshe Khadro and Nick Ribush, 1984

of Buddha, meaningful. I’d just say a few words about lam-rim – not that I know anything about lam-rim. In my case, I would just repeat the few words of lam-rim I knew over and over: impermanence, impermanence, impermanence, lower realms, lower realms, lower realms, attachment, attachment, attachment. I didn’t have any realization but I would just repeat the same things about attachment and karma and hell over and over to the people who came to Nepal. This is usually

how it is in my case. Anyway, those few words repeated over and over did something for their minds. Somehow those few words benefited them, I think. Because it benefited them, showing them the real meaning of life and what you are supposed to accomplish and what you should abandon to be free from suffering, the students basically wanted to benefit the people in their own countries, so they started the centers.

With the good heart, they continued with the organization, even though most of these young people weren't

professionals and didn't have any experience of business. Some of them had not completed university. Others might have finished university but didn't have any work experience. However, with the good heart and with patience through many difficulties and hardships, they continued to benefit others. This is how the organization has grown up to now . . .

Excerpted from a talk given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at the end of a long-life puja at Chenrezig Institute, Australia, on June 21, 2006. Transcribed and edited by Ven. Ailsa Cameron, further light editing by Claire Isitt. Additionally edited here for space.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL OFFICE'S SUPPORT TO THE CENTERS, PROJECTS AND SERVICES OF FPMT

FPMT International Office has a long history of offering assistance to the many centers, projects and services that make up the organization. FPMT's Center Services provides structure and support to newly developing and established centers, assists centers in finding teachers and translators, coordinates the teaching activities of Lama Zopa Rinpoche and helps provide useful guidelines for FPMT as it grows and expands into the twenty-first century.

This history of serving centers can be traced through the travel pattern of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa as they visited each new center in the early days of activity. The Lamas sat with and encouraged those pioneers who, with very little resources, were laying the foundation for FPMT.

Physical visits to each center were necessary because there was no other reliable way to communicate then. There were no cell phones, no e-mail. Urgent messages were sent by telegram. Kopan Monastery and Tushita Retreat Center had no phones and a series of miracles were required to even book an overseas call from telegraph office in Delhi or Kathmandu.

Formal correspondence was written on a portable Smith Corona typewriter perched on the suitcase of those who travelled with the Lamas – Ven. Yeshe Khadro, Nick Ribush, and then Peter Kedge from 1976 to 1980.

Peter had traveled to India with three of his engineering colleagues in 1971. He learned about the meditation courses on Kopan Hill from fellow travelers and decided to give them a try as an alternative to the “rather hedonistic agenda” he (and thousands of other young Westerners at that time) had been pursuing previously.

After serving as director for Dharamsala's Tushita Retreat Center, Lama Yeshe invited Peter to join him and Lama Zopa Rinpoche on their upcoming travels as their attendant.

Peter remembers, “Around 1975 Lama called some of

us together and said, ‘You people have to organize. Zopa and I will teach, but you people have to organize.’” And so was born the first official, organized managing body of the Lamas' activities. It was called, the Council for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (CPMT).

The “office” at this stage was on the road with Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The attendant's responsibilities were twofold. First, to respond to letters that came to Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche which included invitations for teachings, questions about spiritual practice or advice about the running of centers; second, to organize. The attendant would organize all aspects of the non-stop travel arrangements and international teaching schedule, liaise with the centers on Lama Yeshe's behalf and generally follow up to ensure that Lama Yeshe's advice and instructions were being followed by the appointed directors.

The concept of an official “office” developed in 1978. Previously, the attendant carried the office equipment around in a suitcase: a small portable typewriter, carbon paper and other supplies. But by 1978, the administrative tasks were growing and it became impossible to organize everything while on the road. A stationary place was needed with space for files and equipment. So, in 1979, the first Central Office was set up with Jacie Keeley's help at Kopan Monastery.

In 1980, Peter moved to Hong Kong to set up a business with the intention to help fund the burgeoning activities of the newly-formed organization.

Jacie Keeley served as the first Central Office Director from 1980 to 1984. She worked out of Kopan and then moved the office to Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa (ILTK) in Pomaia, Italy in 1984. Before beginning her tenure as director, Jacie had been working for two years as Peter's assistant, serving him and the Lamas.

When asked how she began working so closely with



Peter (and thus the Lamas) she remembers that in 1978 she was given her first opportunity to make Lama Yeshe a cup of tea. Growing up American, she hadn't had much experience making tea and was worried she would serve an awful cup to Lama Yeshe. When she presented the cup to him she said, "And Lama, if this tea wasn't made satisfactorily we'll just start over and try again." Lama grinned his famous smile and said, "I like your attitude, dear!"

Known for her organizational skills and unwavering dedication to Lama Yeshe, Jacie helped keep the new centers on track by communicating Lama's wishes to the directors. She also organized His Holiness the Dalai Lama's first teaching tour of Europe in 1982. In fact, she was the first Western woman to ever offer a mandala to His Holiness.

While on retreat in Bodhgaya in mid-February 1984, American student, Jeff Nye was hand-delivered an unexpected letter from Lama Yeshe. Lama Yeshe informed Jeff that he had been elected as the new executive director of the main office and instructed: "So, don't cut your beard and don't lose your tie because you are my boss too. If you keep family healthy economically and educationally and relationship is harmonious then that is your true long-life offering for me."

Lama Yeshe passed away in March while Jeff was in route to Italy to take over the directorship from Jacie. That year was a difficult year for the organization. Lama Yeshe had passed away, and amidst the grief of hundreds of distraught students, Lama Zopa Rinpoche stepped into his guru's role as Spiritual Director of the organization.

Jeff recalls his time as director as "a holding period" when everyone involved in the organization was getting their bearings, as "everything had changed, the whole world had changed" when Lama Yeshe passed. During this transition period there was much discussion about the roles and responsibilities of the Central Office, the board of directors and the relationship of both to Lama Zopa Rinpoche as the organization's new spiritual guide.

Jeff served for two years, bringing his kind and gentle nature to a very difficult transitory situation, until the directorship was given to Ven. Yeshe Khadro in 1986.

Ven. Yeshe Khadro's term was to be for six months but lasted over a year. During this time, the Central Office was based with Lama Zopa Rinpoche and was run out of his dining room at Kopan until moving to Kathmandu where Harvey Horrocks took over as

director in 1987. Harvey, who had served previously as founding director of Manjushri Institute in England and director of ILTK in Italy, moved the office to Land of Medicine Buddha, California in 1995 when the political unrest in Nepal made it too difficult to remain there.

In 1995, Petra McWilliams (now known as Ven. Tenzin Chogyi) was asked to come on board to co-direct the office with Harvey Horrocks.

By this time, FPMT was composed of eighty initiatives in eighteen countries (including a rapidly growing interest coming from Asia and Central and South America), and it became clear that a separate department needed to be established with the sole function of liaising with representatives of both established and new centers.

"Center Services" then, sprouted from the Central Office directorship. Petra became the first Center Services Director and worked fervently to bring structure and order to the many arms of the international organization. At this point, it also became clear that "Central Office" didn't quite capture the extent of the activities now being coordinated. So, Harvey debuted "International Office" as a new concept in 1996.

Sharon Gross, a student of both Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, took over from Harvey in 1997. Sharon's directorship was also marked by transition. Under Sharon's guidance, significant strides were made in the areas of standardized materials for the organization. Additionally, she pushed to restructure the office more toward web presence and e-mail as methods for communication rather than the rather outdated methods of snail mail, phone and fax.

In 1999, Lama Zopa Rinpoche asked Scott Parris to commit to one year as director of International Office, which he accepted. Scott served as director for almost exactly one year to the day from his appointment. Scott came to the organization with a background as CEO in a corporate setting and was tasked with shifting the office from the volunteer based office of a rather ad hoc religious organization to a professionally run international office of a global organization. Ven. Connie Miller, who worked for the Education Department of International Office during this period remembers, "Under Scott's directorship, we had to actually create specific budgets for each department with timelines, tasks and process outlines. In the past, there had been budgets in the office, but not ones that people were particularly held accountable for."

Massimo Corona took over as the director of International Office in 2000 and the office was moved to Taos, New Mexico. Massimo also brought a business and professional background to his directorship and was able to build on the organizational structure that Scott provided.

In 1999, Petra made plans to begin a three-year retreat. Claire Isitt, who was working as the manager of Jamyang Institute in London, was asked to take over as Center Services Director in 2000 and she happily accepted. Claire was well-rounded for the job having served as director of Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Program and spiritual program coordinator of Tushita Meditation Center in Dharamsala previously.

One of the key new developments she took on was an affiliating agreement with the centers. Massimo and the board of FPMT, Inc. had identified some problems with the current structure of the international organization. Many centers were incorporated according to local law, with various connections stated to FPMT's Spiritual Director, Lama Zopa Rinpoche – and many had no incorporation or no stated connection. Even when a connection was stated, no actual workable legal relationship was established

which created an unhealthy situation for an organization which Lama Zopa Rinpoche saw as lasting for lifetimes!

In late 2001, the FPMT board of directors worked with a legal firm specializing in religious organizations to draft a new Affiliation Agreement policy aimed to establish a clear and legal relationship between the Spiritual Director and his centers, through the legal entity of FPMT, Inc., and serve as a clear guide concerning what it means legally to be an FPMT center.

Understanding that corporate messaging must be consistent and unified, Claire worked diligently to establish a standard approach to the way in which centers described their affiliation with FPMT. Over the next few years, International Office's relationships with FPMT centers matured.

As one condition of this maturation, Center Services considered the benefits of instituting a probationary period for new initiatives before they can officially affiliate with the organization.

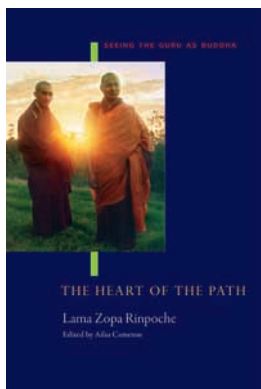
Thus, 2001 saw the launch of the category "study group," which is how all fledgling endeavors must begin before application is accepted and affiliation status is gained. The suggested period for this status is two years.

Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive

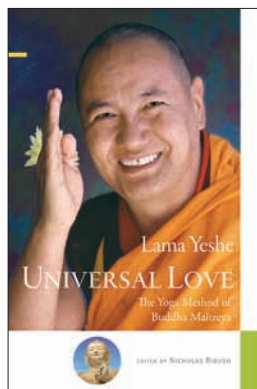
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Further, upon examination it became clear that FPMT was not simply composed of “centers” or pre-center “study groups.” Retreat centers, city centers, monasteries, nunneries, and many social and community service projects had also been initiated. Thus, International Office now fittingly supports, “centers, projects and services” of FPMT.

In 2006, Kim Hollingshead, who had been serving as Operations Director for Liberation Prison Project in San Francisco, was asked to take over as director of International Office. Shortly thereafter, the office transitioned to being overseen by a Management Committee, made up of the directors of each International Office department, which is itself supported and overseen by FPMT’s CEO, Ven. Roger Kunsang.

Kim Hollingshead passed away in 2007.

Over the last few years, International Office’s relationship with and support of the organization’s centers, projects and services have continued to evolve.

As FPMT standard education programs developed, Rinpoche’s advice to centers, projects and services was made more available, the FPMT Handbook became more thorough and exhaustive and the website became more functional, giving access 24/7 to many of International Office’s resources, the benefits of FPMT’s extensive and far reaching activities are now more quantifiable to newcomers to the organization.

As one result of this, some Dharma groups who

had no prior relationship with Lama Zopa Rinpoche have begun to apply for affiliation with FPMT in order to take advantage of the fantastic programs, organizational structure, reputation and teachers. Of course, this is a substantial shift from the original model of students wishing to start centers in their home countries in order to keep the teachings of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche alive.

International Office encourages these new relationships when appropriate and feels this shift is a testament to the organization’s truly global appeal as a quality source of authentic Buddhist programs and teachers.

Additionally, over the last several years, FPMT has made great strides in becoming more regionalized in terms of active national offices which serve as localized satellites for the greater efforts of the organization and help provide the required legal structure established by national law when possible.

Claire finished her service at International Office in December of 2008, passing her responsibilities over to Doris Low. Doris had previously served for six years as FPMT’s Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator and has a broad and deep familiarity with FPMT.

This is an incredibly exciting time in the history of FPMT. The organization is now finally growing up in the ways that Lama Yeshe was encouraging so many years ago. We’re now beginning to do our job of bringing universal wisdom culture to the entire world. ☸

HOME: NEPAL AND INDIA

NEPAL:

KOPAN MONASTERY

*Kopan was always the mother.
It was very clear that it was Lama’s home.*

Karuna Cayton, resident and staff of Kopan Monastery from 1975-1988, current FPMT board member



By March 1972, Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche had already given four successful meditation courses at Kopan Monastery in Nepal.

The monastery had been established on Kopan Hill, overlooking the beautiful Kathmandu Valley, by the Lamas and their first student, Zina Rachevsky, in 1971 and served as the spiritual and organizational base for the Lamas’ activities and the many students they were acquiring.

Of course, it wasn’t called Kopan Monastery in those days. Kopan’s first official name was the Nepal Mahayana Gompa Center, and was known as Mount Everest Center to those who attended the early courses. Linda Millpond, an early student and lawyer, incorporated the center in the United States as a nonprofit so that people could donate money to Lama Yeshe’s center and receive the appropriate tax write-off.

“Kopan” is actually the name of the town in which



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had no prior relationship with Lama Zopa Rinpoche have begun to apply for affiliation with FPMT in order to take advantage of the fantastic programs, organizational structure, reputation and teachers. Of course, this is a substantial shift from the original model of students wishing to start centers in their home countries in order to keep the teachings of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche alive.

International Office encourages these new relationships when appropriate and feels this shift is a testament to the organization’s truly global appeal as a quality source of authentic Buddhist programs and teachers.

Additionally, over the last several years, FPMT has made great strides in becoming more regionalized in terms of active national offices which serve as localized satellites for the greater efforts of the organization and help provide the required legal structure established by national law when possible.

Claire finished her service at International Office in December of 2008, passing her responsibilities over to Doris Low. Doris had previously served for six years as FPMT’s Asia Pacific Regional Coordinator and has a broad and deep familiarity with FPMT.

This is an incredibly exciting time in the history of FPMT. The organization is now finally growing up in the ways that Lama Yeshe was encouraging so many years ago. We’re now beginning to do our job of bringing universal wisdom culture to the entire world. ☸

HOME: NEPAL AND INDIA

NEPAL:

KOPAN MONASTERY

*Kopan was always the mother.
It was very clear that it was Lama’s home.*

Karuna Cayton, resident and staff of Kopan Monastery from 1975-1988, current FPMT board member

By March 1972, Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche had already given four successful meditation courses at Kopan Monastery in Nepal.

The monastery had been established on Kopan Hill, overlooking the beautiful Kathmandu Valley, by the Lamas and their first student, Zina Rachevsky, in 1971 and served as the spiritual and organizational base for the Lamas’ activities and the many students they were acquiring.

Of course, it wasn’t called Kopan Monastery in those days. Kopan’s first official name was the Nepal Mahayana Gompa Center, and was known as Mount Everest Center to those who attended the early courses. Linda Millpond, an early student and lawyer, incorporated the center in the United States as a nonprofit so that people could donate money to Lama Yeshe’s center and receive the appropriate tax write-off.

“Kopan” is actually the name of the town in which





Lunch at 10th Kopan course, fall 1977

INDIA:

TUSHITA RETREAT CENTER

Lama Yeshe left the March 1972 Kopan course early in order to take teachings from his guru, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, in Dharamsala, India. While there he made an historic purchase. He bought a house. The four-acre property had previously been the temporary home of His Holiness Ling Rinpoche and His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche at the time when the Indian Government allowed the Tibetan Government-in-Exile to move from Dalousie to Dharamsala.

Lama Yeshe delighted in the prospect of purchasing his gurus' old home and negotiated the whole deal himself. Lama named his first and very auspicious real estate purchase: Tushita Retreat

TUSHITA MAHAYANA MEDITATION CENTER, DELHI

In 1977, Lama Yeshe called Nick Ribush, early student involved in many of the initial activities of the organization and current director of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, to his room at Kopan Monastery and said, "I think we need a center in Delhi, I want you to go there and start one."

This came as a shock to Nick who was just settling into his fifth year at Kopan and had no desire to be anywhere else. And perhaps that was the problem. Nick remembers, "Lama didn't like anyone to get too settled. As he often used to say, 'There's no security in cyclic existence. Everything always changes.'"

Lama Yeshe explained to Nick that for centuries the Tibetan people had benefited from the greatest of all Indian gifts to the world, Dharma, and now that Buddhism had nearly disappeared from India, it was

Kopon Hill is located even though many think of Kopan Monastery as simply "Kopon."

Now Kopan is a thriving monastery of 360 monks, mainly from Nepal and Tibet, and a spiritual oasis for hundreds of visitors yearly from around the world. Nearby is Khachoe Ghakyil Ling Nunnery, home to 380 nuns.

www.kopan-monastery.com

Today Nepal is home to two centers, two retreat centers, two nunneries and two monasteries.

Center (now Tushita Meditation Center), and declared that many students would come there to meditate, transform their minds and eventually be of real, lasting benefit to others.

Today, Tushita's ten-day residential Introduction to Buddhism courses are extremely popular and typically have long waiting lists. Many people from all over the world have been introduced to the teachings of the Buddha at Tushita. Very often, course participants comment to the staff of Tushita that attending an introductory course there was definitely one of the highlights of their trip to India and that Tushita has a special place in their hearts.

www.tushita.info/index.htm

time to repay the kindness of the Indian people by helping to bring it back home.

Nick brought Publications for Wisdom Culture (the seed enterprise of Wisdom Publications) with him to Delhi and Lama Yeshe sent newly ordained Australian nun, Ven. Robina Courtin, along to help set it up.

In 1978 Lama Yeshe moved Publications for Wisdom Culture to Manjushri Institute in England, but Tushita, Delhi, as the center is commonly referred to, carried on and continues today to offer meditation classes, teachings, pujas and celebrations organized around holy days on the Tibetan calendar.

www.tushitadelhi.net/index.html ☉

Today India is home to three centers, one retreat center, two study groups, one translator program, one health care initiative, one school, and one monastic community.



FPMT MOVES WEST

A growing number of Westerners were traveling to the East in the early seventies, and many of them found their way to Kopan Hill. Few of the early students had the means to or interest in staying on in Nepal for extended periods of time and thus returned to their respective homelands.

Once home, many could not shake a driving impetus to establish centers in their own countries. These students had found a new way of life, a bigger way of interpreting the world, and weren't able to leave that in Nepal or India. Many had quickly and readily offered their lives to the Lamas, eagerly willing to do whatever was needed of them to help spread Buddha's teachings far and wide for the benefit of all.

Some students stayed to work and study in Nepal or India, but most eventually returned home and began requesting teachings and courses from the Lamas in their homelands.

And these students weren't merely sitting docilely waiting for the Lamas to appear. They were organizing.

AUSTRALIA:

DIAMOND VALLEY COURSE

The Lamas' first Australian course was given in Diamond Valley, southeast of Queensland, from August 30 to September 28, 1974. A core group of dedicated Australian students including Nick Ribush, Ven. Yeshe Khadro, and Tom and Kathy Vichta had worked tirelessly for eight months preparing for the course. It was held on an open piece of land in a remote setting beside a pretty creek near the Vichtas' small farm.

Pete Northend appeared just in time to build a small two-roomed cabin for the Lamas out of mill ends lined with styrofoam. Their cold water stand pipe was the most sophisticated plumbing on site. The only hot water available came from a forty-four gallon drum suspended over a fire.

Two hundred people turned up for the much anticipated thirty-day course and despite certain physical discomforts, the dropout rate was remarkably low. A big marquee sat above a "tent city" like a scene from the gold rush era. There was a "main street" and little clusters of tents tucked into gullies here and there. The kitchen tent was set up beside the creek and tree trunks dragged into a semi-circle served as seating. The cuisine was rigidly purist – a macrobiotic spread of brown rice, vegetables, tofu and miso, all washed down with soy bean coffee and alfalfa tea.

Out in the tent city however, secret cakes were shared in the dark, cheeses stashed away and real coffee brewed in hidden gullies. Fights broke out over sweet biscuits.

CHENREZIG INSTITUTE

At a meeting held one very hot afternoon during the Diamond Valley course, the decision was made to build a permanent Australian center. Later that day, while everyone else was in the main tent with Lama Zopa Rinpoche, and Lama Yeshe was in his little cabin, a bush-fire broke out in the valley. Somebody had the presence of mind to hit the big dinner gong. Everybody rushed out to see fire rapidly approaching the cabin. "Quick, Lama," they shouted, banging on his door. "Get out now, the fire is coming this way and your cabin is lined in plastic! It will go up like a bomb!" Lama laughed. He told his frantic students the fire was an auspicious sign indicating that the new Queensland center would grow very quickly. The fire stopped one hundred meters from his cabin. Lama Yeshe didn't even come out of his room to watch. Lama Zopa Rinpoche just continued teaching.

With the plan for their own center now gathering



Chenrezig gumpa, 1975

momentum, Lama Yeshe asked his Australian students to sign a petition inviting His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit the country. Meanwhile Lama Yeshe, Anila Ann, Ven. Yeshe Khadro, the Vichtas and a few others got together



WISDOM CULTURE

The method of bringing Dharma to the West is to bring the Dharma itself, not the Tibetan culture. We cannot do everything in a Tibetan manner because it is too time consuming and because many of the cultural and historical elements are not important.

Even 2,500 years ago Buddha Shakyamuni understood life in the twentieth century. That is why he presented a rapid way of developing oneself. My feelings are that if the time changes, then the culture, the mentality, the behavior and even the environment change. Therefore, the presentation and method of teaching must also change. We cannot use a slow method if we are living a fast-paced lifestyle. Buddha Shakyamuni himself said

the *Vinaya* rules must change when the culture changes, because what was useful earlier often becomes a hindrance later.

What we normally understand as the meaning of “culture” is the relative mind or spirit, the collective illusions of a certain land or people. It actually has nothing to do with the wisdom truth of Dharma. If we stretch the meaning we could say that Dharma is the “culture” of our progressively developing wisdom. I was brought up in a great culture that is two thousand years old. Now I am working with Westerners. I think the meeting of East and West is on a gross level, but could be worked progressively towards a finer level of understanding. I think we must work towards a wisdom culture. — *Lama Yeshe*

to discuss potentially suitable sites. Nick Ribush, Ven. Yeshe Khadro and Tom and Kathy Vichta happened to jointly own land at nearby Eudlo. At Lama’s request they drew up maps, including another piece of land Nick and YK part-owned. Lama Yeshe sent these to His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche for his approval. Just before the course ended they received word that the Eudlo land was most auspicious.

On the last day of the course, September 28, 1974, everyone made a ceremonial pilgrimage to the Eudlo land via a walking track leading up from Diamond Valley. The Lamas led an intense puja and named the center, Chenrezig Institute for Wisdom Culture.

That evening, Anila Ann asked Lama Yeshe the purpose of that puja: “There isn’t any place on this planet that is not possessed by sentient beings, consciousness,” he told her. “So in this particular place the consciousness possessing it needs to be

assured we will only do positive things there. We make offerings to ask for its assistance and tell it we have no intent to harm it or its possession of anything there,” he explained.

A photo taken at this 1974 puja can be seen on this issue’s cover.

Chenrezig Institute began as the first official Tibetan Buddhist center in the Western world and today is still one of the largest. The Institute is composed of a resident geshe, a large community of ordained Sangha, residents, volunteers, retreatants and guests. Apart from the formal study programs, Chenrezig Institute is a peaceful, calm and relaxing place to spend a few hours, days or weeks.

www.chenrezig.com.au

Today Australia is home to six centers, four retreat centers, three study groups, three hospices, two monastic communities, one book distribution company, one prison project, one stupa project and one Maitreya Project branch.

ENGLAND:

MANJUSHRI INSTITUTE

By September 1975, Peter Kedge and Harvey Horrocks were well on their way to establishing a center in England. Peter had already proposed the name Manjushri Institute for Wisdom Culture, and Lama Yeshe gave his consent.

After investigating several potential sites, Conishead Priory in Cumbria, a massive and rambling place with nearly one hundred rooms on seventy acres (thirty-five hectares), was decided on. The purchase price agreed with the owner was 70,000 pounds sterling – an extraordinary deal even then.

But where were they to get the kind of money required for such a purchase? Harvey coordinated the fundraising efforts and he, one of Geshe Rabten’s students, Frau Sigrid Kremzov, who came from Zurich, and



Manjushri Institute, 1976

others each donated enough to secure the deposit. A further twenty thousand was raised by offering students three-year leases for small apartments and cottages on the property. In addition, a wealthy racehorse owner whose estate adjoined the Priory leased part of the land. Audrey Cohen, whom Lama Zopa Rinpoche referred to as his “English mother,” along with her husband, Jack, also contributed funds.

The first course Lama Yeshe taught at Manjushri Institute was on Manjushri

yoga. Manjushri represents the perfection of wisdom, and holds above his head a flaming sword used to cut through delusions.

Twenty-nine students took the Manjushri initiation, after which Lama began teaching on Manjushri’s mantra: *Om Ah Ra Pa Tsa Na Dhi*. It is said that experienced practitioners can repeat the Dhi exactly one hundred and eight times in one exhalation. Those students who had spent time at Kopan were familiar with this mantra – it was the one the Mount Everest Center boys shouted as they swept the courtyard every morning: “*Dhidhidhidhidhidhidhidhidhidhi!*”

Mantra was a new subject for Westerners. “The purpose of concentrating on this mantra is to transform ordinary speech into divine, indestructible, truth speech,” Lama Yeshe taught. “Actually, speech has much problem. For some people, not telling a lie for even for one day is impossible. For some reason, by the force of uncontrolled energy from your consciousness, the ridiculous vibration of distrust suddenly comes out – Pfff! Actually, all human beings want some kind of perfection in words, you know. But by the force of karmic energy some people repeatedly tell lies, developing disunity of speech energy. Even if you are tired of doing these things and you want to correct that habit, still somehow, uncontrollably, distrust is coming. Sometimes you hate your speech! ‘Why I talk this one? I gain nothing and still I talk this one!’ You don’t understand yourself.

“Mantra is a sound that has existed in your nervous system since before you were born, and is audible if you listen wisely,” Lama continued. “Mantra is not something you receive all of a sudden, from a lama. Without the natural vibration of sound within your nervous system, you would be deaf. Each kind of energy has its own natural sound. This is

not religious dogma, but something you can discover scientifically. You cannot abandon the natural sound of your nervous system. You might as well try to abandon your head.”

In 1976 Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Peter Kedge visited Geshe Kelsang Gyatso at his small home in Mussoorie, India. Kelsang Gyatso had been in the class ahead of Lama Yeshe at Sera Je Monastery and they were friends there. Lama Yeshe explained to Kelsang Gyatso the scenario of FPMT centers developing around the Western world and invited him to teach at Manjushri Institute. Lama suggested a period of about three years. Geshe Kelsang accepted.

He arrived in November 1977, with a supported visa and a Geshe Agreement, a contract defining the relationship FPMT has with geshe teaching in different centers.

From 1978 to 1983 Manjushri Institute functioned as a thriving hub of FPMT activity.

Lama Yeshe designed the revolutionary Geshe Studies Program which began in 1978. “Geshe” is a scholastic degree administered in large monastic universities that can take two decades or more to complete. Lama Yeshe felt that twenty or thirty years of study in a monastery were not necessarily efficiently spent on study. So, he streamlined the study and produced Geshe Studies aimed at training Western students and especially the recently ordained Western monks and nuns. Peter Kedge remembered Lama Yeshe’s aim with this program was to “give people, both lay and ordained, the depth of insight into the system of mental development in a Western context that would permit them to work if they had to. In Tibet the monastic system received a great deal of patronage from lay people who considered it a privilege to support it even if they couldn’t participate. But there was no such concept in the West.”

Publications for Wisdom Culture also moved to Manjushri Institute in 1978 from India as did most of the community of monks and nuns of FPMT.

In 1978 Geshe Kelsang opened another center in England, his own, and in contravention of the Geshe Agreement. He offered to resign, but some students begged him to stay.

Unfortunately, Manjushri Institute saw many internal problems during this period and FPMT ultimately lost the center in 1984, the year that Lama Yeshe passed away.

Many students attribute Lama Yeshe’s early passing to the disharmony generated at Manjushri Institute. According to Lama Zopa Rinpoche, “Lama’s passing was due to the karma of the students and dependent arising, including what happened at Manjushri Institute.”

Today England is home to two centers with retreat facilities, three study groups and one Maitreya Project branch.



THE UNITED STATES:

BODHICHTTA EDUCATION RESEARCH
AND RETREAT CENTER FOR DEVELOPING HUMAN POTENTIAL

The Lamas visited the United States for the first time in 1974. They arrived in New York, visited Wisconsin and then headed to Nashville, Indiana, to the home of student Louie-Bob Wood.

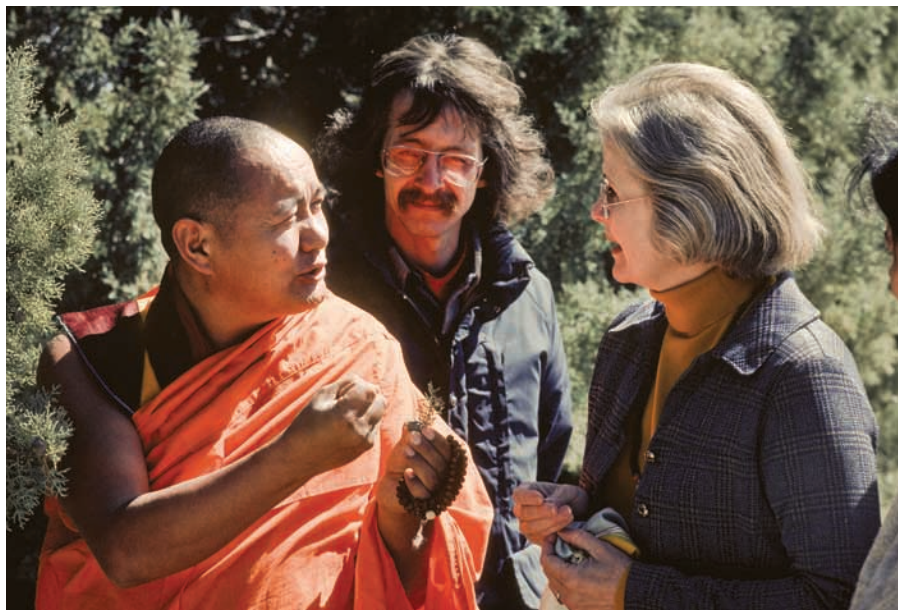
Louie-Bob had attended the fifth Kopan course in 1973 after a series of not-so-subtle cues that she should visit Nepal.

To begin with, one night in 1968, while talking with her husband, Don, in front of their TV, which was turned off, he suddenly pointed to the set saying, “Look!”

“On the blank screen, clear as a bell, was the image of a monk,” Louie-Bob remembers. “First he looked at me then he turned and looked at Don. He had the most intense eyes we had ever seen. His look seemed to tell us that he not only knew precisely what we were thinking at that particular moment, but also everything we had ever thought. We didn’t exactly go around telling everyone about this incident.

“Five years later a series of coincidences led me to the Fifth course at Kopan. I was full of anticipation. Two weeks or so into the course Lama Zopa Rinpoche walked into the tent, having just shaved his head. Suddenly, I realized that his was the face I had seen on the TV. I waited two weeks before telling him about it. He listened intently then said: ‘It was for a reason.’ I gave him a little sterling silver cross I had worn for years.

“At this stage I still hadn’t seen Lama Yeshe, until one evening I walked into his candle-lit room. The impact of it overwhelmed me – he just filled the room. I said: ‘I suppose each person who comes to see you believes fate has brought them here.’ ‘Yes yes,’



Lama Yeshe with Louie-Bob Wood

he said. Then he reached into his shirt and produced my little silver cross. Suddenly, I realized what was going on, that the image of Rinpoche I had seen on the television screen had been sent by Lama Yeshe. ‘You sent him,’ I said.”

As she was preparing to leave Nepal for her journey back to Indiana she requested that the Lamas visit her home should they ever find themselves in the United States. And they did. She remembers: “The morning after the Lamas arrived, people just began walking up our driveway. Around seventy came just to see these Tibetan monks. None of them had been invited, though a lot of people knew the monks were coming here. They just sat down in my yard, many with gifts of food for them. Zopa Rinpoche gave a talk from the porch. The next day Lama Yeshe spoke to them in the living room.”

It was here that Lama Yeshe founded his first Western center, naming it: Bodhicitta Education Research and Retreat Center for Developing Human Potential. The center served for nearly two years as a gathering spot for deep conversation and Dharma study. Because the center never established a relationship with FPMT, it is typically not discussed as the first Western center even though it was the first center established by Lama Yeshe.

VAJRAPANI INSTITUTE

The formation of Vajrapani Institute can be traced back to 1975 when Ven. Wongmo organized the first American course with Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, which took place at Lake Arrowhead, California (located in the southern California mountains).

One evening during the retreat, sitting around with students after dinner, Lama Yeshe described in great detail his enormous vision for a complete Dharma mandala, with gumpa on a hilltop in the center, monasteries surrounding that, and a lay community, schools, gardens, and a bustling township at the base of the hill. His California students had been exploring the idea of starting a Dharma center for some time, and Lama gave their aspiration a name – “Vajrapani Institute for Wisdom Culture” – naming Dick and Meredith Robinson its new directors.

After Lake Arrowhead, the Robinsons and Sharon and Louie Gross, who had all become part of a core committee tasked with organizing the new center, went back to their respective homes in California, Dick and Meredith to Venice (on the ocean close to Los Angeles) and Sharon and Louie to Berkeley in the San Francisco Bay area. In this way Vajrapani North (Berkeley) and South (Venice) were born. These students kept the momentum of activity going strong in both places by organizing short courses and meditations. In 1976, both couples decided to move to Santa Barbara and share a house together, in an attempt to bring Vajrapani to one location. They invited Vens. Pende and Ngawang Chotak to give classes and organized short Dharma courses with Geshe Sopa and Geshe Gyeltsen. John and Elaine Jackson arrived on the scene at this time.

After about six months, however, this Santa Barbara effort fell apart resulting in Dick and Meredith returning to Venice and Sharon and Louie to Berkeley. Together with Ven. Wongmo’s help again, Dick and Meredith then organized the March 1977 Yucca Valley course with the Lamas that took place at the Institute of Mentalphysics retreat center near Joshua Tree, California. They requested Lama Yeshe to teach on Vajrapani, since no one really had yet any idea about what “a Vajrapani” was.

Janet and Ross Brooke, who were both present for this course, owned two parcels of land deep in the redwood forests behind the town of Boulder Creek near Santa Cruz in partnership with their friends, James and Miriam Kent, Tom Post, and Harriet Heywood. One piece was fifty acres, the other thirty acres. They asked their partners how they felt about donating their investment in the thirty-acre piece and the group agreed immediately. It was an extraordinary gesture from young people who were disciples of Baba Mukhtananda – only



Vajrapani Institute is built in the “jungle”

the Brookes ever became Buddhists. The land was offered before the end of the course and the students formed an organization to assume the remainder of the mortgage.

Lama Yeshe’s first visit to the land was in April 1977, just after the completion of the Yucca Valley course. Robbie Solick rented a big American car for Lama, and so with Robbie and Anila Ann in the car, and trailed by a convoy of students, Lama drove to Boulder Creek to inspect the site. “Highway Nine is just like a snake,” remembers Anila Ann, who was instrumental in most of the early development of the organization. “It follows the river through the redwood forest and you just can’t go faster than about thirty miles an hour. Lama swerved and corrected and veered into oncoming traffic every time, and my mutters from the back seat got louder and louder. ‘What’s the matter, Anila? Are you nervous?’ Lama asked. I’d gotten to the point where every button of my North American automobile-scary lifetime of experience was being pushed and my hair was practically standing on end.”

Miraculously, the party arrived in one piece and after checking into a motel braved the equally perilous drive along a barely existing road to the land itself. “Oh dear, this is my interpretation of jungle,” said Lama Yeshe as he walked around.

Soon after, gripped by the pioneering spirit, a group of students hastened to set up camp in this majestic redwood forest. Among those prepared to forego all manner of comforts to labor in the wilds were John and Elaine Jackson. They sold their home, and with their children, aged five and two, set about building a new life on this rugged uncleared land. Anila Ann, the Brookes, John McKay, Chuck Thomas, Tom Waggoner, Jacie Keeley, and five others followed suit. Jacie Keeley remembers, “It was a very exciting time because we were indefatigable. There was nothing that could stop us.”



Lake Arrowhead Course, 1975. Who do you recognize in this picture? Free copy of *Mandala* sent to person who can tell us the names of the most people. Dr. Nick, sorry, you are not allowed to play. We have to give the others a chance!

Vajrapani Institute (VI) is now a contemplative retreat center welcoming personal and group retreatants. Hosting an average of thirty group retreats a year, including the popular annual Kopan West and Family Camp, VI has seven retreat cabins situated on a ridge by Lama Yeshe's cremation site. Additionally, VI established a Fire Puja House and a fire-puja support team available for individuals completing

tantric retreats. VI is currently spurring an alliance between the eleven Bay Area sister centers and projects aimed at increasing their visibility and leadership within the community.

Today the United States is home to ten centers, three centers with retreat facilities, ten study groups, one Buddhist college, one school for children, two publishing initiatives, a sacred art project and one Maitreya Project branch.

NEW ZEALAND:

DORJE CHANG INSTITUTE

As a result of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's first visit to New Zealand in 1974, a group of Dharma students started to meet regularly. After the Lamas' third visit in 1976 the first New Zealand center was named by Lama Yeshe, Dorje Chang Institute.

Lama told everyone he was persuaded to return to New Zealand after student Ecie Hursthouse sent him a photo of herself receiving a kiss on the cheek from a full-grown deer on a lonely country road.

Dorje Chang Institute was established in Auckland in September 1976, with Steve ('Esteeb' as Lama Yeshe called him) Malasky as director.

As the oldest Tibetan Buddhist center in New Zealand, Dorje Chang Institute offers meditation classes, courses in beginning through advanced Buddhist philosophy and practice, pujas, retreats and a variety of other services including prayers for those who are sick, dying or experiencing obstacles, house blessings, and much more.

www.dci.org.nz/program.shtml

Today New Zealand is home to three centers and one hospice.

ITALY:

ISTITUTO LAMA TZONG KHAPA

In the spring of 1975, Italian students Claudio Cipullo, Piero Cerri and Massimo Corona each separately asked Lama Yeshe to teach in Italy during his second world tour; to each of them, he agreed.

Several months later, they began working together to organize the first Italian meditation course with Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. At that time Piero, already a monk, was staying in the entrance hall of a house sublet by a friend of his. This became their office. It was a bare, unfurnished room, with only a carpet on the floor and a telephone. From this office, they produced pamphlets and posters, pasting them up around town to announce the upcoming course.

This first course was held in a Roman Catholic retreat center in Eupilio, from October 13 - 20, 1975 and was attended by about eighty people. On October 19, many of the participants at the course met with the organizers to discuss the possibility of establishing a center in Italy. They requested and received permission from Lama Yeshe to do so. Later that evening Lama suggested they choose between naming the new center "Atisha" or "Lama Tzong Khapa." The latter was agreed on by all.

Lama wanted the new center to be in the country and to be composed of a community of practicing students. It was to serve both as a base for the organization of courses, conferences and other activities that would be useful for making Dharma teachings known to the public and as a center that would inspire the practice of Dharma in Italy. His

idea was that people living in the country far from the busy city, through helping each other, would progress more quickly in the practice of Dharma. In this way, they would become an example and a guide to those interested in the teachings. Lama wanted the place to have space for monks and nuns as well as single lay people and families. He said, "We have to build a mini-society in which these three types of individuals who have always formed the base for the spreading of the Dharma in a country are present. The ordained and the lay people are to help each other in order to be able to create a suitable support for a Buddhist society. Ordained people alone or lay people alone cannot work."

The Corona family enabled the purchase of the large property that still exists as the home of Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa.

Currently ILTK offers a seven-year *Masters Program* (MP), both residential and online, in English and Italian; and a five-year *Basic Program* (BP) online in Italian. Currently the residential MP has approximately fifty students, the online program about one hundred students, and the online BP seventy-five students. The Istituto also offers *Discovering Buddhism* in weekend modules ranging over a two-year period. In addition, other Dharma courses are offered regularly on weekends and during holiday periods. Essential Education hosts a summer and winter camp for children and their parents at the Institute.

Italy is now home to six centers, two retreat centers, one study group, one Liberation Prison Project branch and one distance adoption program for Tibetan refugees.

FRANCE:

INSTITUT VAJRA YOGINI



IVY 1980

In 1979 a small community of twelve students moved into an old abandoned chateau in the southwest of France to start a new center. Institut Vajra Yogini (IVY) would be its name. The first years were difficult, remembers Ven.



IVY today

Elisabeth Drukier, the Institut's first director. "There were no showers or toilets, no heating, and we had to repair roofs, install a waste water system, tidy up the overgrown gardens..."



In 1980, the west wing of the chateau caught fire during the night. Lama Yeshe was encouraged by this, telling Ven. Elisabeth, "Very good, very good ... good purification!" Perhaps he already knew that the money from the insurance would allow them to purchase another chateau ten kilometres (six miles) away, which became Nalanda Monastery.

NALANDA

In March 1981, Adrian Feldman (now known as Ven. Thubten Gyatso), was in Bodhgaya when he received a letter telling him to come to Dharamsala. Most of the FPMT sangha were still living at Manjushri Institute in England, but now that the fire insurance from Vajra Yogini Institute had financed the purchase of another large building near Lavaur, Lama Yeshe was eager to establish a monastery. Lama Yeshe told Ven. Gyatso that he was to serve as its first director.

Ven. Gyatso remembers, "I sat on the floor of a tiny room in the Lamas' new house at Tushita. Lama and Rinpoche sat on carpeted beds, while Lama outlined my new job. He leaned forward and said: 'How are you going to finance it?' That question kicked off one of the most incredible experiences I ever had with Lama and Rinpoche. Suddenly they both fired question after question at me, without giving me any time to reply, just opening my mind to all these different issues about finance, monastic routine and administration. As soon as Lama drew breath, Rinpoche would start. It was obvious they were working on me

This year, IVY celebrated its thirtieth anniversary by hosting the 2009 CPMT meeting and a 100 Million Mani Retreat with Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

Please see page 66 for a report on the CPMT meeting and visit: www.mandalamagazine.org/2009/july for an update on the Mani Retreat under "Worldview"

together. Through their questions, not one of which I could answer, they presented the entire picture to me.

"*Gelongs*¹ have a vow not to touch silver or gold and I was trying to live a very pure life. I wasn't into business at all. My idea was that if you just acted purely, support would come out of the sky. I still believe that actually... I was against charging for courses and all that. Losang Nyima came into the room with a four-inch long silver ingot. Lama picked it up and was throwing it up in the air and catching it while asking me how I was going to finance the place. The message he gave me was that for the greater good, I had to do business."

Today Nalanda is composed of about twenty-five monks and a number of lay men and is fortunate to have Abbot Geshe Jamphel teach the *Basic Program* which will continue until 2012 when the *Masters Program* will also be offered.

www.nalanda-monastery.eu

¹ A *gelong* is a fully ordained monk in the Tibetan tradition. *Gelongs* hold 253 vows as opposed to the thirty-six vows of a novice monk.

DORJE PAMO MONASTERY

During the first Enlightened Experience Celebration (EEC) Bodhgaya, Lama Yeshe asked his Sangha who was ready to move immediately into Nalanda. Some recall that Nalanda had actually been purchased with nuns in mind, but when more monks than nuns put up their hands at the EEC it became a place for monks, not nuns. In mid-1982 the nuns were given two floors in the stables attached to IVY, where a group of thirteen established Dorje Pamo Monastery. Dorje Pamo is the Tibetan term for Vajra Varahi, the wrathful aspect of Vajrayogini. Ven. Sangye Khadro (Kathleen McDonald) was appointed director of the world's first community of Western Tibetan Buddhist nuns. Ven. Thubten Chodron (Cherry Greene) was the spiritual program coordinator.

Ven. Thubten Chodron remembers, "At first the nuns worked for IVY. Besides leading pujas, we worked in the kitchens and cleaned the lay people's toilets. Later we stopped cleaning and cooking and



Two original Dorje Pamo nuns (who are no longer ordained), Gun Cissé and Merry Colony, with Geshe Tengye

began cooking on our own, though we continued to lead pujas and give Dharma talks at IVY. It was not an ideal situation, but it was the plight of Western Sangha in those days (and still is for many). But the nuns had a lot of energy. Besides studying, we established a small business [it was called, Brin d'Herbes (Blade of Grass)]. Eva März taught us how to make lavender and rose-filled cloth hearts, and later we began making hand creams. We started a

newsletter, gave many Dharma talks and led *nyung-nes* and retreats for women.

“Geshe Tengye was incredibly compassionate towards the nuns and helped us a great deal. He was always encouraging us in our studies and giving us advice. When Geshe Jampa Tegchok arrived at Nalanda we started going over there for teachings. It was a precious opportunity to study with a great master.”

“We had one dilapidated car with part of the floor missing that we took to Nalanda daily for class with Geshe Tegchok – at least six of us went in that,” recalls Director of FPMT Education Services, Merry Colony, who was ordained at the time.

Ven. Thubten Chodron continues, “My time at Dorje Pamo was a very happy and productive one that I cherish

very much. I received a wonderful Dharma education and loved living in community. Living with other nuns, rather than in Dharma centers, was a totally different experience that helped me grow in the Dharma. In fact, living at Dorje Pamo planted the seeds for beginning Sravasti Abbey, a monastery in northwest USA, where I now live.”

Unfortunately, people did not support the nuns in the same way they supported the monks. Dorje Pamo closed and most of the nuns were sent away to other centers. By 1986 it was all over.

Many years later a community of Western nuns was established at Chenrezig Institute in Australia.

Today France is home to two centers, one retreat center, one publishing company, one study group, one monastery and one area of retreat land.

THE NETHERLANDS: MAITREYA INSTITUUT

Paula de Wys Koolkin was at Kopan Monastery in 1972 and met fellow Dutchman, Marcel Bertels there during the third November course. She returned to the Netherlands, but he remained in Nepal and ordained. In 1976 she was asked to arrange a two week lam-rim course for Marcel, so that people could hear these teachings in their own language for the first time. That summer course was repeated in the following summers and in 1979, when Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche were planning to visit Amsterdam, other students like Jan Paul and Margot Kool helped to organize the event. Lama Yeshe then suggested to plan one weekend course a month with teachers invited from the surrounding countries and to put out a Dutch language magazine including reliable information about Dharma subjects. Jan Paul, Margot and Paula put a lot of energy into doing both of these things and the formula seemed to work well. After renting premises for these monthly courses for a few years, a group of Dutch students returned from Kopan with a plan to look for premises for a “real center.” In 1981 the Lamas came to open that center, Maitreya Instituut, which was rented in Bruchem then.

The center moved to Maasbommel after that, where Geshe Konchog Lhundrup came to live as Maitreya Instituut’s first resident geshe. It was time to buy a place, and an



Lama Yeshe visits Holland, 1979

old former youth hostel was found in the woods in the east of the country. After buying and fixing up that property, Maitreya Institute Emst moved in and has been there ever since. Geshe Konchog Lhundrup retired in 1989 and was followed by the great scholar Geshe Sonam Gyaltzen, who is living and teaching there now. The center has an extensive teaching program, with Geshe-la’s teachings translated directly from Tibetan into Dutch.

www.maitreya.nl

www.maitreya.nl/adam

Today the Netherlands is home to two centers and one Maitreya Project branch.



SPAIN:

OSEL LING CENTRO DE RETIROS

Spanish students, Paco Hita, Maria Torres and Francois Camus, approached Lama Yeshe in 1981 about starting a retreat center on mainland Spain. Lama Yeshe agreed and Paco and Francois put all of their energy and money into building the center including retreat cabins, a meditation house and a road leading up to it.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama made a surprise visit to the center in 1982 and named the center Osel Ling, "place of clear light." His Holiness also said that he fervently hoped that in times of great darkness it would indeed be a place of clear light and emphasized that it is retreat centers such as this that are so important to the success of Dharma practice.

In February of 1985, not yet a year after Lama Yeshe's passing, Paco and Maria welcomed Osel Hita Torres into the world. Osel, "clear light" in Tibetan, would later be recognized as the reincarnation of Lama Yeshe.

Today, Osel Ling's program has four major components: Retreats: individual houses for retreat;



Osel Ling Retreat Center

Teachings: courses, group retreats and FPMT Education programs; Service: as a countryside premises, there are many daily chores and services offered to those who engaged in retreat or attending teachings; Projects: Osel Ling is carrying out different projects under the advice of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The most recent is a 9 ft bronze Tara statue which is nearly finished.

www.oseling.org

Today Spain is home to five centers, two retreat centers, one publishing company, one Liberation Prison Project branch and two study groups.

GERMANY:

ARYATARA INSTITUT

FPMT spread to Germany in 1980 through the efforts of Sylvia Wetzel who became the first director of Aryatara Institut. For many years the center was located in Lower Bavaria, and is now located in the heart of Munich.

Resident Teacher, Ven. Fedor Stracke teaches the FPMT *Basic Program, Discovering Buddhism*, and Tibetan language courses.

www.aryatara.de

Today Germany is home to two centers and one study group.

OTHER FIRSTS FOR CANADA, EUROPE AND RUSSIA:

GREECE: Gonpo Chakduk Ling, 1991

LATVIA: Ganden Buddhist Meditation Centre, 1993

DENMARK: Tong-nyi Nying-je Ling, 1997

Tong-nyi Nying-je Ling has initiated two projects: one hospice and one publishing company

RUSSIA: Aryadeva Study Group, 1997

Today Russia is home to two study groups.

CANADA: Lama Yeshe Ling, 2001

Today Canada is home to one center and one study group

SWEDEN: Tsog Nyi Ling Study Group, 2001

AUSTRIA:

Panchen Losang Chogyen Center, 2003

CZECH REPUBLIC:

Dompipa Study Group, 2005

FINLAND:

Tara Liberation Study Group, 2007

FRENCH POLYNESIA: Naropa Meditation Center, 2000



Lama Zopa Rinpoche greeted by students in Russia

FPMT MOVES EAST

While many young Westerners were traveling to the East in the early 1970s in response to a growing dissatisfaction with Western materialism, the Vietnam War and nine-to-five living; young Asians were not typically traveling in the same way or with the same purpose.

At that time very few Asian youth had options outside of beginning their work career at fifteen or sixteen years of age. This was quite a different reality from that of young American, European or Australian renegades who enjoyed the cool luxury of dropping out of college – or just delaying their careers to travel in India or Nepal looking for a Guru or answers to life's bigger questions.

As a result, the early centers inspired by Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teachings were established by Western students who had met the Lamas in Nepal and brought their new worldview and sense of purpose back to their home countries.

FPMT development in many Asian countries happened a bit later although Lama Yeshe did visit and teach in Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Initially, travels to these countries occurred during stopovers en route to Australia, New Zealand and the United States. While there, the Lamas met young educated people who couldn't

relate to the traditionally faith-based cultural incorporation of religious practice by the older generation and felt inspired to hear the more complete explanation of life and the mind offered by the Lamas.

Thusly, the initial interest in the Lamas had been ignited by Westerners traveling East. Until fairly recently, even the centers in Nepal and India were run by Westerners. The connection with Asian students, conversely, originated with the Lamas' visits to those respective countries and developed further and more substantially under Lama Zopa Rinpoche's spiritual directorship.

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SINGAPORE:

AMITABHA BUDDHIST CENTER

In 1980, a Singaporean student named Wilson Tan wrote to Lama Yeshe asking for Tara teachings. Lama immediately replied with a long written explanation and later accepted an invitation to visit. During this visit, Lama Yeshe ordained Wilson and suggested that he start a center called Amitabha Buddhist Center (ABC).

Later, Lama Yeshe put his Indonesian student, Dharmawati Brechbuhl, in charge of developing ABC. Lama instructed Dharmawati to always wear make-up and green clothes (which she does still today). Jackie Keeley remembers, “Dharmawati and her husband, Max Brechbuhl, gave Lama a lot of financial support. She did many retreats.”

Lama then sent Ven. Thubten Chodron to Singapore who built up a lot of contacts. Dieter Kratzer followed until finally Ven. Sangye Khadro pulled all of the efforts together and made Singapore her home.

ABC was officially registered as a charity on January 1, 1989.

Today Singapore is home to one center and one Maitreya Project branch



Top: Lama Yeshe with Wilson Tan and others, Singapore, 1981. Bottom: Lama Yeshe and Dharmawati Brechbuhl, Indonesia 1979.

CHINA

THE MAHAYANA BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION (CHAM-TSE-LING)

With Lama Yeshe’s approval, Peter Kedge moved to Hong Kong in 1980. The intention was to develop a business that would assist the financial development of FPMT.

On one of the first times Lama Yeshe was in Hong Kong, Peter and Lama were walking up Nathan Road and Lama turned and said, “This place has no Dharma.”

There was a small group interested in study and practice and after years of holding meditation sessions in different homes, and inviting many lamas, Sangha, and lay teachers to give talks and courses, Cham-Tse-Ling was officially named and

established in Hong Kong in 1989.

The earliest gatherings were a combination of meditation, socializing and having some good Indian food on Monday nights in Pauline Sokrani’s apartment. For some years following, meetings were in various apartments before graduating Cham-Tse-Ling to Nathan Road.

Cham-Tse-Ling currently offers a full program of meditation classes, teachings, animal liberations, pujas and more.

www.fpmtmba.org

Today China is home to one center and one Maitreya Project branch

OTHER FIRSTS IN EASTERN AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

JAPAN: Do Ngak Sung Juk Center, 1991

TAIWAN: Shakyamuni Center, 1994

Today Taiwan is home to two centers, one publishing company, one monastic community and one Maitreya Project branch.

INDONESIA: Potowa Center, 1999

MONGOLIA: Shedrup Ling, 2000

Today Mongolia is home to two centers and one publishing and translation initiative.

MALAYSIA: Jangsem Ling Retreat Centre, 2003

Today Malaysia is home to two centers, one hospice and one study group.



Students in Taiwan greeting Lama Zopa Rinpoche

FPMT MOVES TO CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

MEXICO:



Ven. Thardoe, Geshe Gelek, Ven. Tonden, Ven. Lobsang Dawa, at Teotihuacán pyramids outside Mexico City

FPMT activity took root in Mexico in 1989 with Lama Zopa Rinpoche's first visit to the country. Even though no FPMT group was established at that time, Rinpoche's visit planted seeds and established interest.

Later, with the initiative of Rocio Arreola, who met Lama Zopa Rinpoche at a Kopan course, and a few other students, a study group began in Mexico City. Rocio also built Serlingpa, a retreat center in the beautiful forest of Michoacan.

In 2001 Ven. Lobsang Tonden (then known as Carlo Carranza), formed a study group in Aguascalientes and the following year established Khamlungpa Center in Guadalajara.

Today Mexico is home to three centers, one retreat center, one branch of Liberation Prison Project and five study groups.

BRAZIL:

CENTRO SHIWA LHA

In 1992 His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche both travelled to Brazil. Soon, Buddhist lamas and teachers from other traditions began appearing in Brazil as well. Students who were beginners became devoted Dharma practitioners and non-Buddhists began to respect Buddhism as a philosophy.

By the mid-1990s all four Tibetan Buddhist lineages were present in Brazil and Marly Ferreira found herself Center Director of a new FPMT center in Rio de Janeiro, the Dorje Jig Je Center, which would later become Centro Shiwa Lha.

Today Brazil is home to one center and two study groups.



2009 INTERNATIONAL SANGHA PRAYERS FOR WORLD PEACE

SAKADAWA (JUNE 7) TO WHEEL TURNING DAY (JULY 25)

The monks and nuns of International Mahayana Institute are offering Prayers for World Peace. We invite you to join us:

- Participate in the recitation of the *Sutra of Golden Light*;
- Make dedications for your family members, friends and loved ones;
- Offer support to help provide for the basic needs of the monastic community.

www.JoinPrayersForPeace.org

IMI

INTERNATIONAL MAHAYANA INSTITUTE
Sangha Jewel—A Community of Buddhist Monks and Nuns
399 Webster Street San Francisco CA 94117 www.IMISangha.org



COLOMBIA:

YAMANTAKA BUDDHIST MEDITATION CENTER

In the 1970s a group of American Buddhist practitioners fleeing from the Vietnam War settled in Colombia. Many great lamas began to visit Colombia in the late 1980s.

One Colombian student, a business administrator, Mauricio Roa Mackenzie, found his way to FPMT in 1993 when, while lying deeply depressed in a hospital bed, he read Lama Yeshe's book, *Introduction to Tantra*. He found the address of Land of Medicine Buddha, California, in the front of the book and made contact with a nun who was living there. She advised Mauricio to come to Land of Medicine Buddha where Lama Zopa Rinpoche was about to give teachings. Without a moment's hesitation, Mauricio packed and flew to California.

Mauricio told Lama Zopa Rinpoche about the situation in Colombia: the drug cartels were bombing all of the principal cities and many people had been killed and a Buddhist center was much needed in this violent country. Lama Zopa Rinpoche named the center to be created in Bogota, "Yamantaka Buddhist Meditation Center."

Mauricio returned to Colombia and went to work. He taught the first classes in a gymnasium located in the northern part of the city. There he met his first students, Rosario Arcos, Gustavo Urrego and Olga Lucia Sierra.

In 1994, one year into these efforts, Mauricio received a phone call from Ven. Robina Courtin. Mauricio remembers, "She was speaking so fast I could hardly understand," but finally he got the message. Ven. Robina wanted to visit the new center in Colombia.

Ven. Robina taught on many aspects of Buddhist philosophy, beginning a daily practice and was received with great enthusiasm. She was interviewed by several radio stations and piqued the interest of many. Her kind contribution impacted the center tremendously which could continue in a more organized way after she left.

During its fifteen years of existence, Yamantaka Buddhist Meditation Center has been visited by more than a dozen teachers from around the world.

www.yamantakabogota.org

ARGENTINA:

YOGI SARAHA STUDY GROUP

Originally from Argentina, Ven. Thubten Kundrol brought FPMT to her homeland in 2007. She left what she calls a "country in corruption" in the 1970s after seeing many young people her age getting killed. She spent thirteen years in Japan and served as director of Do Ngak Sung Juk Center. In 1997 she moved to Italy and had a strong desire to start a monastery. Lama Zopa Rinpoche requested that she start a center in her home country first. Ven. Kundrol describes her return to Argentina as filled with obstacles. "It was really like Mara at the door opposing all Dharma activity from flourishing," she remembers.

For instance, the social situation is such that she's not able to wear her robes in public.

Now she has established Yogi Saraha Study Group in her ground-floor apartment in Buenos Aires, where she has a small gompa for meetings. She leads meditation and teaches at least four times a week. In April, she gave Refuge vows to two students. Ven. Kundrol has hopes for the spread of Buddhism in Argentina as "the most difficult places are the best to learn from." She still fully intends to start a monastery in the future, but for now – her shorter term goal is to obtain a computer so she can more effectively provide her students with the Dharma.

Ven. Kundrol was very encouraged by a three-day visit in May from Geshe Gelek of Kadampa Center, North Carolina. A kind sponsor enabled the trip in which Geshe Gelek blessed the center by offering a Tara puja. "I am so grateful to the sponsor and to Geshe-la. We are in the middle of the jungle here with no Dharma flavor and when a teacher visits from a place where Dharma is flourishing it is so refreshing and gives us the strength to continue our practice." ❁



Meditation group in Mendoza, Argentina

PROJECTS AND SERVICES

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS:

FPMT currently supports six international projects which contribute to the organization's core mission of inspiring, educating and serving all those interested in working toward a more wise and compassionate (inner and outer) world.

LKPY: LOVING KINDNESS PEACEFUL YOUTH

Conceived in 1999 by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, LKPY (Loving Kindness Peaceful Youth) believes that peace starts from just one person.

LKPY was instigated by young people for young people and aims to create the space for young people to develop peace: for themselves, their community and the world as a whole.

Through projects and activities which nurture, engage, educate and inspire people from all cultures and faiths worldwide. LKPY uses the tools of essential education, to inspire young people to realize that they are able to make a difference through their thoughts, words and actions.

www.lkpy.org



Original instigators of LKPY: Freeman, Mike, Shyla, Matt, Poh Lin. Three out of the five instigators' parents were students of Lama Yeshe

LAMA YESHE WISDOM ARCHIVE



The Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive (LYWA) contains all the recorded teachings of the late Lama Yeshe, founder of the FPMT, and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, its spiritual director. The Archive maintains a rapidly-growing website that offers these teachings in edited and unedited form, audio, video and much more, all searchable with powerful technology. The LYWA also publishes free books (more than 450,000 in print) and books for sale, DVDs and other materials.

The Archive recently published Lama Zopa Rinpoche's extensive teachings on guru devotion, *The Heart of the Path*, and is preparing for publication of *Big Love*, the authorized biography of Lama Yeshe.

www.lamayeshe.com

INTERNATIONAL MAHAYANA INSTITUTE

In 1974, Lama Yeshe established the International Mahayana Institute in order to develop a community empowered to respond to, and take care of, the needs of its family of monks and nuns through the development of quality education programs, harmonious monastic communities, effective communications, financial support and advocacy.

IMI is distinct in preserving the unique lineage of Lama Tsong Khapa, integrating study and practice as manifested by its teachers, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, and Lama Yeshe, all the while adapting to various cultures and conditions around the world.

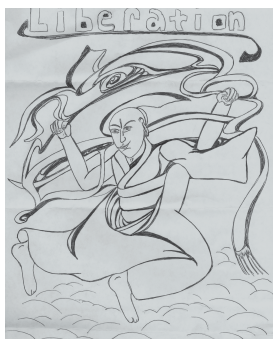
www.imisangha.org



FPMT Sangha at 2009 CPMT meeting



LIBERATION PRISON PROJECT



Pen drawing by LPP student, Mike Payne, Torres Unit, Texas

Founded in 1996 by Ven. Robina Courtin, then editor of *Mandala*, Liberation Prison Project (LPP) offers spiritual advice and teachings, as well as free books and materials, to people in prison interested in exploring, studying and practicing Buddhism.

Active mainly in the US and Australia, LPP also has branches in Spain, Mexico, Mongolia and Italy.

Since 1996, LPP has helped over 20,000 prisoners with their spiritual practice. A team of 200 Buddhist volunteers help guide inmates' studies, mainly through correspondence, but also by teaching in prisons.

Mandala is offered free to hundreds of prisoner students.

www.liberationprisonproject.org

THE MAITREYA PROJECT

The goal of Maitreya Project is to bring the greatest possible benefit to as many as possible, for as long as possible. The name Maitreya comes from the Sanskrit word "maitri," that is "loving-kindness." Maitreya is the name of the future Buddha.

THE 500FT/152M MAITREYA BUDDHA STATUE, THRONE BUILDING AND PARK

As its focus, Maitreya Project plans to build a magnificent 500ft/152m statue of Maitreya Buddha, the future Buddha, in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, India, close to the place where Shakyamuni Buddha passed away.

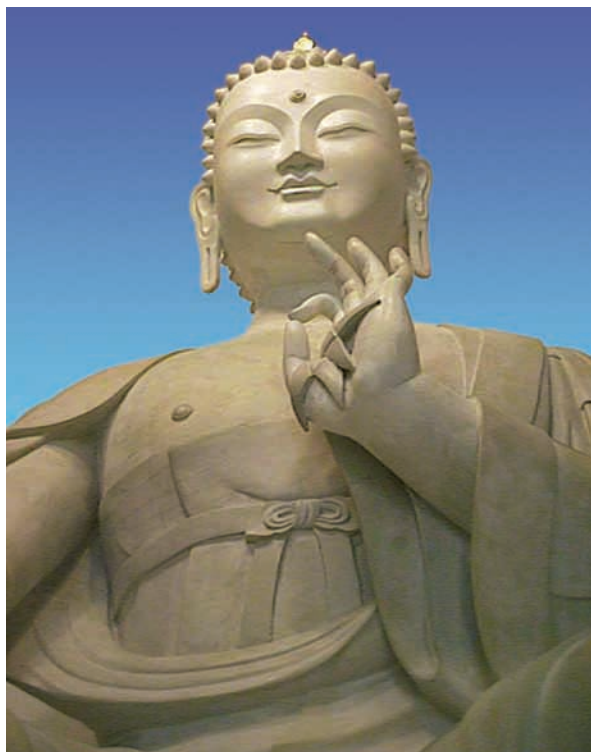
The construction of the statue will provide an enduring monument with the potential to bless and transform the minds and heart of everyone in the world.

The Maitreya Buddha statue and its throne building will provide the public with temples, exhibition halls, a museum, library, audio-visual theater and hospitality services. All will be set in landscaped parks with meditation pavilions, water fountains and tranquil pools. The buildings and grounds of the Project will contain an inspiring collection of sacred art.

The public facility is designed to last at least 1,000 years so it can act as a long-term catalyst and influence for personal, community and international peace as well as provide social, economic and civic benefit in northern India.

MAITREYA PROJECT HEART SHRINE RELIC TOUR

For many years, Lama Zopa Rinpoche has been collecting relics of Shakyamuni Buddha and other Buddhist masters from around the world in order to place them in the Heart Shrine of the Maitreya



Simulation of the Maitreya Buddha statue to be built in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, India

statue when it is completed.

The Maitreya Relic Tour began in March 2001 so that the collection could travel throughout the world to bring the blessings of the relics to people everywhere. Since then, more than a million people have been personally blessed by the relics and felt Maitreya's message of loving-kindness.

Due to the increasing number of invitations to host the relics, some relics will continue touring even after the Maitreya statue is completed in order to benefit more people.

MAITREYA EDUCATION PROJECT aims to benefit the children and communities of northern India by providing free education from Kindergarten to Grade 10, regardless of religion, caste, gender or social status.

MAITREYA HEALTHCARE PROJECT plans to create public health programs of international standard in northern India with the intention of supplementing those medical services already provided by the government.

www.maitreyaproject.org

THE FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPING COMPASSION AND WISDOM (FDCW)



Providing Essential Education resources, training and connections for people of all cultures and traditions who want to create a more peaceful world.

www.essential-education.org

Please stay tuned for the upcoming Oct-Dec 2009 issue of Mandala, which will highlight all of FPMT's education initiatives, for complete information on FDCW and Essential Education. ☸

HEALTH CARE AND HOSPICE SERVICES

FPMT supports health care and hospice initiatives aimed at providing those in need with comfortable, quality and compassionate care.

MAITRI CHARITABLE TRUST, INDIA



In 1979, Adriana Ferranti met the Lamas at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Italy. From that auspicious meeting, Adriana went on to complete a Chenrezig retreat based on a sadhana especially written by Lama Zopa Rinpoche related to future leprosy work and she trained at Schieffelin Leprosy Research Center in South India. In 1983 Nick Ribush asked Adriana to manage Lama Yeshe's Delhi leprosy colony project. Three years later she moved to Bodhgaya and in 1987 established the MAITRI Leprosy Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation Center, now known as the MAITRI Charitable Trust.

Among its many efforts, the MAITRI Charitable Trust works to eradicate leprosy and tuberculosis, and rehabilitate those disabled by leprosy. The trust also provides humanitarian aid to the poorest of the poor in Bihar, educates men and women about HIV/AIDS and birth control, supports poorer women and children by providing pre- and post-natal care, and provides respite care.

www.fpmt.org/maitri

OTHER HEALTH CARE AND HOSPICE SERVICES

INDIA

Shakyamuni Buddha Community Health Care Center
(of Root Institute)

NEPAL

The Maya Daya Medical Clinic

AUSTRALIA

Karuna Hospice Center
Cittamani Hospice Service
Hospice of Mother Tara
Wheel of Life Hospice Service
(of Hayagriva Buddhist Center)

DENMARK

The Center for Conscious Living and Dying
(of Tong-nyi Nying-je Ling)

NEW ZEALAND

Amitabha Hospice Service

MALAYSIA

Kasih Hospice Care

SPAIN

Potala Hospice (of Nagarjuna Center, Madrid)

USA

Tara Home (of Land of Medicine Buddha, CA) ☸

Please refer to FPMT Directory on page 75 for all contact details.



CHARITABLE PROJECTS:

FPMT supports charitable projects spanning in purpose from ambitious initiatives to build 100,000 prayer wheels, stupas, and statues to a sanctuary for animals who would otherwise be killed, to granting education scholarships, to providing nutritious meals to thousands of monks studying at Sera Je Monastery, among many others. These projects are essential to FPMT's objective of building a more compassionate world from the inside out and critical to its mission of transmitting Mahayana Buddhist teachings and values worldwide.



THE SERA JE FOOD FUND:

Offering three meals a day to all of the monks at Sera Je Monastery for the last eighteen years.



AMDO EYE CENTER:

Providing continuous, sustainable and quality eye care to all, particularly the underprivileged, through the construction of a hospital in the Amdo region of Tibet.



THE FPMT PUJA FUND:

Sponsoring continual pujas and practices around the world for the benefit of all FPMT centers and projects, all FPMT students and benefactors, and for all beings.



LAMA TSONGKHAPA TEACHERS FUND:

Preserving the pure unstained teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa by supporting the Ganden Tripa, Abbots, teachers and the best scholars of our time.



PADMASAMBHAVA PROJECT FOR PEACE:

Building 100,000 statues of Padmasambhava around the world for world peace.



PRAYER WHEEL FUND:

Increasing universal compassion and peace by building 100,000 large prayer wheels around the world.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche and FPMT's CEO, Ven. Roger at prayer wheel, LMB, California



STUPA FUND:

Increasing universal compassion and peace by building 100,000 large stupas around the world.

Stupa at Shakyamuni Center, Taiwan



ANIMAL LIBERATION FUND:

Rescuing, blessing and liberating animals that were going to be killed.



WRITING THE PRAJNAPARAMITA & SANGHATA SUTRA:

Writing out the Prajnaparamita and Sanghata Sutras in pure gold as a means to create the merit needed to build a 500 ft (152 meter) Maitreya statue in India.

FPMT ALSO SUPPORTS the personal projects and activities of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche including making offering to: holy objects, lamas and Sangha around the world.

For a complete description of all current priorities and information on how you can help, please visit: www.fpmt.org/projects