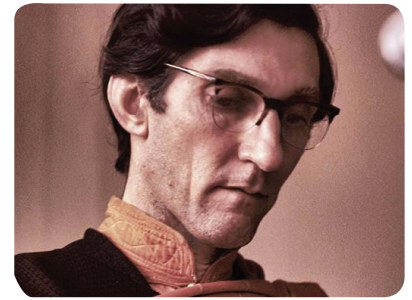




sangharakshita and triratna's beginnings

Triratna has come a long way since the evening of April 6th 1967, when 24 people gathered to form this new Buddhist movement under our founder, Ugyen Sangharakshita. Sangharakshita, who was born Dennis Lingwood in South London 1925, discovered himself to be a Buddhist at the age of 16 when he came across a Buddhist sutra. He went on to live in India for 20 years, where he studied under leading teachers from major Buddhist traditions and was ordained and given the name Sangharakshita ('protected by the spiritual community'). He later returned to the UK where he sought to clarify the essential teachings and practices of Buddhism, translating them for our modern times and has since written and lectured prolifically both in the West and the East.



There are now Triratna Buddhist centres in 65 cities and 27 countries around the world, as well as 15 retreat centres. The movement which includes over 2,000 ordained members is neither monastic nor lay, but simply Buddhist; composed of individuals at varying stages of commitment and understanding of the principles of the Dharma which they adopt in their daily lives.

monika's getting ordained

Monika was invited to join the three month ordination retreat at Akashavana (the women's retreat centre in Spain) and she set off on this journey in early April. We as a community could not be more delighted for her, the first woman from Dhanakosa to be ordained whilst living here. Monika has lived at Dhanakosa for four years and has contributed so much to the Dhanakosa project, but in living and practicing with us she brings depth, friendship and a passion for the Dharma which we all enjoy. Sadhu Monika, we'll miss you these three months and look forward to meeting you (with your new name!) when you return from this experience.

from Monika

When I asked for Ordination, I was clearly looking for something real, even had a glimpse of it, but still had no idea what it was. I think that going through the ordination training in such a vibrant place was the best decision I made in my adult life! Not the easiest place to live at times, but hey! Is there such a place anyway? It's a dynamic and unique way of living, but it's also where the magic happens

- an invisible flow of generosity, kindness, shared humanity, sometimes tears and simply being together, supporting each other to grow.

Now, just as I am getting ready for the ordination retreat, I know a little bit more; I know that conditions matter, that I found what I was looking for within such a supportive context and that this is just the beginning of my spiritual journey....

Monika moved to Dhanakosa in 2013 and is the kitchen manager.

She's especially committed to her meditation practice along with studying and reflecting upon the Dharma.



retreat highlights 2017

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 21 - 28 jul | facing the demons - dharma for troubled times triratna regulars
<i>led by Parami and Khemasuri</i> |
| 4 - 11 aug | dhyana and insight meditation regulars
<i>led by Bodhipaksa</i> |
| 6 - 13 oct | mindfulness and the path to freedom introductory
<i>led by Balajit and Siddhimala</i> |
| 24 nov - 1 dec | utopia for realists - exploring a buddhist vision of our economic future introductory
<i>led by Vaddhaka</i> |

check www.dhanakosa.com for our full 2017 programme of retreats



In this issue: we celebrate both Dhanakosa's 25th year and 50-years of the Triratna Buddhist Community, by telling the 'Story of Dhanakosa' and sharing news from our Triratna day celebrations.

grand triratna day celebrations

The Triratna Buddhist Community turned 50 this year and the Scottish celebrations were held right here at Dhanakosa, Saturday 8th April. A grand marquee was erected creating a shrine space to house over 120 people. The invitation was open to anyone who attended a local Triratna Buddhist centre or group; or had simply been on retreat at Dhanakosa before and was interested to find out more, and people travelled to Dhanakosa from the furthest reaches of Scotland and beyond.

One beautiful element of the day's celebrations involved a world-wide 'metta wave' led by Sinhaacandra. At noon our gathering began an hour of loving kindness meditation and so participated in a wave that was carried over the globe as, in turn, each Triratna day gathering took part at 12pm in their local time zone.

Blessed with sunshine, groups of friends old and new were then able to enjoy their lunch seated around Dhanakosa's grounds, ablaze with yellow daffodils, relaxing together on the lawns over looking the loch. A team of volunteer cooks, who had been preparing food for much of the preceeding week, put on a generous spread which included quite a few kilos of humus, 170 handmade vegan sausage rolls and numerous bowls of nutritious, colourful salad, rounded off with a bounty of cakes and, of course, tea.



We joined together once again in the afternoon in the shrine tent to hear from three speakers on the theme of the day, Dhardo Rinpoche's 3 line exhortation: 'Cherish the Dharma, live united, radiate love'. Vairocana spoke of 40 years of Dharma study, the application of these teachings in his life and his passing them on through leading classes at the Glasgow Buddhist Centre. Smritiratna spoke warmly of his experience living in the community at Dhanakosa; myriad challenges and difficulties, alongside

joys and growth - of individuals and of the Dhanakosa project. Finally, Dassini spoke of living in the world and the importance of responding with kindness, with love, regardless of the situation and to every living being. She finds this especially inspiring a teaching from Dhardo Rinpoche, a revered lama who had to leave his home country of Tibet as a refugee and faced great physical hardships and poverty, but persevered and established a school for Tibetan children in Northern India.



We closed the day with a traditional seven-fold puja and as the mantra resonated many people made offerings of candles or incense at the shrine. The shrine itself was swathed in strings of handmade paper birds, hundreds of them of all shapes and colours, speaking through imagery of our diversity as individuals and the beauty and benefit that diversity brings to the world.

It is said that the Buddha talked often about the importance of the Sangha (or spiritual community) gathering together in large numbers and Triratna day felt profound in this respect. It was deeply moving to have so many practitioners collected together, hearing the Dharma, meditating and turning our minds to what we've been given through Triratna; it's 50 years of history, in the context of 2,500 years of Buddhism, and what the next 50 years might bring for Triratna. How might we increasingly respond to the world, together and with kindness?

We'd like to thank everyone that made this day possible through volunteering their skills; the Dhanakosa community itself, the kitchen team, the shrine team, the vision team (who planned the event and theme) and those who gave talks and lead rituals; sharing of themselves, years of practice and collective wisdom.



fundraising

by *Dhiraka*

I had a little experience of that kind of work so the fundraising was a huge challenge - especially asking for money on retreats. I was much happier writing applications to trust funds from the safety of my desk. An abiding memory of the whole period is of the massive festival weekends - I remember fear, excitement and remarkable generosity. I also planted hundreds of sponsored trees.



In the end we made the target, secured a mortgage, and the newly formed Dhanakosa Trust bought the property. This success was a team effort, a Sangha effort. I got to experience what it means to people to have a 'spiritual home' and was fortunate to also witness, directly and tangibly every week, their gratitude for this. It was a humbling experience that has profoundly shaped my Dharma life ever since. Though I didn't know it at the time, fundraising was exactly the Dharma practice I was so desperately seeking aged 25.

organising on retreats

by *Jamie*



After living and working at Dhanakosa for some years, I began organising on retreats in 2001 and have organised over 150 retreats since then, meaning I've been on retreat with a lot of people. Dhanakosa has been hugely important in my life and some of my most important friendships have come through living and working there. At times I was overwhelmed and confused by people there taking an interest in me and being kind, it was not something I was used to. Dhanakosa is a place where these connections and many other threads of my life interweave like a spider's web, intricate, delicate and beautiful. Organising on retreats allows me to offer practical support and by sharing my own Dharma practice, I can help encourage and support others to live more deeply.

cooking as practice

by *Danabhadri*

I first found my way into the kitchen at Dhanakosa sometime in the late 1990s, back when retreats were self catering and with all the stress and uncertainty that went along with that. One autumn in 2003 on a small retreat I decided to have a bash at cooking. The team was more than capable of managing the retreat without me, so I reasoned that if I fell flat on my back it wasn't going to be a huge crisis. I cooked for the last few days of the retreat and I enjoyed it immensely and was launched as a cook!



It has since been a practice in all sorts of ways and I joke with friends that I cooked my way to ordination (and beyond). But there is truth in the joke, everything for spiritual development is there in the kitchen. When I open the door of the kitchen at Dhanakosa I am in touch with an energy that isn't mine - I don't understand it and I don't try to.

tending the gardens

by *Dharmavasini*

I moved to Dhanakosa in July 2007 with Nayaka, Rosie (who was just two) and Ben, one. We lived with the community for 18 months until the new house (with the grass roof) was completed in January 2009. I am not trained, but I love the work and have learned 'on the job' as it were.



I guess, you could say, I have a feel for it, but it's all been by trial and error. I love that about the gardens – you can shape it, but you cannot control it. The vision is simple; the landscape is stunning and there are always surprises as well as disasters - sheep incursion and deer come to mind. Perhaps, we should become a deer park, as in the Buddha's day! As well as tending the garden, there are living beings to think about and what conditions they need to grow. I have to say, for all its challenges, it is for





telling the story, 25 years of dhanakosa



This year Dhanakosa turned 25 and to date 42 people have lived and worked at Dhanakosa as part of the community. A great many more have given their time and energy as trustees, retreat leaders, organisers, cooks and general volunteers. They have sustained, endured and flourished, providing the conditions for around 1,000 retreats, allowing for some 20,000 people to come on retreat at Dhanakosa; none of whom have been charged more than a booking fee, a real triumph of generosity. This is the story of Dhanakosa as told by some of those who made it possible and a snapshot of that history...



a brief timeline

- 1992** - Purchase of Ledcreich House by Geoffrey (Aranyaka) with rent-free lease to FWBO (Triratna) Glasgow; Dhanakosa holds first retreat in autumn.
- 1998** - Vajra Sheilin and Bothy solitary huts and community shrine room built by Ajitasena.
- 2002** - Dhanakosa Trust forms to take over running of project and completes purchase of Dhanakosa, with support of loan from Triodos Bank.
- 2007** - Team changes from men's to mixed community.
- 2009** - Family house built; Nayaka, Dharmavasini and children move in, after 18 months in the community.
- 2012** - New accessible wing built.
- 2017** - Dhanakosa turns 25 and hosts Scottish celebration of 50 years of Triratna.

the property search by Kulaprabha

The property search was a six month project which lasted three years! I got to be very good at creating financial spreadsheets showing that we stood a good chance of running a successful retreat centre and supporting a team of people to look after the place.



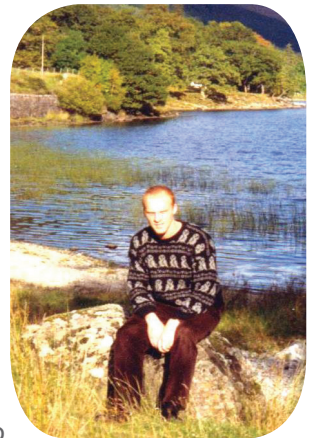
After many viewings and one ideal property that slipped through our fingers, I got a call to go up to Balquhider to view a smallish hotel which was up for sale. It was soon very clear that this place would be ideal for us. On our second visit, Geoffrey (now Aranyaka) and I were sitting up at the back of the field looking down on the property.

"Geoff", I said, "We mustn't lose this one."
"No", he replied.

His offer went in soon afterwards and was accepted. So began Dhanakosa. I've led lots of retreats up there since and love the place dearly.

moving in by Aranyaka

September 1992: shovelling money into a payphone (remember those) in Cambuslang fire station finalising the purchase offer with the solicitor hoping the bells wouldn't go off. I was working as a part-time fireman at the time! When we got the keys Varaghosa spent the first night at Dhanakosa alone – who gets the chance to do that these days?!



The first winter was a bit challenging. I remember driving up in the middle of a bitter night to do battle with a frozen oil pipe, armed only with a hairdryer to help out a guest stranded without heat. The supply chain was a bit tenuous in those days too and I remember leaving a night shift, packing the car full of provisions from 'Roots and Fruits' for the weekend ahead. There are of course many more tales to be told of teething, but maybe they will need to wait until the Golden Anniversary!

