

# Chenrezig Institute



## Annual Review 2020 - 2021

*By practising kindness and wisdom we can change ourselves for the benefit of others*

LIVE WITH  
COMPASSION  
WORK WITH  
COMPASSION  
MEDITATE WITH  
COMPASSION  
WHEN PROBLEMS COME,  
EXPERIENCE THEM WITH  
COMPASSION  
DIE WITH  
COMPASSION  
ENJOY WITH  
COMPASSION

PRACTICING THIS GIVES YOU THE BEST  
HAPPY LIFE - IT FULFILLS  
ALL YOUR WISHES AND ALL  
LIVING BEING'S WISHES  
FOR HAPPINESS



A stylized signature in gold ink, likely belonging to the Buddhist teacher depicted in the image.



## Our Purpose (Mission) and What we Provide

Chenrezig Institute is dedicated to:

- Creating and providing opportunities for people to be introduced to study, practice and experience the FPMT lineage of the Mahayana Tradition.
- Helping people reach their full potential through Buddhist practices according to the FPMT lineage of the Mahayana Tradition.
- Providing a base where International Mahayana Institute monks and nuns can live, study and practice according to the FPMT lineage of the Mahayana Tradition.
- Become a recognised authority on Buddhist Spirituality based on the FPMT lineage of the Mahayana Tradition.



## Our Spiritual Teachers



**His Holiness the Dalai Lama**

**Lama Thubten Yeshe**



**Lama Zopa Rinpoche**



**Geshe Tsultrim**

Geshe Tsultrim spoke at the beginning of the year about the essential qualities of method and wisdom to enable us to deal with difficult situations. Staff members are constantly transitioning and need to be patient with each other and we must not forget we are here to benefit each other.

## Messages from the Board - Chair, Colin Crosbie

After the last AGM, the newly elected Executive Committee was composed of Colin Crosbie - Chairperson, Claire Barker - Secretary, Hilary Tilton - Ordinary member, Ian Howie - Ordinary member and Adam Hassell - Ordinary member.

Soon after taking up our responsibilities, both Claire and Ian stood down for personal or health reasons. This was felt as a great loss at the time as both had much to offer. In the absence of now having no Secretary, Hilary, who had held this role in the previous Interim Executive Committee, took that role on again until we could find a suitable replacement. Fortunately Karyn Ellis, an 'old' student and former CI resident answered our call for this position and has been doing excellent work. For some time we remained without a Treasurer, until Paul Bourke, a former Director here at CI and ex-CEO of Australia Tibet Council accepted our request to take up this position. We were also without a Director for some time until Ruby Karmay came on board, initially as Centre Services Manager and then as Director.

Initially one of our primary focuses was continuing with the vital and good work that the previous Interim Exec. had been doing in the area of CI's finances. This remains an important focus, with ongoing improvements to policies, protocols and procedures of how every cent is tracked in the comings and goings of our incomes and expenditures.

In accordance with FPMT's requirement every individual working, volunteering or residing here at CI had to sign an Ethics and Morality agreement.

Also introduced and implemented, was FPMT's Protection from Abuse policy and two 'Designated Protection Person (DPP)' were nominated. This role automatically being included in the Chairperson's responsibilities, the second being accepted by Ven. Khadro, who is also in training to be our next interpreter, when Ven. Khartson eventually takes his leave.

A great deal of work and time has been put into clarifying and approving position descriptions and employment contracts for every role, creating an organisational chart delineating the various areas of CI's activities, who is responsible for those areas and the correct lines of communication for any issues within those areas.

Of course the aim of all this is to have well defined working manuals for Chenrezig Institute to function in an ever increasingly clear, efficient and harmonious manner long into the future.

Enormous heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the scores of people, too many to mention here; staff or volunteers, long term or short, who give of their time and life to the cause and vision of Chenrezig Institute, our founder Lama Yeshe and our Spiritual Director, Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

## Secretary - Karyn Ellis

I started in the position of secretary for the Chenrezig Inc. Executive committee on July 8, 2021, after a successful vetting process.

I put my hand up to be considered for the position as I was seeing that it had been unfilled officially for some time. Several people had generously acted in the role as either the secretary or note taker - Hilary, Jana, Jane, Serina, Marc, Leonie and Claire - hopefully I've not missed anyone.

It's been 8 months since that first executive meeting, and I feel like I jumped in the deep end. Chenrezig Institute is a dynamic centre and I do not take the enormity of the responsibility lightly. I am grateful to be working with a supportive team of people that all have the same motivation at heart, to do our best to act in accordance with Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa Rinpoche's and our resident teacher, Geshe Phuntsok Tsultrim's wishes, for the benefit of all sentient beings on behalf of the CI Inc. members.

On a practical level there has been no end to reviewing and creating policies and procedures, which are the backbone of the centre, as a guide and protection for all, especially in a centre that has so many moving parts. Updating or creating new position descriptions has been front and centre, with the intention to create as much understanding and security for all working at the centre.

The biggest challenge I find is voting on decisions as a representative of the CI Inc. members and ultimately on behalf of all those who interact with the centre and all those who will in the future. It almost always comes down to voting in favour of what will be for the greater good and the biggest test is listening to my heart and mind. A skill which I will be working on for quite some time to come and I'm very grateful to have this opportunity.



## Treasurer - Paul Bourke

A full Financial Statement and Auditors Report will be provided to members prior to the AGM and discussed at the meeting, so my comments below are general in nature.

The position of Treasurer on the Executive Committee had been vacant for some time until I took on the role in late April 2021. Pamela Higgins was the Finance Manager until August 2021 and Steven Heath took over from her in September.

Pam and then Steven and I have focused on improving the management of all aspects of CI's finances – accurate processing and tracking of income, procedures for better management of spending, better integration of the assorted systems used, and accurate, timely financial reporting to the Executive Committee.

Chenrezig Institute's finances and accounting is complex. As well as the general operational areas of CI, including courses, accommodation, the Big Love cafe, the Wellbeing Centre and so on, there are a number of ongoing "projects". These include the Chenrezig Nuns' Community, the Art Studio, Garden of Enlightenment as well as Special Projects, such as the Lama Yeshe statue and associated works, the Nalanda Masters Garden and other one-off projects.

We use the professional services of NexZen Accounting to manage the fortnightly payroll, monthly PAYG reporting, quarterly GST reporting, superannuation lodgement, annual Workcover reporting and renewal, and the preparation of year end accounts and report to our auditors.

With NexZens's assistance, we are confident that Chenrezig Institute is meeting our obligations to our employees, funding agencies, government regulatory bodies and CI's members.

There is, of course, still a great deal of room for improvement. Much of the work at the Institute is done on an as-needed, year to year, project by project basis. I would like to see the development of a middle and long term vision for CI with detailed budgets and plans for the development of the facilities to provide the teachings, and associated infrastructure, to make them accessible to an even greater number of people.

## Director - Ruby Karmay

I'd like to offer my respects to Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Geshe Phuntsok Tsultrim, Venerable Sangha, Members and Friends and acknowledge that we are all part of the FPMT family and therefore within Rinpoche's holy mandala.

Geshe Tsultrium never ceases to inspire me with his continued enthusiasm to provide the Dharma and improve the centre; he is always friendly and kind beyond measure. When I stepped into the Manager's position in late March, I worked with Leonie Harridine with the Helping Hands team, starting up the cafe again serving meals and providing accommodation. The pandemic has presented its own set of unique circumstances over 2020 and 2021. We have focused on staying open, but keeping people mindful and careful about each other to prevent unnecessary spread of COVID and further lock downs. I'd like to thank all the people who helped during those challenging times; Rosie, Colin and the EC, Kathy, Ven. Ailsa, Ven. Kartson, Ven. Khadro, Leonie, Malgo, Peter S and the existing workers and volunteers, people in reception and the shop, cafe and grounds people.

We have worked hard over the past year to create an organisational chart to take the pressure off the Director position and make room for a stronger management team with their own team leaders and volunteer support. My wish is that each of us have reasonable amounts of work to do and with time for our daily practice; for the centre to be financially viable and sustainable and have a fully coordinated database. This means we'll have a central hub that incorporates Chenrezig's information, people and programs. This will also enable us to track donors and thank them for their contributions and keep our buildings maintained, utilising the School Building fund.

My focus over the last year has been to write position descriptions and to review policy and procedures. We have refined how to develop a legal and fairer system acknowledging the in-kind contribution and the need for a small salary for longer term staff. There is still a way to go with refining human resources, policy and procedures, but I have confidence we can steadily make progress. I value each of the community members at Chenrezig - an extraordinary team of people.

I feel like I have met so many people in such a short time, all contributing in their own way. Every day here is part of the changing mandala of our Gurus and our own aspirations and visions. My wish would be that each of us value our collections of daily merit and connect our service as part of the journey to enlightenment.

Thank you all so much for this opportunity to serve Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Geshe Phuntsok Tsultrim and the FPMT.



## Ethics and Culture Liaison - Ven. Lozang Khadro

The Ethics/Culture Liaison role is a newly created position at Chenrezig Institute. A direct excerpt from it's position description describes it as the following:

*Responsible for guiding the centre towards the fulfilment of the objectives of the FPMT with particular focus on the Ethical Policy, the Protecting from Abuse Policy and three of the five pillars - Social and/or Community Service, Interfaith Activities, and Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom.*

While the COVID circumstances have prevented development of interfaith activities, community service activities have begun to slowly develop. The first implemented was the monthly Dorje Khadro Fire Puja, held for the specific purpose of bringing members together to purify negativities individually and collectively.

There are other plans that will be integrated within the next twelve months, including more dharma orientated support for our diverse CI volunteer team, identify opportunities to offer programs that attract non-primary stakeholders from more conventional areas of the wider community (eg. professional development programs aligned with Buddhist values) and an intentional connection between primary and external stakeholders knowledgeable in environmental issues with the intention to engage with CI's environment as an equal stakeholder of our future.

## Spiritual Program Coordinator - Rosie Muller

### The Spiritual Program in 2021

Despite the ongoing COVID concerns and restrictions, the Spiritual Program was very successful during 2021. We were able to continue the General Teaching program, In-depth program, Discovering Buddhism and held the annual Nyung Na retreat as well as the Mani retreat, Vajrasattva retreat and Lamrim retreat. Visiting teachers in 2021 included Ven. Robina Courtin (in May and August via Zoom from Santa Fe), Ven. Tsultrim, TY Alexander and Ben Isbel.

We sadly said goodbye to our resident teacher Ven. Chokyi in November, as she followed Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's advice to teach at the FPMT Western Australian centres. Ven Chokyi's teaching commitments at CI in the six months after her departure will be filled through drawing

on the skills of other CI registered teachers including Ven. Tony Beaumont, Ven. Kartson and Ven. Pema. In 2022 the Spiritual Program committee will continue to plan how the teaching needs are met for the Discovering Buddhism program.

In October 2021 Ven. Lozang Khadro returned to CI from India in the capacity of trainee interpreter. Ven. Khadro will take over the role of Ven. Kartson as interpreter when the time comes for him to leave Chenrezig Institute sometime in 2022. Ven. Kartson will be greatly missed after more than 16 years in his role as interpreter at CI. We are very fortunate that Ven. Khadro will be filling this critical role into the future.

## **Spiritual Program team**

2021 saw considerable change in the Spiritual Program team, with Shannon Murphy finishing in the Spiritual Program Coordinator (SPC) role at the end of May and Kathy Vichta taking on the acting SPC role while recruitment for an SPC occurred. We sincerely thank Shannon and Kathy for their generosity, excellent work and great contribution to the spiritual program and the centre. Rosie Muller commenced as SPC in mid August with Kathy remaining to work alongside Rosie for an extended handover period.

We were fortunate to have several people providing help to the SPC in a voluntary capacity, and wish to thank Madhu, Ailee, Andrea, Annie, Wendy, Michele and Karyn.

In 2022 Michele Jackson and Karyn Ellis are currently providing a joint role as SPC assistants, helping Rosie over four days/week.

## **Discovering Buddhism**

In April 2021 Ven. Chokyi began teaching a new cycle of Discovering Buddhism (a 14 module course) commencing with Module 1: Mind and Its Potential. This was followed by modules on How to Meditate, Presenting the Path and the Spiritual Teacher (with Ven. Tony also).

A committed group of students (the 'Dharma Jewels') honoured Ven. Chokyi with a farewell lunch held in the gompa during her final weekend teaching on The Spiritual Teacher.

In February 2022, the DB program continued with the Death and Rebirth module taught by Ven. Kartson.



Ven. Chokyi and DB students, 2021

## In Depth Program - Kathy Vichta



Geshe Tsultrim and Ven. Kartson, 2021

In 2021 we continued the extensive teachings on *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (begun with the start of COVID in 2019) and completed this at the end of June 2021 with presents, speeches and celebrations. We had developed a very successful online program and although more people have returned to the gompa, at least as many remain online.

On 3 August we continued with two modules of Mind and Cognition. Over 40 people registered, many of them online. The material was complex and only a small number chose to complete the tests. We have no financial information available for module 1 (the website was not ready) but for module 2 in spite of many reduced prices, \$4,213.00 was paid in course fees (probably more through checkfront).

12 October - part 1 of Buddhist Tenets, Great Exposition and Sutra Schools, again offered in person and online very successfully. The subject was in three parts with the first two offered in 2021 and the second planned for March 2022. 20 people registered in person and 26 registered online. A total of \$3,856 was paid.

16 November – Part 2... 18 people registered in person and 19 registered online ( a smaller number perhaps reflecting the difficult subject matter) and \$3,270 was paid.

The schedule is three days per week - meditation and teaching in the morning, discussion and tutorial in the afternoon. All teachings, tutorials and discussions (and some meditations) are Zoomed and recorded to YouTube. All audio and data is uploaded to a Dropbox for student access. Teachings are transcribed promptly (thanks to Sonja Webb's organisation) and various students lead meditations and help with discussions.

Students love Geshela's teachings and Ven. Kartson's support. Discussions and meditations are less well attended but an integral part of the course. Fees remain at \$240 recommended for a 4-week module with a minimum payment of \$60. Sangha remain free of charge.

We are planning for the rest of 2022 with *Wheel of Sharp Weapons* in April/May, the *Heart Sutra* in June/July, and hopefully the 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the *Ornament for Clear Realisation* (and a short teaching on the *Grounds and Paths* of Sutra) in August onwards.

## Kind Kids Club

In 2021 the Kind Kids Club was offered on the first Saturday each month, with a wonderful group of volunteers coordinated by Kerri Hewitt. A big thank you is extended to Sara Lucia, Greg and Julie who are stepping back from the program. In 2022 the KKC will continue to offer a monthly program based on the 16 Guidelines for primary school aged children.

## The Multimedia Team - Malgo Dobrowolska

In March 2020, when COVID changed the world, Chenrezig Institute immediately adapted to the new situation by providing teachings and practices online. Since then the online programme is flourishing, the Multimedia Team is growing and Audio/Video equipment is becoming more and more advanced. It is a big milestone for Chenrezig Institute.

We started out with one small webcam and an old laptop. Currently, we are able to livestream from multiple cameras and microphones. In the beginning of 2021 Chenrezig Institute bought new speakers, soundboard and due to COVID safety requirements, private headset microphones for our main teachers.

Teachings and practices are available online through Zoom and on Chenrezig Institute YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/c/ChenrezigInstituteAustralia>

The Multimedia Team has 11 members (volunteers) and is coordinated by Małgorzata Dobrowolska. Each person in the team has special skills and tasks. It wouldn't be possible to run the online programme without this group of dedicated people.





Malgo, Geshe Tsultrim, Sangha and lay students, during the consecration of the Nalanda Masters Garden, 2021

**YouTube channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/c/ChenrezigInstituteAustralia>

The Chenrezig Institute YouTube channel was started in April 2020. Since then, the channel has grown steadily. Currently it has 1,653 subscribers. The largest increase in new subscriptions occurred during *Big Heart Sutrathon* and the ongoing *Healing the World with Thangtong Gyalpo's Prayer* (the 24 hour prayerathon). Due to those two worldwide events Chenrezig Institute YouTube channel established an international audience.

## **Prayerathon - Malgo Dobrowolska**

On August 1, 2021, we marked the one-year anniversary of “Healing the World with Thangtong Gyalpo’s Prayer”.

The 24 hour Prayerathon was commenced on the advice of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. About 100 IMI Sangha have been involved in organising and leading the recitations each weekend over the last year and half. The Chenrezig Institute Multimedia Team hosts the online event, providing the YouTube channel and technical support.

“It is a great privilege to host this worldwide event each week. When we started in August 2020 we didn’t know how long it would take, we thought two or maybe three months maximum.

During one and half years the prayerathon has become an integral part of our weekend. The most challenging part is the night shift and we couldn't do it without Nathan, our night hero." - says Małgorzata Dobrowolska, Multimedia Coordinator

## Film nights - Malgo Dobrowolska

Over the last year Chenrezig Institute had a privilege to show newly released Buddhist films such as *Mission: Joy* (with two screenings) and *Return to Gandhi Road*. The screenings were accompanied by Q&A sessions with filmmakers, panel discussions or conversations with the audience over the cake and chai.

Each of the screenings had a full gompa and received very positive feedback from the audience. Since implementation of the new COVID policy the screenings were also made available online to allow everyone to watch the film.

The main goal of showing Buddhist films is not only to spread knowledge about Buddhist culture, practices, biographies of masters, sacred places, history and current issues, but also by providing interesting and engaging events to build community and attract new students.

"It is nice to see so many new faces in the gompa, hear people's laughter, make connections with filmmakers and discuss with the audience after the screening." - says Małgorzata Dobrowolska, Movie Nights Programmer

Each of the screenings was organised as a fundraiser event to support the Chenrezig Institute to enable countless others to benefit from the Dharma. *Mission: JOY* raised approximately \$2600 from two screenings (170 viewers) and *Gandhi Road* raised around \$1800 from two screenings.

## Facebook - Annie McGhee

In early September 2021, Andrea Dudley stepped down from her role as the Facebook manager.

Andrea was extremely dedicated and consistent, and contributed countless hours over the six years she volunteered in this role. During this time she was instrumental in taking Chenrezig Institute's Facebook followers from 10,000 to nearly 30,000 (49% overseas and 51% in Australia) and the numbers are still growing daily.

“Andrea left big shoes to fill”, says Annie McGhee, who took on this role in late September 2021.

Annie reports that our Facebook audience is slowly growing still beyond 30,000 followers and now reaches and engages with many people globally beyond the FMPT circle, offering them an opportunity to find out about the Dharma.

A post that reaches the biggest audience, is usually one of a beautiful image and concise text. Monitoring our page daily is essential to ensure diversity of the posts in order to reach a larger audience.

## **Newsletter - Rosie Muller and Annie McGhee**

In 2021 we moved from producing a fortnightly newsletter to a monthly one. This decision was made on the basis of the new CI website becoming the main source of information about upcoming courses and events, taking some pressure off the need for a regular mail out about the upcoming program. Producing the newsletter is also a very time consuming task for the SPC and support volunteer (Annie McGhee), so there is improved efficiency in moving to a monthly format.

The newsletter has a subscription base of 3780 people, and web informatics indicate that the open rate is around 30%. This indicates that around 1000 people are opening the newsletter each month.

## **Website Report - Kathy Vichta**

My close involvement with the Chenrezig Website started in June 2021. Previously I had been asked to provide some program materials but when Shannon left, the whole program became my responsibility and I was asked (by Serina) to edit other pages and to check the accuracy of what had been written there. When Serina left, I became website manager to work towards the launch, planned for early August (finally 23 August 2021). A lot of work had been done before I came on board, much of it excellent, and huge thanks go to Serina, Andrea and many others.

It's been a huge learning curve for me, Kimberley has led some zoom workshops and helped greatly. She agreed to support us for 3 months after launch but continues to answer questions even now. The website is quite complicated, we ask a lot of it especially with new covid regulations, but it is clear that processes are now (usually) much more streamlined and we can



obtain much more information than we used to. People are now able to register for all events through the website and we can track attendees and payments. It is a valuable automatic source of information.

Fortunately one of our students, Ross Bennetts, who is very experienced with websites and technology, has agreed to help. He has been a great resource on many occasions.

There were very few records passed over to me. Recently I wanted to check what expenses were likely to come up and discovered that many plugins etc had been covered by Kimberley during the past year and would now become our responsibility. With difficulty Ross and I worked out what was necessary and I arranged for payment details to be updated and new subscriptions bought. Ruby now has a list of these for future use. We may find some smaller payments arise but at present these costs come to US\$ 1201.33 p.a., most of which is due Jan/Feb 2023. Ross works in return for accommodation and food credits at present.

Most reports say that people love the website, it is attractive and, for the most part, works very well. Some pages still need finalising, eg the Online Learning Centre and the Membership page, and there are proposals for:

- a) a new page for community input, and another for centre policies and AGM reports,
- b) an upgrade of the links to other FPMT groups etc.
- c) Further investigation of how to make things more mobile-friendly
- d) general updates and additions eg a photo gallery, more information about our holy objects eg Prayer Wheel, Lama's Statue etc

I apologise for any glitches because of my ignorance but these are getting fewer.

## **The Library - Hilary Tilton**

This last year has been demanding but – as always - the Library Veggies have responded with enthusiasm. We have worked on things we didn't have time to do before – like clearing out our overloaded shelves, holding a successful Book Sale and giving a great deal more time to the

Archives area where Ven. Pende has been doing invaluable work scanning and editing our photographic collection.

Meanwhile we continue to add to our great collection with Buddhist classics, psychology, environmental books and much more. We have acquired newly published translations of important Tibetan Buddhist texts and our book donors have been most generous. Our collection continues to expand and our shelves are beginning to look overcrowded again.

The lockdowns we have all experienced have rekindled an interest in reading and we are slowly signing up more members as visitors realise what an extraordinary resource our precious Library is.

Just drop in and see for yourselves.

## **Volunteering - Leonie Harridine - Volunteer coordinator and recruitment**

During the past 15 months that I have been in the role of Volunteer Coordinator (VC), many challenges have arisen but I have also experienced immense gratitude and admiration for our precious Community.

The VC role includes responding to on-line applications for a position as either a Helping Hand Volunteer (live-in) or a Day Volunteer, covering all areas of the Centre. Arranging interviews over the phone or in-person, checking references and meeting on-site for inductions is also part of the process in welcoming all the new volunteers to our Centre. Without a doubt, engaging a volunteer workforce to help run the commercial business of the Big Love Cafe and accommodation has been one of the biggest challenges.

With no international travellers and ongoing border restrictions, supporting these areas has been difficult at times but we now seem to be coming out of this phase and starting to receive more applications for volunteering, both live-in and day volunteers. I have processed 211 applications during this period, with 72 new Day Volunteers now helping in various areas across the Centre and 27 Helping Hands have supported the Customer Services for various lengths of periods, some for a few weeks, some for over 1 year.

Seeing so many volunteers upskill and commit to the Centre, ensuring that the services can be provided and visitors can come to Chenrezig Institute and find the space they are often seeking, maybe even meeting the dharma, has been so rewarding and this continues to be my motivation to recruit a karma yoga workforce that will be sustainable for the future.

My role will now concentrate on recruitment and I want to thank all the volunteers for their ongoing commitment and motivation to Chenrezig Institute, plus all the management team, especially Ruby, for their ongoing support of me in this role.

## **Big Love Cafe - Christina Orellana**

We rejoice as Lama Yeshe's Big Love Cafe is still alive and thriving, helping to support and build the Chenrezig Institute community, by providing a focal point where people get together, enjoy a lovingly prepared meal by our volunteers, socialise and share Dharma discussions on Gompa teachings.

2021 began with the Big Love Cafe opening only for chai, coffee and cake. However, with constant enquiries from visitors about our famous vegetarian lunches, special efforts were made by our team and April saw the regular reopening of the kitchen 3 days a week. As news spread, lunch numbers steadily increased from 40 lunches per day to 90.

This was made possible by the coming together of a beautiful dynamic team of people who worked hard together to coordinate, organise, cook, clean and serve healthy and delicious meals.

In total, we had 150 cooking days and were able to serve close to 9000 meals as well as providing a work environment welcoming volunteers to experience the dharma kitchen teachings, as well as creating a supportive and caring environment.

The integration of a motivation at the beginning of each cooking day has helped to bring the cooking team together as well as creating awareness. By the end of the year, we welcomed Sangha back into the fold with their offering to help with preparing meals. The building of this close connection between our Sangha and volunteers is treasured and we all look forward to continuing to support the community through the big love found in the Big Love Cafe.

## Bookshop and Reception - Claire Barker

Our Dharma Shop continues to be a popular place to be at Chenrezig Institute. Visitors often spend up to half an hour in our little shop browsing all the giftware, dharma items and books.

We often receive secondhand books as donations, with titles that are otherwise difficult to find and are just what someone is looking for. That serendipitous karma is always a joy to see ripen.

This year we have a shop playlist that is available on Spotify. It is four hours of mantras, Tibetan music, local artist instrumental music and even one of Tenzin Osel Hita's favourite jams.

It has been a challenge ordering everything that the shop needs though. The pandemic obviously is still interrupting the supply chain. An area of focus for the coming year will be ensuring the books for sale in the shop are everything that a Chenrezig Institute dharma student needs, as well as still providing books that inspire the secular visitor to bring mindfulness and joy into their lives.

A beautifully packaged range of Ayurvedic teas are a new addition to the shop and they are proving very popular. Our extensive range of Tibetan, Bhutanese, Japanese and Indian incense continue to be the most purchased items, closely followed by Prayer Flags.

During the colder months warm woolly shawls made in India and Nepal sell like hotcakes, as do the gompa socks!

Items for beautifying altars such as vases and crystal lotuses are also a staple.

This year Ven. Wangmo started supplying us with beautifully quilled cards and artwork as a donation. They are so loved and all monies are a direct donation to the centre. Another initiative of Ven. Wangmo was to make crystal mala's for children and have them blessed by Geshe-La. People love the opportunity to purchase such a precious item.

Ven. Thubten's handmade books and book bags are also a huge seller. This is cause for much rejoicing because all the proceeds go towards Ven. Thubten writing out sutras in gold creating much merit for all.

Keeping up with ever changing COVID regulations has been quite a challenge, but Chenrezig Institute remains contactable 7 days a week thanks to online reception work by volunteers home.

The CI Shop is a treasure trove of Dharma delights and we thank the community for it's continuing support.

## Wellbeing Centre Manager - Jana Zehr

The Wellbeing Centre (WBC) hall is hired out from Friday to Sunday at a cost of \$250 per day. The price has been increased from \$150 to \$200 from April 2021 to December 2021.

Currently, two weekends a month are set aside for external groups requiring accommodation at Chenrezig Inc (CI). The new policy at CI enables conduct of the internal events on the premises as well.

Two weekends a month are set aside for bookings arranged by the Spiritual Program Coordinator (SPC). The other two weekends are available for day bookings without accommodation being available for external groups (e.g. Yoga and Mindfulness events).

Due to COVID-19, most of the Lotus House rooms are now single rooms. Only two rooms have remained as twin share. This, along with the reduced number of beds in dormitories, has led to an overall reduction in beds available to visitors, resulting in a number of booking cancellations.

The recent development of this SPC program has allowed more Dharma weekend courses at CI, however the WBC booking system is predominantly used for Yoga or Mindfulness events. In 2021, 62 days were booked by customers hiring the facility at the day rate, generating an income of \$12,900. Further income is generated through meal and accommodation bookings.

### Single-day events:

Single day Yoga events once a month run by Annie McGhee, who generously offers 60% of the income to Chenrezig.

### Multi-day events:

These are held by 2 long term customers – Being Yoga (Michael Daly and Vanessa Rudge) and Mindfulness Yoga (Erin Ashley). These multi-day events that don't include accommodation and meals still generate income from participants who book themselves in for the duration of the event.

I'd like to thank CI staff for their help and willingness to get things done at a short notice. I would recommend that someone onsite at CI takes on the role of bookings coordinator, assisting with making sure that all hall equipment is available, assess when extra learning needs to be done, monitor the space before and after use, liaise with hirers and develop a relationship with them.

## **Property Services Manager - Adam Hassell**

In October 2021 the position of Property Services Manager was created to ease some of the workload that would otherwise be done by the already busy position of Centre Director. The Property Services Managers role is to facilitate and coordinate the daily tasks required to help the centre function and any maintenance and upkeep required on the built environment of Chenrezig. This includes all buildings, roads, carparks, gardens and paths located on the Chenrezig Institutes property. The Property Services Manager is also responsible for ensuring all works completed at Chenrezig are completed in accordance with workplace health and safety legislation.

It has been a productive year in regards to maintenance and upgrading sections of the property. Thanks to generous donations from students, a lovely new, smooth concrete driveway welcomes all up the hill now.

Under the guidance of Mark Taleon, Chenrezig institute had solar power installed on the Gompa roof. This supplies electricity to the Gompa, including the library and offices, the Nuns community, Geshe-la's house, the teachers house, Sangha house and retreat huts. Since its instalment this has saved Chenrezig Institute \$13,600 by reducing our electricity consumption from the grid by 45.1MWh.

A new septic system has been installed to the Dam Huts ablutions block as well as repairs and upgrade to that of the retreat huts.

We also resumed work on a revised version of the sewage system upgrade. This will ensure we remain compliant after the 2024 deadline set by government legislation.

## **Accommodation - Housekeeping, Georgina Ryan, Team Leader**

The Rainforest dormitory has had a revamp. The walls have been sanded and repainted, bunk beds replaced with four single beds, the additions of modern bedside lamps, new rugs, new modern doona covers and towels. There is now a comfortable outside guest area with overhead lighting and couches

Additionally the Retreat hut toilets were sanded and repainted internally with anti mould paint.

The Wellbeing Centre's two side rooms are now set up for volunteer accommodation and used for consultations and a hot water zipper is installed for kitchenette

Renovations in room 7 and 8 and freshly painted walls and ceilings in the Lotus block were completed and rotted wood has been removed from room 7 roof.

The Koala dorm has had two bunk beds replaced with single beds and a fitted desk and couch.

There is now a new coin operated dryer placed for guests and residents to use.

Old mop heads/buckets, toilet brushes and cleaning products for the public toilets have been replaced through Dunkers cleaning supplies Nambour. A new cart was purchased for carrying heavy linen and supplies up the hill.

We rejoice in the support from day volunteers and retreatants for helping clean toilets and process washing while residential volunteer numbers were low; providing clean rooms for retreats; Nyung na, Mani, Vajrasattva, Lamrim and yoga retreats.

## Membership Report February 2022

This report incorporates 1000 Arms membership and CI Inc. membership.

### CI Inc. membership

This allows you to attend CI Inc. meetings.

Members can pay \$2 or \$20 annually. CI Inc. Friends pay \$2 and cannot vote at the meetings.

Full members pay \$20.

As of 1 July 2021, membership is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July each year. Pro rata membership is available in 3-month increments:

\$20 July - September

\$15 October – December

\$10 January – March

\$5 April – June.

Membership forms are available at the shop or requested and emailed.

New members are to be endorsed by 2 current members. On completion of the form and with 2 signatories, the forms are to be handed in to the CI Inc Secretary who presents them at the next Executive Committee (E.C.) meeting for approval.

Once approved, membership fee is to be paid.

Historical note: It would seem that prior to 1 July 2018, there was only 1 class of membership, and the annual fee was \$2. From 1 July 2018, the 2 levels of membership were available and the annual membership fees were set at \$2 and \$20. This is my assumption from looking at past invoices of long-term members.

As of 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022, there are **50** members of CI Inc and **2** CI Inc Friends.  
In comparison, on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020, immediately before the world changed, there were 33 CI Inc members and 4 CI Inc Friends.

## Membership 1000 Arms

This membership is often taken out by regular attendees of courses.  
When Chenrezig Institute reopened in 2020, after the closure in March 2020, membership benefits were revised. The major change was that members were no longer offered a complimentary weekend course and night's accommodation.

Membership benefits currently are:

- Library Membership
- \$10 Big Love Café Voucher
- 10% off all Shop purchases
- Prayers for the long life and health of member and member's family
- Book from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive (LYWA)

Options are for single, family, or concessional memberships.

Single - \$185

Family - \$245

Concessional - \$120

Most people choose to pay an annual membership fee. Currently 15 people pay an automatic Paypal quarterly amount.



There has been some discussion to reassess the membership in the next financial year, looking at ways to support our Dharma education program. We are immensely grateful to Ven. Ailsa for her contribution towards fulfilling this aim.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

	<b>FEBRUARY 2022</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 2020</b>
<b>SINGLE</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>FAMILY</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>CONCESSIONAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>112</b>



## Project - Lama Yeshe House



## Project - Nalanda Masters - Colin Crosbie



Thanks to the arrival of COVID, this next phase of the Nalanda Masters Garden has been a prolonged exercise in patience. The statues were nearly ready to be shipped back in October or November when Vietnam was hit badly by COVID and went into complete lockdown. So the sculptor wasn't able to conduct any business outside of his home, workplace.

The silver lining to that was that we had more time to prepare more of the infrastructure required for their placement. As well as do more crowd-funding towards the shipping and freight costs of bringing them here. Then we rather fortuitously (given the current chaos happening with COVID and global shipping operations) secured a shipping container space on a ship leaving Danang on 29<sup>th</sup> December. This was missed due to a new requirement of the Vietnamese government that a sales invoice was necessary to calculate a 'stone export tax'. As with every project here at Chenrezig, it has taken 'many hands to make (not so) light work.'

Concreting footings, laying, rendering and painting of blockwork, tiling, welding reinforcement to metal framework, a seating bench around the Bodhi tree..... In this consignment of statues there are nine more Nalanda Masters – five will be placed to the left of Lama Tsong Khapa, along with a 1.8 metre Kadampa stupa next to them, and two will go on either side of the steps going up to the large prayer wheel.

A Padmasambhava statue will go over in the Enlightenment Gardens and a cave for Milarepa will be built just above the eating area adjacent to Big Love Cafe. The Lama Yeshe statue will go in the purpose built house for him adjoining the Stupa below Big Love Cafe. The placement of two more statues, Maitreya and Gotami is yet to be decided. There will also be two gateways built, a

large one up on the lawn beside the large prayer wheel house and a smaller one at the foot of the steps leading up from Big Love Cafe towards the small prayer wheel and the garden itself.

So, like all of us here at Chenrezig, the statues have been sitting patiently in the sculptors yard waiting, waiting, waiting.....but hallelujah, rejoice.....now the wait is over! A space on a ship has been booked, scheduled to leave Danang on 11<sup>th</sup> March. This should have them arriving at the Port of Brisbane very early April.

On behalf of Geshe-la, a huge thank-you and appreciation to all who have helped bring this beautiful vision of his a step closer to completion. He keeps coming up with more ideas, so stay tuned!

## **Financial Report - Finance/Management Team**

### **Income**

The 2020/2021 financial year of Chenrezig has remained in a positive position with a surplus of \$5,834. There has been a decrease of income of \$122,708 in the areas of accommodation, cafe sales, and general Dharma educational program due to the COVID 19 second wave, when the centre was in lock down for significant periods of time.

A cash flow boost of \$39,956 and Job Keeper payment of \$174,000 have been a contributor to maintaining a positive position.

### **Expenses**

There has been a decrease in electricity charges of \$26,684 in 2020 to \$8588 in 2021 due to in previous years we have been charging nuns for electricity charges separately, now it is included in their facility fee. A new solar system has been installed in the gompa and up on the hill area.

Wages significantly decreased from \$406,280 in 2020 to \$251,820 in 2021 due to restructuring and COVID 19.

Repairs and maintenance expenditure during this period have included water and sewerage improvements in 20/21 to meet compliance and health and safety standards. We have

increased the capacity for septic systems at the retreat huts. The fire extinguishers are now maintained and checked every 6 months.

Test and Tag has been implemented for all electrical appliances and infrastructure including outside lighting. The Rainforest dorm has new blinds and can be used for accommodation at the WBC.

All the assets in Chenrezig were valued by a certified valuation agent in November 2020. The depreciation has been charged for the first time in FY 2021, as per the rates advised by the Valuation agency.

### **Sponsorship and Fundraising**

Offerings were made on a regular basis to:

- Long Life pujas for HHDL and KLZR.
- Offerings to teachers in gratitude for leading events.
- Monthly offerings at pujas to purchase offerings and at special events.
- Offerings to the Sangha on special days.

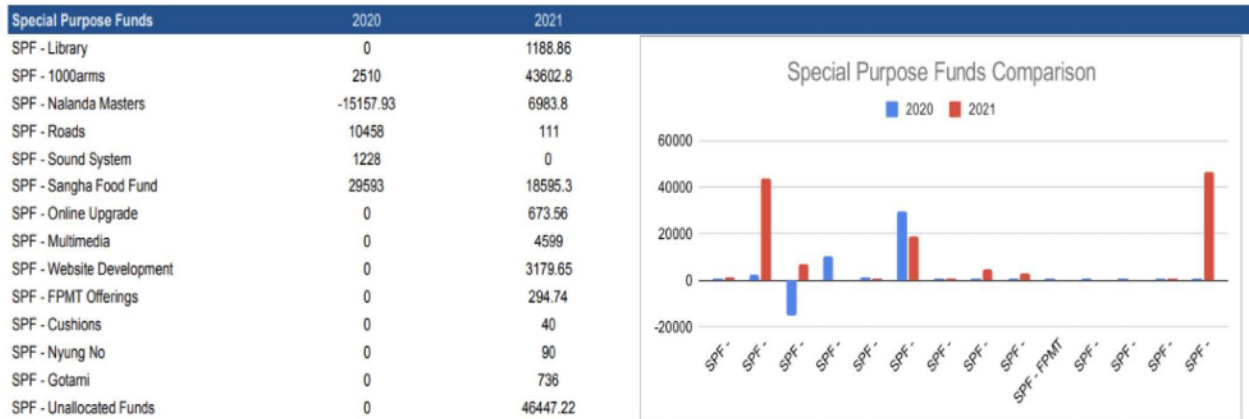
A special thanks to the members of Chenrezig Inc. and 1000 Arm members for their contribution to the centre and to the regular donors to the centre. A total of \$63,432 was donated to the Building Fund throughout 2020/2021. A total of \$59,468 was spent from this fund on the solar project. A special letter went out in June requesting support for the building funds for our Education Program and approximately \$2,480 was raised. The money for the building fund is allocated for the maintenance of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings.

Geshe Tsultrim's visa expenses were very quickly covered by the community and Geshe la and his team generously offered a momo night, which also supported and covered these expenses.

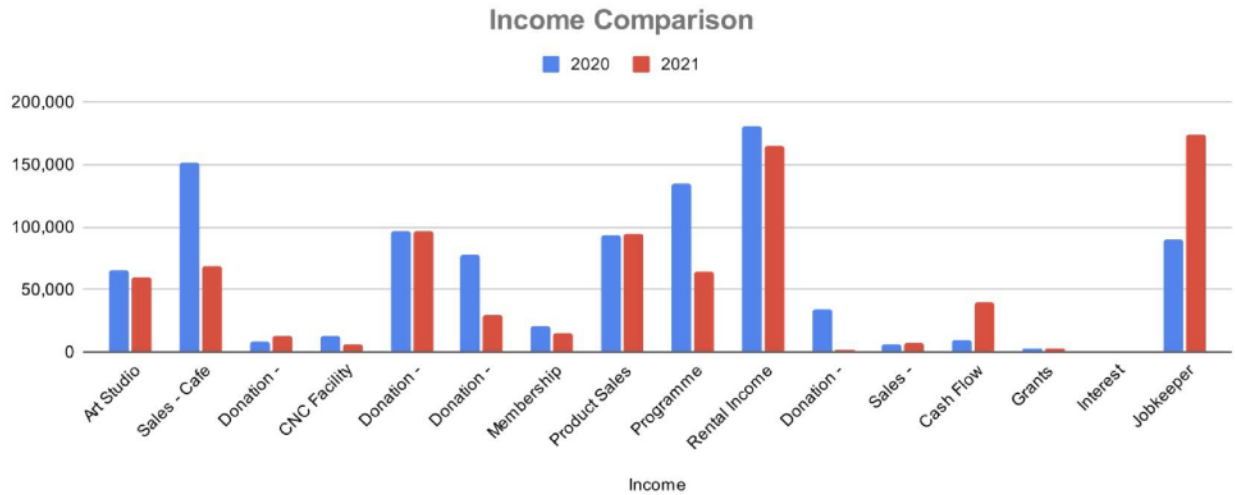
In August 2021, Geshe la supervised the making of the cushions over several weekend sewing bees attended by a happy group of students. Fifty large square cushions were made for the gompa out of 100% polyester velvet, which meant that the cushions would be soft, not prone to mould and retain their shape due to the high density foam used. This type of foam won't absorb moisture, is resistant to mould and will stay dry and light. Twenty cushions of gold velvet were made for the Sangha and thirty dark blue for lay people.

Our heartfelt gratitude to Rob Neill and Victoria Geboult for their generosity in offering a total of \$4,750 which covered the associated costs.

Special thanks to Pam Higgins, 20/21, Steven Heath, Financial Manager /2021, Paul Bourke and the NexZen accounting team.

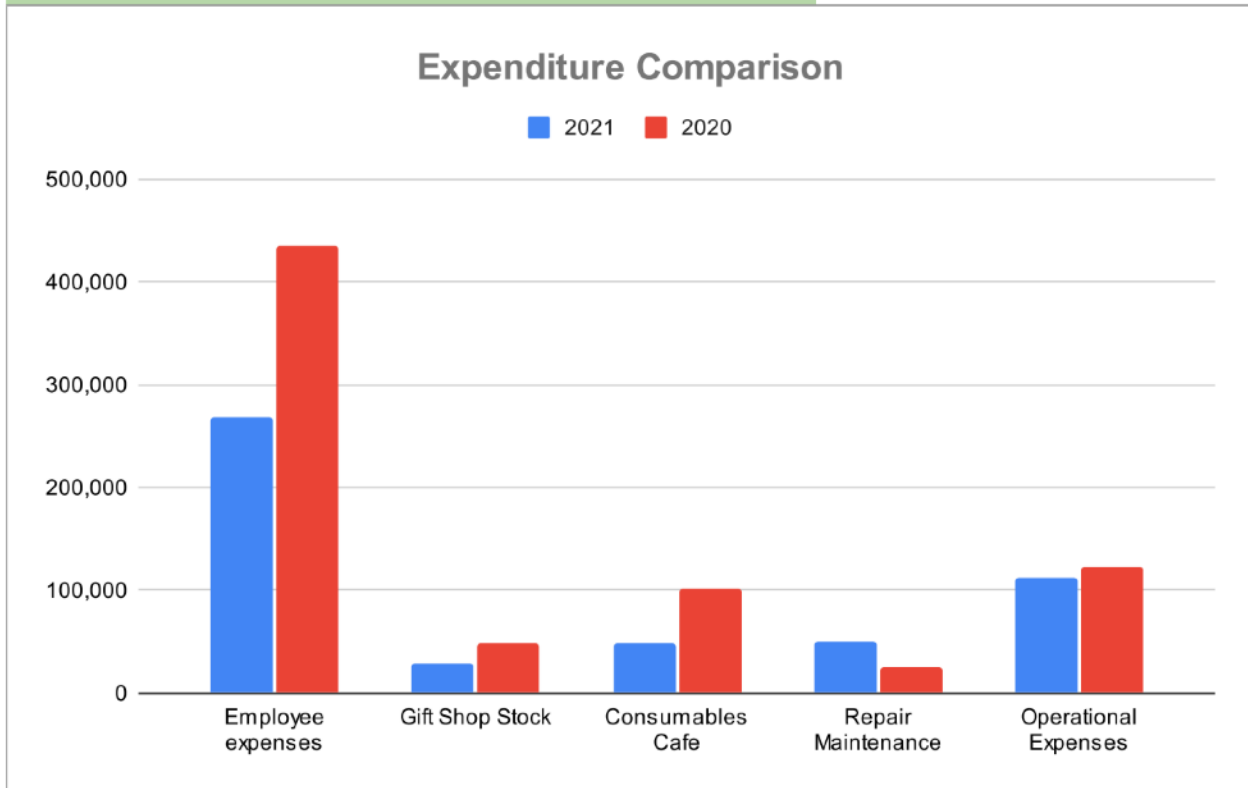


Income		
	2020	2021
Art Studio Sales	65,600	59,663
Sales - Cafe	151,260	68,703
Donation - CNC Support	8,291	12,505
CNC Facility Fee Income	13,051	6,050
Donation - General Purpose	96,362	97,064
Donation - Special Purpose	77,175	29,894
Membership Fee	20,495	15,511
Product Sales - Shop	93,007	93,983
Programme Income	134,527	64,025
Rental Income	180,575	165,149
Donation - Sangha Food Fund	33,570	1,577
Sales - General Venue Hire	5,693	7,387
Cash Flow Boost -ATO	10,000	39,956
Grants	2,270	2,270
Interest Income	321	689
Jobkeeper Payment	90,000	174,000



## Expenditures

	2021	2020
Employee expenses	269,057	436,094
Gift Shop Stock	29,275	49,036
Consumables Cafe	48,057	101,556
Repair Maintenance	50,608	25,405
Operational Expenses	112,045	122,575
Depreciation	246,102	803
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>755,144</b>	<b>737,489</b>





## Grants Report - Sandra Smith

The benefits of receiving grants are to boost turnover, profit, and employment, increase business confidence and skills and improve business resilience and survivability.

This financial year, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 to 30 June 2021, we have applied for and been successful in receiving several grants as below.

### 1. Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant Program - Round 2

Grantor: Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA)

Project: New website

Amount: \$9,000

Funds Received: August 2020

Summary: There were difficulties with executing the project in a timely way, however, variations were requested, the new website was eventually launched, and an acquittal form was lodged in July 2021.

### 2. Merit Box Project

Grantor: FPMT

Project: COVID-19 Financial Hardship Relief

Amount: US\$3,000 (AU\$4,161)

Summary: While this is considered a grant by FPMT, the CI Finance Manager has advised this is considered a donation by the ATO.

Grant Projects that are currently being considered include signage projects @ \$3,000 (CHART: Federal govt. Grant ) Merit Box: project to be decided and a disability access amenities block.

## Project of Chenrezig - Art Studio, Garrey Foulkes

### Report on Garden of Enlightenment and the CI Art Studio





Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Geshe Tsultrim and Garrey, 2018

I am stepping down from the role of manager at the Garden of Enlightenment and the Art Studio. My future role will be only to assist with any artwork and experiential advice relating to these two projects and my continuing role with the Great Stupa in Bendigo.

The new director for the Art studio and, in part, the Garden of Enlightenment is Adam Hassell, who has been learning the ropes for some time now and I have every confidence in him taking on this work.

It has been a great pleasure being involved with both of these projects over the past thirty or so years and big thanks go out to the many people who volunteered both time and expertise to bring these projects to where they are today. Special thanks go to my very patient partner Krissie, who gave me total support during the often challenging times involved.

I am also very pleased to report that following a very difficult couple of years the finances have now returned to their previous healthy situation.

Both of these projects have been self funded, have never been “in the red” and have also played a considerable role in financially supporting many different projects at the centre and particularly in the gompa.

In the past ten years we have been able to offer a little financial support to some workers, as was Rinpoche’s wish.

Both projects do continue to need new and ongoing help from volunteers with skills in a wide range of areas - from working with Holy objects, Art, IT skills, PR. & paperwork, to dealing with clients who have lost loved ones, gardening, handling orders, freight , materials etc.etc  
Moving forwards, the success of both of these projects is quite critical if Chenrezig Institute is to continue to contribute and prosper following the advice of our precious teachers, our ability to manage an ever-changing world and to actualise the 5 pillars.

I am however very happy to say that the current people on board give me great confidence that these projects can continue to grow and flourish well into the future.

## **Project of Chenrezig**

### **Chenrezig Nuns Community - Ven. Lhagsam**

Members of Chenrezig Nuns Community have been quite busy during the last 12 months. The advanced program, general teachings and pujas have continued in person and online. During the break some of the nuns have taken the opportunity to do private retreats before the start of the next stage of the Middle Way studies.

COVID lockdowns have meant some activities such as hospital chaplaincy and spiritual care in nursing homes have been cancelled, and some of these have been replaced by phone calls. In a sign of further change in COVID circumstances, Ven. Demchog became our first nun who was able to travel overseas to Nepal. Ven. Demchog will be undertaking retreat and other practices, and we welcome her back whenever she looks to return to Australia.

The nuns have chosen a suitable place near their huts for a statue of Bhikshuni Gotami, who was the first woman to be ordained by the Buddha, but this is yet to be confirmed as to whether it's possible to get the statue in there.

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## Yoga

### Monthly Saturday yoga with Annie McGhee

Annie has been holding regular monthly yoga workshops in the Wellbeing Centre since early 2017.

Held on a Saturday of each month, these one-day workshops are popular and are usually attended by the same group of people, with the majority coming from the Sunshine Coast and a small percentage from Brisbane. We have formed a lovely community and friendships over the years, with many students booking well in advance for the upcoming workshops.

Last year meditations led by either Ven. Tony or Ven. Kartson, were included, adding a wonderful dimension to the workshops.

The numbers continue to range on an average from 16 to 22 people per workshop, and last year (January - December 2021) a total of \$11,331 was generated from these workshops for Chenrezig Institute.



### Friday yoga with Erin Lee

Erin has offered a one hour Mindful Yoga classes for the last 3 years on Fridays from 9 -10am in the Wellbeing Centre. Attendees pay \$12 each with full proceeds going to Chenrezig Institute, with approximately 75% of the students being regular attendees.

These classes average 20 attendees each week and have been a great way of bringing people to see what is on offer at Chenrezig. Students are always encouraged to make a full morning or day of it, by walking up the hill after class for the 10:30am teaching with Geshe Tsultrim, staying on for lunch at the Big Love Cafe, and the afternoon meditation offering.

## Chenrezig Working Team

### Executive Committee

**Chair** Colin Crosbie,

**Secretary** Karyn Ellis,

**Treasurer** Paul Bourke,

**Ordinary Member** Adam Hassell,

**Ordinary Member** Hillary Tilton,

**Centre Director** Ruby Karmay

**Spiritual Program Coordinator** Rosie Muller

### Management Committee

**Centre Director** Ruby Karmay

**Spiritual Program Coordinator** Rosie Muller

**Finance** Steven Health

**Culture and Ethics Liaison** Ven Khadro,

**Customer Services Manager** Jen Sheppeard

**Property Services Manager** Adam Hassell

## Spiritual Program Team

**Senior Teacher** Geshe Phuntsok Tsultrim

**Resident Teacher** Ven Chokyi

**Spiritual Program Coordinator (SPC)** Rosie Muller

**Interpreter** Ven. Kartson

**Trainee Interpreter** Ven. Lozang Khadro

**In Depth Program Coordinator** Kathy Vichta

**In Depth Program Tutor** Ven. Kartson

**Spiritual Program Assistants** Michele Jackson, Ailee Ashton and Karyn Ellis

**Library and Archives** Hilary Tilton

**Multi - Media Manager and Videographer** Małgorzata Ola Dobrowolska

**FaceBook and Newsletter** Annie McGhee

**Website** Kathy Vichta

**Technical Assistant** Ross Bennetts

**Kind Kids Club Coordinator** Kerri Hewitt

**School Tour Coordinator** Sara Lucia Silva

**Program Committee** - Ven. Tony Beaumont and Jhampa (Karl Gratton)

## Projects of CI

### Chenrezig Nuns Community

**Liaison** Ven. Ailsa

**HR** Ven. Lhagsam

**Maintenance** Ven. Palyon

### **Art Studio and Garden of Enlightenment**

**Manager** Outgoing - Garry Foulkes, Incoming - Adam Hassell

### **Nalanda Masters - Lama Yeshe House**

**Coordinator** Colin Crosbie

## **Customer Services**

### **Reception and Dharma Shop and Administration**

**Team Leader** Claire Barker

**Online assistant** Jana Zehr

**Membership** Jana Zehr

**Google Workspace** Carly Clutterbuck

**Grant Writing** Sandy Smith

### **Big Love Cafe**

**Kitchen Team Leader and Cook** Christina Orellana

### **Volunteering**

**Recruitment** Leonie Harradine

### **Accommodation**

**Housekeeping** Georgina Ryan

**Wellbeing Centre** Jana Zehr

## **Property and Grounds**

**Property Services** Adam Hassell

**Caretaker** Kym Bartlett

**Weekend maintenance** Gordon Noble.



**Chenrezig Institute would like to express the deepest gratitude and appreciation to all our teachers, members, supporters, volunteers, friends and benefactors.**

**Your kindness helps provide the conditions needed to carry out Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's great vision for the centre and the FPMT organisation.**

**Our accomplishments are the direct result of your generosity and commitment to the centre.**

**May we all rejoice together!**

**We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we work and live, the Gubbi Gubbi Nation, and we pay respects to Elders, past, present and emerging as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their nurturing of Country, Culture and Community.**

<p>ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་གྱི་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།</p>	<p>། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།</p>		<p>འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།          འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།</p>	<p>། འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལ་འགྲོ་བཏུང་།</p>
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