



## Dhamma Miscellany — Ajahn Candasiri and the Nuns' Community

Over the last several months, our group has been fortunate to have received two unscheduled visits from Ajahn Candasiri. Resident at Amaravati, Ajahn Candasiri travels to Edinburgh on a regular basis to help care for her aged parents. It is our great good fortune that she does her best on such occasions to speak to our weekly group. In recent months, the Ajahn visited once before Christmas and again in February.

During her February visit, one of our sangha members asked the Ajahn to give an overview of the development of the nuns' community. Her account was fascinating, highlighting the early days of a community that struggled first to even come into existence, and later to find an identity that was appropriately related to yet separate from that of the monks. She spoke of the excellent guidance provided by Ajahn Succitto in forming the nuns' daily routine and vinaya, a

significant task given that there was no precedent on which to build.

She also spoke of significant milestones in the evolution of that community. These included:

- the first Pabbajja (going forth) ordination ceremony in 1983;
- the invitation to Ajahn Succitto to help in establishing a training for nuns, which happened six months later;
- the move from the extremely cramped quarters of Chithurst to Amaravati in 1984; and
- the eventual transfer of responsibility for guiding their community to the nuns themselves, which took place in 1991.

It is curious that while they are so similar in many ways, the nuns' and monks' communities certainly do retain separate identities. The Ajahn explained, for example, that a nun's ordination follows a different form

from that of a monk, and it is a form that is still evolving. Other differences include how the communities decide whether or not to accept new members, the content of the vinaya (monastic code), and even the language in which the vinaya is written (English for the nuns, Pali for the monks).

A significant new development Ajahn Candasiri described was the purchase of Hammer Cottage (see box). Having made do with extremely limited space for many years, the nuns and visitors to Chithurst will now have much improved facilities.

Our group is honoured to receive teachings from one of Amaravati's senior monastics. We are most grateful to the Ajahn for making time to visit us, and to Amaravati for making her trips to Edinburgh possible.

—submitted by *Claralynn Nunamaker*

### Cottage Purchase at Chithurst

The good news from Chithurst is that a cottage has been purchased for use by the nuns' community. Long cramped for space, the monastery will now be much better able to provide for visits by monastics and laywomen. Renamed Rocana Vihara after the first nun, Hammer Cottage was purchased after careful scrutiny of limited resources.

For those wishing to support the nuns community, donations to help with the cost of this new and much-needed acquisition can be sent payable to the "English Sangha Trust" at either of the following addresses:

Cittaviveka Buddhist Monastery  
Chithurst, Petersfield  
Hampshire GU31 5EU  
Telephone 01730 814986

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery  
Great Gaddeson, Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire HP1 3BZ  
Telephone 01442 842455



### Meeting Information & Contacts

Meetings are held every Thursday evening at 7:30 pm, Christchurch Hall, Holy Corner, Bruntsfield Place.

We aim to encourage deeper investigation of the practice of meditation

within an atmosphere of group support. We actively support and are supported by the monastic community at Harnham Buddhist Monastery (Ratanagiri), Newcastle.

#### Contacts

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#### Scheduled visits from

#### Harnham Monastery monastics

May 4	September 7
June 1	November 2
July 6	December 7