

Ajahn Brahm and his Merry Monks



Biographies



Introduction

This booklet was compiled to introduce the monks residing at Bodhinyana Monastery to the lay community; to put a name to the monks that they see each time when the monks go on *Pindapata* (Alms round). It also includes monks who have moved to other monasteries who have played a significant role in teaching the Dhamma at the Buddhist Society of Western Australia (BSWA). Later it was decided to include monks who have Ajahn Brahm as their preceptor.



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Ajahn Brahmavamso



Ajahn Brahmavamso Mahathera (known to most simply as Ajahn Brahm) was born Peter Betts in London, United Kingdom on August 7, 1951. He came from a working-class background. In the late 1960s, he received a scholarship to study Theoretical Physics at Cambridge University. At Cambridge he joined the university's Buddhist Society and after a few weeks at the age of 18, he saw a monk for the first time. He knew then, that was what he wanted to be. After graduating from Cambridge, he taught in a high school for one year before travelling to Thailand to become a monk.

Ordained as a monk (bhikkhu) by Somdet Buddhajahn at Wat Saket in Bangkok in 1974, Ajahn Brahm travelled to north-east Thailand in January 1975 and became a student of meditation master Ajahn Chah at Wat Pa Pong. In that same year he became a founding sangha member of Wat Pa Nanachat, a monastery established close by to Wat Pa Pong by Ajahn Chah to cater for the increasing number of Westerners that were coming to ordain and train with him. Ajahn Brahm became the Vinaya (code of monastic discipline) master at Wat Pah Nanachat from 1975 until his departure in 1983. His Vinaya notes are still authoritative for most Western Buddhist monks in the Theravada tradition.



In 1983, Ajahn Brahm was invited to Perth by the Buddhist Society of Western Australia (BSWA) to assist Ajahn Jagaro in teaching duties. Later that year, BSWA purchased a rural and forested property south of Perth to create Bodhinyana Monastery - the first and largest dedicated Buddhist monastery in the Southern Hemisphere.

In 1995, Ajahn Brahm became the Abbot of Bodhinyana Monastery upon the departure of Ajahn Jagaro.

In October 2004, he was awarded the John Curtin Medal for his vision, leadership and service to the Australian community by Curtin University; and in 2006 the King of Thailand conferred upon Ajahn Brahm the title “Tan Chao Khun” which is something akin to being appointed a bishop. As a result, Bodhinyana Monastery receives a symbolic monk’s robe every year from the King of Thailand, a sign of royal patronage of the monastery.

Ajahn Brahm was influential in establishing Dhammasara Nuns’ Monastery at Gidgegannup north-east of Perth. In October 2009, he was instrumental in facilitating Bhikkhuni ordinations at this monastery.

On 5 September 2019, Ajahn Brahm was awarded the Order of Australia, General Division medal, for services to Buddhism and gender equality. The presentation was performed at Government House in Western Australia.

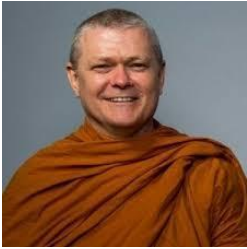
Currently, Ajahn Brahm is the Abbot of Bodhinyana Monastery, the Spiritual Director of the Buddhist Society of Western Australia, Spiritual Adviser to the Buddhist Societies of Victoria and South Australia, Spiritual Patron of the Buddhist Fellowship in Singapore.

He has also written several books including ‘Opening the Door of Your Heart’, ‘Mindfulness, Bliss and Beyond’ (A Meditator's Handbook), ‘The Art of Disappearing’, to name a few.

His Dhamma talks are downloaded millions of times a year.



Bhante Sujato



Bhante Sujato (Anthony Best) is an Australian Buddhist Monk, a popular Dhamma and Meditation teacher, founder and former Abbot of Santi Forest Monastery. Currently residing at Lokanta Monastery in Sydney.

Born in Perth and raised in a liberal Catholic family, he left a career as a musician to become a Buddhist monk.

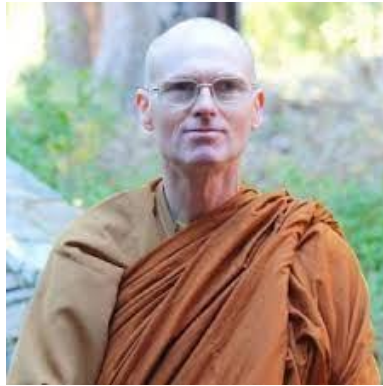
In 1994, he was ordained in Chiang Mai, Thailand. After living in remote forest monasteries for several years, Bhante Sujato returned to his native Perth to join the community at Bodhinyana Monastery. In 2003, he was invited to establish Santi Forest Monastery in Bundanoon, New South Wales, where he served as the Abbot for ten years. During this time, he became well known for supporting the revival of the bhikkhuni lineage and participated in the first ordination of bhikkhunis in Perth, Australia in 2009. In 2012, Bhante Sujato offered Santi Monastery to the bhikkhuni sangha and he returned to live at Bodhinyana. In 2015, he moved to the island of Chimei, off the coast of Taiwan, undertaking a three-year project to translate early Buddhist texts into English. In 2019, he moved to Sydney to establish Lokanta Vihara (the Monastery at the End of the World) to explore what it means to follow the Buddha's teachings in an era of climate change, globalised consumerism, and political turmoil.

As well as being a meditator and teacher of international renown, Bhante Sujato is a scholar of early Buddhism, with several books and essays of original and often ground-breaking research. In 2005, Bhante Sujato co-founded the SuttaCentral website providing access to early Buddhist texts in their original language and making translations available in modern languages.

Bhante Sujato contributes to Buddhism in Australia through a wide variety of organisations, including: the Australian Sangha Association, Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils, Australia Partnership of Religious Organisations, Australian Association of Buddhist Counsellors and Psychotherapists, Australian Association of Buddhist Studies, and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change.



Ajahn Appicchato



Ajahn Appicchato (Ajahn Appi) was born 1964 in Wales and came to Australia when he was two. He grew up on the south coast of New South Wales. He was educated and employed as a registered nurse. He is a fair dinkum boat person! He lived south of Sydney for 28 years.

He was interested in Western Zen Buddhism from age fifteen, moving on to Japanese Zen, then Chinese Chan, and finally Theravada Buddhism. He was part of the Sunyataram Theravada community in Bundanoon, NSW, on and off for 10 years. In 1993, he decided to come to Bodhinyana Monastery. When he mentioned to Ajahn Jagaro that he wanted to ordain, Ajahn Jagaro, with his long experience with keen young men, replied, “We shall see how you go!” Ajahn Appi was one of the first four monks ordained by Ajahn Brahm.

He was ordained as an Anagarika at Bodhinyana monastery in 1993. After five years as a fully ordained monk, he travelled extensively, living in monasteries in Italy, England, Thailand, New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

In 2008 he returned to Bodhinyana and is now the second most senior monk after Ajahn Brahm at the Monastery.



Ajahn Brahmalī



Ajahn Brahmalī was born in Norway in 1964. His interest in Buddhism and meditation started after a visit to Japan. Having completed degrees in engineering and finance, he began his monastic training as an Anagarika in England at Amaravati and Chithurst Buddhist Monasteries. Listening to the teachings of Ajahn Brahm, he decided to travel to Bodhinyana Monastery and has been there since 1994. He later received Higher Ordination with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor.

Ajahn Brahmalī's knowledge of the Pali language and the Suttas is excellent. He has completed the only full translation of the Vinaya Piṭaka (Monastic Law) into English. It is available on the SuttaCentra website and will be published as a proper book in the next few years.

Bhikkhu Bodhi who translated most of the Pali Canon into English called Ajahn Brahmalī one of his major helpers for the recent translation of the 'Numerical Discourse of the Buddha'. Ajahn Brahmalī has also published a number of essays, including the book "The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts" in collaboration with Bhante Sujato. Most of his publications are available online at bswa.org

The monastics at Bodhinyana Monastery greatly appreciate Ajahn Brahmalī's Sutta and Pali classes, and often rely on him to clarify the Vinaya (Monastic Law) or Suttas. Furthermore, he has contributed significantly to the building and maintenance projects at the Monastery and at Hermits Hill in Serpentine.

Apart from the regular talks at Dhammaloka, Ajahn Brahmalī, together with Ajahn Sujato and other monks, have, since 2013, led ongoing courses on the Early Buddhist Teachings. Ajahn Brahmalī's clear and thoughtful talks make the teachings of the Buddha easily accessible to all. He travels extensively in Australia, Asia and Europe to share his knowledge and experience through teachings and retreats.



Ajahn Nissarano



Ajahn Nissarano was born in Perth in 1952. After completing an arts degree, he worked in libraries for 20 years. From an early age he has had an interest in spiritual teachings, and has been involved with a number of different traditions such as Quakers, yoga, T.M. and Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh.

During this period he encountered Buddhism, and in 1983, attended his first Buddhist meditation retreat run by the Tibetan Buddhist Society and thus became involved with the Hayagriva Centre in Perth.

In late 1983 he started regularly attending the Buddhist Society of Western Australia (BSWA) at its previous location in Magnolia Street, North Perth.

His most important Buddhist teachers have been Ajahn Jagaro, Ajahn Brahm, Ayya Khema and Bhante Gunaratana (Bhante G).

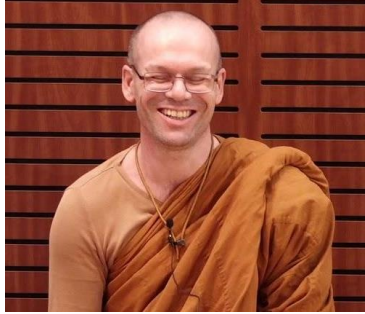
In 1994, he stayed for six months at Bodhinyana Monastery, and the experience inspired him to return in 1996 to seek ordination. In March 1997, he was ordained as a novice monk and a year later he took full ordination. 2021 is his 24th year as a fully ordained Buddhist monk.

In June 2006, he travelled to Sri Lanka and stayed there for almost 14 years. During that period he spent eight years living in a cave on the side of a beautiful mountain, surrounded by forest and going for alms round to the village below. It was an idyllic experience, though not without its challenges, that he will always treasure.

In November 2019 he returned to Australia to teach at the Buddhist Society of Victoria. In July 2020, he spent the Rains Retreat at Newbury Buddhist Monastery, about 90 km from Melbourne. In January 2021, with the blessing of Ajahn Brahm, he became the resident Senior Monk at Newbury Buddhist Monastery, which has now become his base. Nevertheless, he still hopes to maintain his connection with Sri Lanka, and to pay short visits to Sri Lanka when opportunities arise.



Ajahn Cittapalo



Ajahn Cittapalo was born as Andre' Friedrich in the autumn of 1969 in Germany.

He came into contact with Buddhism at the tender age of nineteen, attending his brother's ordination as a Buddhist Monk in Thailand.

Having developed an interest in monastic life for almost a decade and inspired by Ajahn Brahm whom he had met a few years earlier he took the final step into the monastic community.

He lives at Bodhinyana monastery with few and short interruptions to visit his parents and other monasteries ever since.



Phra Ajahn Ekaggata



Phra Ajahn Ekaggata formerly known as Terry Milligan ;
lived in the United States of America for 25 years ;
in Australia for 45 years ;
and Thailand for the last 10-12.

Ordained as a Bhikkhu in Perth, at Bodhinyana Monastery
at age 62, making him - this pansah (Rains) - a 20-year monk.
He has been residing for the last 11 years at
Wat Pah Tudong Tham, a small forest monastery up in
Karen Hill-tribe country ... some distance from Chiang Mai.
Having just had his 81st birthday, he finds he is privileged
to be the Kingdom's oldest *phra farang* (Western monk)
with all gratitude and respect to his preceptor,
Ajahn Brahm.



Ajahn Bodhicitta



Ajahn Bodhicitta was born into a Chinese family in Malaysia in 1965. His whole family went to Christmas Island in 1981. While there he met Ajahn Cunda. He worked as a heavy-duty mechanic there. In 1988, Ajahn Bodhicitta moved to Western Australia (WA), and lived in Perth.

On 26th October 2002 he went to stay at Bodhinyana Monastery, and shortly after he became an Anagarika. In 2003 he took ordination as a novice monk. Then on 3rd January 2005, Ajahn Bodhicitta took full ordination.

In 2007 he left to stay at Santi Forest Monastery in Bundanoon, New South Wales (NSW) and from time to time he returned for short stays at Bodhinyana. After his time at Santi Monastery, he stayed at other monasteries, including Wat Buddha Dhamma, the Dhammacedi Retreat Centre (Westfield in Kelmscott, WA), Kuan Yin Mahayana Monastery (Maddington, WA), Taoist Temple in Christmas Island, and Newbury Buddhist Monastery.

Ajahn Bodhicitta is currently staying at Newbury Buddhist Monastery in Victoria.



Ajahn Santutthi



Ajahn Santutthi was born in an Indonesian refugee camp in 1979. While still a baby he and his Vietnamese parents were resettled in Perth, Western Australia.

Ajahn Santutthi was in training to become a chef before discovering and developing an interest in Buddhism at the age of 21. At 23 years of age, he decided to “give it all up” and walk the path of the Buddha. He was ordained at Bodhinyana Monastery, Serpentine by Ajahn Brahm in 2005. After 7 years, he left to assist Ajahn Khemavaro at Wat Buddha Dhamma in New South Wales.

After returning to Perth in 2018 he stayed at Wat Dhammayanaram in Kelmscott where he started the Kusala Hermitage Project and provided teachings and support to the lay community. Later he moved into Homestead Vihara, in Gosnells, where he and Ajahn Jhanarato (JR) continued to develop Kusala Hermitage: a residence for Buddhist monks on a 10-hectare forested property in Roleystone, Perth Hills. Kusala Hermitage (a Theravada Forest Tradition Monastery) is part of the Buddhist Society of Western Australia.

Ajahn Santutthi is currently the Abbot of Kusala Hermitage. He provides teachings and support at Dhammaloka in Nollamara and offers meditation retreats at Jhana Grove in Serpentine. He and Ajahn JR also conduct monthly half day meditation retreats in Roleystone.



Ajahn Jhanarato



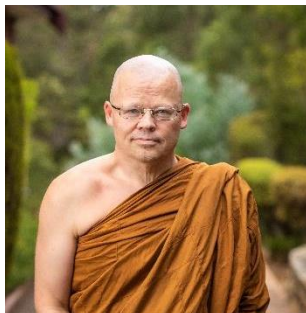
“J.R.”, as he’s usually known, was born in Sydney in 1977. He grew up in Greenwich before moving to Perth with his family in 1996.

There he studied software engineering and upon finishing his degree he spent several years in Melbourne where he worked in software development. Though successful in his career, he found something was lacking. Getting interested in Buddhism, he came across Ajahn Brahm’s ‘Basic Method of Meditation’ and started listening to some of the recorded talks at Dhammaloka. Inspired, he returned to Perth, paid off his debts and was ordained as an Anagarika in 2006.

He took higher ordination in 2009. Though most of his monastic life has been spent at Bodhinyana Monastery training with Ajahn Brahm, he has spent time at Wat Buddha Dhamma in New South Wales, Na Uyana in Sri Lanka and Newbury Buddhist Monastery in Victoria. Ajahn J.R. shared the rental property with Ajahn Santutthi and laboured alongside him to build Kusala Hermitage. Ajahn J.R. has been a monk for 12 years. He now resides at Kusala Hermitage in Roleystone, Western Australia. Ajahn J.R, together with Ajahn Santutthi, carry out monthly half day meditation retreats in Roleystone.



Ajahn Nitho



After finishing high school, a year at the University of Bergen, a Bachelor's degree at NHH (The Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration), a few years working as a CFO and two years of global backpacking, Ajahn Nitho went to Australia in 2007 to be ordained as a Buddhist monk), under Ajahn Brahm and the Buddhist Forest tradition that came out of Thailand. It was Ajahn Chah who ordained and mentored many Westerners, including Ajahn Brahm in the forest tradition.

After one year as an Anagarika (postulant) and one year as a Samanera (novice), Ajahn Nitho took higher ordination as a bhikkhu (monk) in 2009. After more than 10 years of training as a bhikkhu, he decided to return to Norway as a senior monk. Today, both Ajahn Brahm and Ajahn Ganha (in Thailand) are his mentors and spiritual masters.



Ajahn Chandako



Venerable Chandako is originally from Johor in Malaysia. He moved to Australia in the 1980s and worked as a chef for two decades. He was known as Kevin. During that time, he became a staunch supporter of Bodhinyana Monastery, visiting on a weekly basis.

He was also a caretaker at Jhana Grove for a year. He then became a monk in 2011. He was profoundly inspired by Ajahn Brahm, but also by the famous Thai monk, Ajahn Ganha. Ven. Chandako has a stern exterior, but a soft heart.



Ajahn Upasama



Bhikkhu Upasama hails from New York, where he studied psychology at Columbia University. From early on he was interested in spiritual matters. He was a true child of the hippy generation, doing most of the unmentionable things that they were famous for. And of course, he lived in California.

He then moved to Taiwan. He got married, had a daughter, and learned Chinese, while teaching English at a University. He soon considered himself half Chinese! But his interest in spiritual matters continued. Eventually he found Ajahn Brahm on the internet, exclaiming, "He's the real deal!" He gradually came to decide he wanted to be a monk under Ajahn Brahm. In his late 60s he arrived on Australian shores. He is now ordained and has been a monk since 2012.

Not long after he became a monk, his daughter became a nun at Dhammasara Monastery. What more can a father do for his child?

Bhikkhu Upasama is Bodhinyana Monastery's great eccentric; however no details can be divulged! Because of his unusual but sweet character, he is the unofficial mascot of the Monastery.



Ajahn Cunda



Bhante Cunda was born on 28 January 1976 in Malaysia. His father got a job in the mines on Christmas Island and he was joined by his family over time. Kim Yee Chan, as he was known then, moved over in 1980. Then he started spending his time between Christmas Island and Perth.

At the age of 23, Kim Yee came across Buddhism on the island and found some recorded tapes with Ajahn Brahm's meditation instructions (Ajahn Brahm had visited a few years before). He subsequently visited Bodhinyana Monastery a few months later for the first time.

He then asked his parents for permission to ordain, but they did not oblige. So, he patiently waited 10 years, while visiting the monastery frequently. During that time, he worked as a mechanic in the mines, and ran a workshop together with a friend for some years. He soon became an asset in the monastery as their "monk-anic", maintaining the Bodhinyana fleet of eight road and work vehicles.

After 11 years, he made another attempt to ask his parents to go forth. "No" was the answer again. So, he asked what would happen, if he asked again 10 years down the track. "Never, when we are still alive" they answered. He was keen to ordain and since waiting would not make things better, he went ahead anyway and joined the Bodhinyana community in 2008. His family has since accepted his decision, as they can see the positive changes in him.



Ajahn Bodhidhaja



Bhante Bodhidhaja was born in April 1982 as the third child of Czech immigrants to Switzerland. He was introduced to Buddhism at an early age by one of his neighbours and was drawn to it ever since. At the age of twenty-one Nicolas Vrticka (that was his lay name) visited India and took temporary ordination under the late Acharya Buddharakkhita in Bangalore (Maha Bodhi Society Bengaluru). Bhikkhu Buddharakkhita gave him

the monastic name Bodhidhaja in 2003 and he decided to keep it in memory of him.

After graduating from teacher training college, Nicolas worked as a primary school teacher in the countryside for one year. He also chose to engage in various kinds of social work for a bit more than a year, as an alternative to the compulsory military training in Switzerland.

In late 2006 Nicolas started to spend most of his time living, practising and serving as a lay person in different Buddhist monastic communities around the globe. They included Metta Vihara Forest Monastery in Germany (established by Bhikkhuni Ayya Khema), Amaravati Monastery in England (when Ajahn Sumedho was still in residence) and Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery in Australia.

After this initial period of monastery hopping Nicolas arrived in Perth in May 2010 in order to ordain as an Anagarika and to take up monastic training. Ajahn Brahm subsequently gave him novice ordination in May 2011 and higher ordination in July 2012.

Bhante Bodhidhaja is part of the BSWA's monastic community in Serpentine and occasionally helps out in Newbury Buddhist Monastery near Melbourne.



Ajahn Mudito



Bhante Mudito was born in a remote village in Northern Finland in 1979. His was named Petteri at birth after his great-grandfather. Growing up, he tried a variety of jobs including being a chef, translator, office worker and truck driver. These jobs took him to the USA and in particular, to San Francisco and New York. While living in New York, his long-time interest in Buddhism evolved as he started meditating with different groups. It was in New York that he chanced upon Ajahn Brahm who was on his book tour. The stars aligned....It was love at first sight and the rest is history!

In 2011, he received higher ordination at Bodhinyana Monastery with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor. His name Mudito, means joy; especially sympathetic joy. Living in a forest monastery always resonated with Bhante Mudito as he grew up on a farm in a remote village. He has now been a fully ordained monk for more than ten years.

For the last couple of years, Bhante Mudito spent some time in Newbury Buddhist Monastery in Melbourne to help build the monastery. During that time, he was regularly invited to deliver Dhamma talks by the Buddhist Society of Victoria. Bhante Mudito conducted his first retreat in November 2020 at Jhana Grove Meditation Retreat Centre.

Because of his knowledge and expertise in the construction industry, he helped in the construction of kutis and bunkers at Hermit Hill in Serpentine. He is currently in Newbury Monastery in Victoria to assist in the building of the new Meditation Retreat Centre there.



Bhikkhu Lokahita



Bhikkhu Lokahita was born in 1970 in Korea. Since 2001, he has been practicing meditation as a temporary monk at a Meditation Centre in Myanmar.

In 2009 he was ordained as a novice monk at Na Uyana Monastery in Sri Lanka. He then, in 2011, travelled to Bodhinyana Monastery in Perth, Western Australia.

In 2013, he received his Bhikkhu ordination, with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor; and decided to leave Australia that same year and returned to Sri Lanka, where he spent most of his life doing alms rounds in villages while living in forests and caves.

He returned to Korea in 2017 and is currently living in a Theravāda Forest Monastery there.



Bhikkhu Mudu



After a chance invitation by a Thai friend to join her in offering food to the Buddhist monks at Bodhinyana Forest Monastery in Serpentine, Bhikkhu Mudu became inspired by the monastic way of life. Several years later after developing and understanding the importance of meditation and renunciation, he decided to take up the training to become a Buddhist monk.

On 6th January 2014, after completing the two-year trial and preliminary training, Bhikkhu Mudu received the higher ordination as a fully ordained Bhikkhu under his teacher and preceptor, Ajahn Brahm at Bodhinyana Monastery.

Bhikkhu Mudu is currently the resident monk at Bodhinyana Great Southern Monastery in Albany. He resides with an Anagarika and a visiting monk from Bodhinyana Monastery. The monks from Bodhinyana Monastery take turns staying for a short period each time.



Bhikkhu Sampasādana



Bhikkhu Sampasādana (which means internal confidence in stillness or serene confidence) was born in Western Australia. He is usually called Bhikkhu Sampa.

Long before he came to Bodhinyana in January 2013, Bhikkhu Sampa had spent many years practising alone and that often meant facing deep and very difficult challenges and sacrifices, and navigating the very unexpected. He had been very fortunate to have shared deep discussions and learned much from many people of different backgrounds over the years, long before he came to Bodhinyana Monastery.

However, he still remembers the first time as an Anagarika when he drove Ajahn Brahm by himself to Dhammaloka, their discussions and the stories Ajahn told him on the way. Over the years, they shared many more interesting stories.

Bhikkhu Sampa ordained in Bodhinyana Monastery with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor.

The path for Bhikkhu Sampa always includes having virtue, education, kindness and doing service and helping others. His practice involves developing inner strength for solitude, investigation to see things clearly and deep meditation. To him, the texts and teachings of the Buddha are a roadmap for the practitioner to learn to know for themselves what is really relevant now as a priority, and as things unfold by themselves.



Bhikkhu Kassapa



Bhikkhu Kassapa grew up on an apple orchard in Pemberton. His family later moved to Rossmoyne, so his father could study medicine. His mother had been sick for most of his life and ended up with brain damage. She went into a nursing home as her Situation deteriorated and passed away in 2008.

His hobbies included ventriloquism, escapology, magic and photography; he volunteered with environmental rangers, animal sanctuaries and assisted the Christian youth group, as his family were devoted Christians. In school, he received the AK Jones award in Photography at Rossmoyne High School and was dux in that subject from 1999 to 2002. He later completed film school, during this time he fell into drugs and alcohol. In 2009 with the help of his family and friends, he gave up all his addictions and dealt with his suicidal depression.

In 2012, he became a Buddhist, a meditator and a yoga practitioner. He attended retreats, the Kalyana Mitta group, the Friday night talks, and gardening with Mary Williams at Jhana Grove. In 2013, he had thoughts of becoming a monk, and went a two-week stay at Bodhinyana; but he never left! He said goodbye to the lay life, gave-up his house and business, and pursued the monastic life with great enthusiasm.

As a monk, Bhikkhu Kassapa focuses on what is spiritually important: faith in the Buddha, a deepening of sense restraint and meditation, and learning the fundamentals of the Buddha's Path. Bhikkhu Kassapa has great gratitude to Ajahn Brahm, the senior monks at Bodhinyana Monastery and the Forest Tradition, and the noble Sangha of the four quarters. He has great compassion for beings and wishes that we all continue to put our best efforts to purifying and perfecting the heart on the Path to the realisation of Nibbana.

At the end of 2021, Venerable Kassapa was situated at Wat Dhammayanaram (Cambodian Temple) in Kelmscott. He has just completed a three-month-long teaching in the South West of Western Australia.



Bhikkhu Sunyo



Bhikkhu Sunyo was born in the Netherlands and raised in the shade of windmills, amidst fields of tulips and cheese. He got into Buddhism and Meditation near the end of high school. After twenty-six years of unbridled headbanging, mathematics, and playing The Sims, and many other distractions. He decided to better his life.

In 2013, after finishing University, he moved to Bodhinyana Monastery to become a monk. On the day of his ordination, he met his best friend ever in life – his robes – and he hopes to never have to leave this friend behind. Bhikkhu Sunyo has been in Bodhinyana most of the time since and according to him, he has been living the good life.

He also has a wide knowledge and expertise in the Pali language; accordingly, he has been teaching Pali at Bodhinyana Monastery for the past six years. He also did his first teaching gig at Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre in February 2020 which was very well received. Since then, he has done a few short talks during the Covid Lock-Down period. In Oct 2020, he partnered with Ajahn Brahmali to deliver the Early Buddhism Series - Dependent Origination Workshops.

Bhikkhu Sunyo is grateful to all who have supported him, especially those who have provided him with food and shelter. Thus giving him the opportunity to undertake his spiritual journey.



Bhikkhu Nibbuto

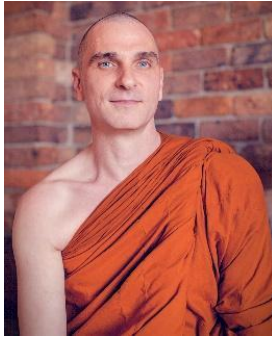


Venerable Nibbuto comes from a Sikh family in the north-west of India. He migrated to Australia in 2008, and he came across SN Goenka style Vipassana meditation in 2011. After the introduction to Buddha's teaching, he started thinking about becoming a monk. A few months later, his faith in the Buddha's teaching established even more after reading the Suttas.

He started visiting Dhammaloka centre in 2013 regularly, and in July 2014 he started his Anagarika training in Bodhinyana, and he went forth a year later. He has been staying in Bodhinyana since then.



Akāliko Bhikkhu



Bhante Akāliko is an Australian monk in the Theravada Forest tradition. He first encountered Buddhism as a teenager and spent over twenty years practising in different traditions before taking full ordination with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor at Bodhinyana monastery in 2016. He currently resides with his long-term teacher, Bhante Sujato, at Lokanta Vihara (the Monastery at the End of the World) in Sydney, New South Wales in Australia.

Bhante Akāliko is regularly invited to share the Dhamma with a variety of Buddhist organisations in Sydney and has also given meditation retreats both in Australia and overseas. He is the founder of Rainbodhi LGBTQIA+ Buddhist Community and a Buddhist chaplain at Western Sydney University.



Bhikkhu Sumangalo



Venerable Sumangalo was born in the southern part of Vietnam, shortly after the Vietnam War. He and his parents immigrated to the United States in 1987. They lived in the area known as Silicon Valley, California. He grew up in a poor suburb of the area during most of his childhood up to college. His early life was typical of any immigrant of the area. The challenges of adapting to the culture of the West, while trying to make sense of how their Asian culture fits into the picture.

After high school, he attended a local university, studying IT and Finance. After graduating from university, he worked in the High-Tech Industry for a while before moving on to monastic life in 2015.

His parents taught through example. They were moral, diligent, frugal, selfless, and kind in their way of life. They would sacrifice much for their children's welfare. They were wise in their own ways in sticking with morality to govern their life. He has two younger brothers who made his life more fulfilling. They taught him how to practice kindness, patience, tolerance, and selflessness.

He came across Buddhism through many sources: the Suttas, The Dalai Lama, Ajahn Chah, Ajahn Brahm and meditation. The peace and happiness through the Dhamma made him want to give the monastic life a try.

He picked his monastic name Sumangalo which means 'one who has good blessings'. The name was chosen by looking through a list of possible names in the book 'The Theragatha' (the poems of the Enlightened Elders). HE chose the name because he felt it is an extremely good blessing to come into contact with the Buddha's teachings and have an opportunity to practise them. He has been a Bhikkhu for three years now, five years training in total.

Venerable Sumangalo would describe his life as a Buddhist monk as a life of service, simplicity, seclusion, peace, and kindness.

He describes happiness as having a peaceful mind.



Bhikkhu Nivato



Venerable Nivato (An) was born in Vietnam to Chinese parents. He later changed his name to Arnold.

In 1980 when he was nine years old, he arrived in Melbourne with three sisters, all in their twenties. His parents remained in Vietnam and later migrated to the United States. In his teens, his mum died of cancer and his dad later died at the age of eighty-two.

As he grew up without his parents, he did not maintain a close bond to them. It was only when he practised Metta meditation that he began to appreciate their kindness; and his gratitude towards his parents blossomed and the closeness grew. His parents and sisters are his source for Metta meditation. He is forever grateful as they enabled him to pursue the monastic life.

In school, his interest was in health, social studies and geography. However, he graduated with a degree in accounting and worked as a clerk. Finally, he followed his heart and studied herbal medicine, nutrition and remedial massage.

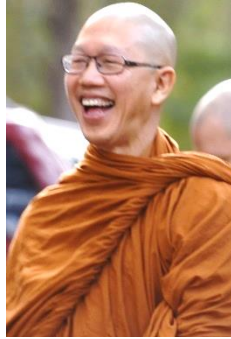
Although he had kind friends and a good job, he was dissatisfied. Thus he began his search for the meaning of life. That led him to Christianity, Krishna worship and later, to the Buddhist Society of Victoria (BSV) where he learnt meditation and Dhamma. For the first time in this life, he found teachings that applied to his daily life. He **then** took the five precepts in 2013.

Although he had a good life, it created a busy mind. He wanted to further his meditation practice and follow the Buddha's teachings more closely. Therefore, on New Year's Day in 2016, he was ordained as an Anagarika. In May 2017, he became a novice monk and was given the name, Nivato, meaning humility or of humble ways. It is from the Karaniya Metta Sutta.

In July 2018, he became a Bhikkhu with Ajahn Brahm as his preceptor.



Bhikkhu Rādha



Before becoming a monk, Venerable Rādha enjoyed a career in engineering. As the middle child of two teachers in a small town of Malaysia, he had the freedom to explore all sorts of interests and hobbies: sports, martial arts, making music, electronics, travels, scuba diving, photography, etc. The same curiosity drove him to often wonder about life - to "look under its hood" and try to figure out how it all works. In this way, he viewed the world a bit differently, and made some unconventional choices.

After he got married, the happy couple encountered Ajahn Brahm's teachings through retreats in Malaysia and Thailand. Though not a natural meditator (too much thinking), he was intrigued – bliss better than... er, all worldly pleasures!? Here was the doorway to the deepest and most profound of wisdom, as well as experiences quite unlike any previous pursuits. Both of them also realised that the opportunity to train under an exceptional teacher such as Ajahn Brahm, is extremely rare, precious and auspicious – an opportunity that must not be regretted!

So on Valentine's Day just before he turned 50, he left behind his motorbike, piano, aikido dogi, cameras, CD collection, and the jacuzzi tub in a cosy townhouse apartment. Together with his partner of 20 years, they boarded a flight at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and flew to Perth International. From there, one headed towards Dhammasara Nuns' Monastery, and Venerable Radha began the journey to Bodhinyana Monks' Monastery to begin his new life. He still resides at Bodhinyana Monastery.



Bhikkhu Jhayako



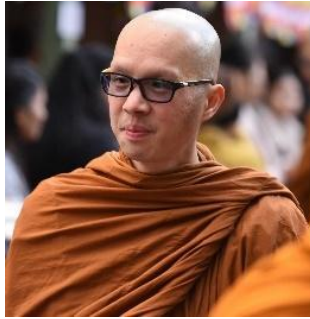
Bhikkhu Jhayako's birth name is Chin Cheong. He was born in Penang, Malaysia.

He still remembers the first day he arrived at the immigration platform in Australia. He was stopped and called aside by the immigration officer. The officer took his passport to their office. This made him wonder whether there was something wrong. He wondered whether he had the correct visa for entry to Australia. After a few minutes the officer returned and smiled and said welcome to Australia.

Bhikkhu Jhayako always wondered what the issue was with Immigration. After a few years of living in Australia, he figured out that it might have had something to do with his birth name. He found out that in Australia, people generally refer to Chinese people as "Chin Cheong". He is Chinese and his birth name is exactly the same. What a coincidence.



Bhikkhu Ānanda



Bhikkhu Ananda became a Samanera (novice monk) in April 2018 and a Bhikkhu, together with Venerable Jhayako, in June 2019 at Bodhinyana Monastery with Ajahn Brahm as their preceptor.

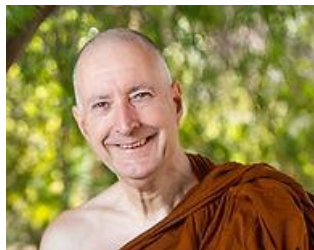
Before becoming a monk, Bhikkhu Ānanda spent most of his time in balmy southern California and sweltering Jakarta. It was a parched life offering little nourishment.

After becoming a monk, Bhikkhu Ananda's life has become much more joyful and interesting. Now all he needs is to sit there, with kindness and gentleness in the heart, and watch the mind blossom into full bloom—uncovering the precious treasures the Buddha long ago had promised in Majjhima Nikaya 27 (Shorter elephant's footprint simile) and Anguttara Nikaya 10.2 (Making a Wish). How neat is that!

Bhikkhu Ananda is very appreciative and thankful to Ajahn Brahm, for showing him the path and being a supreme exemplar to all the monks at Bodhinyana Monastery.



Bhikkhu Mettaji



Bhikkhu Mettaji believes that he is a very fortunate Bhikkhu to be given the opportunity to ordain late in life at Bodhinyana, which is a very precious and rare gift.

His lifelong search for absolute truth started a long time ago in Europe in his teens, but sadly led to lots of cul-de-sacs and dead ends. He is in his early 60s now and believes he only found the real teachings when he touched Theravada Buddhism 10 years ago. Living and studying at Bodhinyana Monastery enabled him to finally find the real teachings.

Good people with Metta sustained and nurtured him through the difficult years. His father, as an expression of Metta, often comes to mind and also his children who are young adults now. Isn't family some of our best teachers too, even when events don't go too well?

He was fortunate to run into an ex-monk from the Thai Forest tradition in 2009 who had been one of Ajahn Chah's carers. Soon afterwards he discovered that all the teachings of the Buddha are very honest and thorough, and passed all experiential investigation. There are no loopholes in the Suttas and the Eightfold Path does gradually reduce suffering.

He tried to blend Buddhist practice into a number of senior roles that he had in the Finance and Charity sectors but soon realised that colleagues will only practice if they want to!

He finds it a blessing to have Ajahn Brahmavamso as his preceptor and access to other marvellous teachers like Ajahn Brahmali, Bhante Sujato and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Such riches!

His name, Mettaji comes from a monk in the time of the Buddha and translates as "Victory through loving kindness." That is the aspiration he wants to fulfil in his practice and in meeting anyone, anywhere.



Bhikkhu Sumitto



Chandan Chakrabartty was born in Bangladesh in 1979 into a Brahmin (Hindu) family. After completing a diploma in marine engineering, he worked as a fitter in Singapore for about six years. While working in Singapore he found the Buddha's biography and some sutta talks by Bhikkhu Dhammavuddho that influenced him to become a Buddhist and made him decide to become a monk.

As his mother was sick and did not permit him to become a monk, he had to continue working a few more years in Australia. When his mother passed away, after he had worked in Australia for six years, he came to Bodhinyana Monastery to become an Anagarika.

He was ordained by Ajahn Brahmavamso on 17 July 2019 as a novice monk named Sumitto, meaning "good friend". Although he did not know anybody by that name, he had used it as his ATM pincode, saved on his phone. When he was told to find a name for his monk's ordination, he decided to use the pincode.

Bhikkhu Dhammavuddho's sutta talks and Ajahn Brahm's great stories inspired him. Absence of suffering is happiness, and he feels life is meaningful as a monastic.



Bhikkhu Vossagga



Venerable Vossagga was born in Subiaco, Perth, in 1996, at which time he was bestowed with his lay name 'Simon' by his father and mother, Peter and Susan. He grew up in the Northern Suburbs of Perth, alongside his three younger sisters, Sarah, Chiara, and Joanne.

As a youth, Venerable Vossagga would spend time studying psychology at university, hiking in the hills of Perth, swimming at the beach with his family and friends, and going to music concerts.

Having been introduced to the practice of meditation by his father when he was a youth, and having gained faith in the monastic communities of Bodhinyana and Dhammasara, as a young man, Simon felt pulled to renounce, shave off his hair, and enter upon monkhood.

Venerable Vossagga ordained as a novice monk in 2019 and received higher ordination as a bhikkhu in December 2020. The monastic name he was given by Ajahn Brahm, his preceptor, was 'Vossagga', which means 'to let go'.



Bhikkhu Vimokkha



Born in Launceston, Tasmania in 1981, Venerable Vimokkha came to Perth in 1992.

He became Interested in Buddhism through watching the Simpsons! – an episode called: " She of little faith"(2001). He was blown away that there was a Religion based on Compassion and Wisdom to all.

Ven Vimokkha had a lot of respect for Buddhism but he did not practise back then. Unfortunately, he got on the wrong side of the law with crime and addiction and went to jail twice. The second time, he realised that he had not learned from his first incarceration and decided he wanted to practice meditation and learn the Dhamma. His first Meditation experience was at Acacia prison with Hugh Sykes.

The Dhamma was music to his ears and the Meditation practice just grew. He enjoyed practicing on his own.

When he got to Karnet Prison, Venerable J.R. (Jhanarato) was the first monastic teacher for him. Closer to his release, he decided to apply to be a Monk.

Venerable Vimokkha became an Anagarika at the Cambodian Monastery on New Year's Day in 2018 and was heavily involved in the building of Kusala Hermitage, supporting Ajahn Santutthi and Ajahn Jhanarato.

He became a Novice in April 2021, and a Bhikkhu in January 2022. He was given credit for the long period he spent as an Anagarika.

Venerable Vimokkha is really grateful to see Samsara clearer these days.



Bhikkhu Sorato



Bhante Sorato was born in 1973, in Penrith, NSW. He graduated from High School in 1991 and immediately found employment as a Dental Assistant. He attended Art School in Liverpool, where he trained in the Fine Arts. The following year he was awarded a Scholarship to study Visual Arts at the University of Western Sydney, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1997, with distinction.

Bhante Sorato came to meditation through the creative process, namely the discipline of drawing. His drawings are at once a practical exercise in meditation while also being direct representations of a meditative condition or state.

In 2013, he left Australia for one year seeking a deeper connection to Buddhism and the practice. Travelling to Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal and Indonesia; Sorato became a pilgrim along the way, offering his respects and providing *Danā* wherever he went.

Upon his return, he became involved with Santi Forest Monastery, located in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, Australia. Sorato has participated in meditation retreats in Australia and overseas and has investigated methods such as Goenka School Vipassana, Mahasi System Satipatthana and of course, Ajahn Brahm's method of meditation.

Sorato arrived at Bodhinyana Monastery in February, 2020 where he immediately began working as an 'Anagarika'. He undertook 'Pabbajja' on 28 April 2021, thereby becoming a Novice Monk. He undertook 'Upasampadā' on 5th May 2022, with Ajahn Brahmavamso as his *Upajjhāya* (Preceptor).



Bhikkhu Vipassako



Venerable Vipassako was born in Perth in 1981. He studied politics and sustainable development at university and later even had a go at politics himself. However, the realisation slowly dawned that even with the best government in the world people would still be suffering, even though governments can alleviate some of the worst kinds of suffering.

Vipassako grew up Catholic and became an atheist by his late teens, later changing to agnosticism but with no desire to return to organised religion. He first came into contact with Buddhist teachings through Western philosophy but didn't take it all that seriously until he learned some more about the Buddha's life and tried his first meditation retreat in Thailand. Although he didn't think of himself as a Buddhist until joining a monastery in the last few years, it had become increasingly clear that the Buddhist way of life was the most viable, and possibly the only way to true contentment and happiness.

He is grateful to have been recently ordained as a Bhikkhu at Bodhinyana.



Venerable Mettāvihārī



Venerable Mettāvihārī grew up in Melbourne, Australia. He was raised in a Christian family, but as a young boy he often had fantasies of living like a monk, and as a teenager he was attracted to Buddhism without knowing why. He received a bachelor's degrees in psychology and English before beginning a career teaching English as a Second Language

at a language institute in Sydney and a university in South Korea.

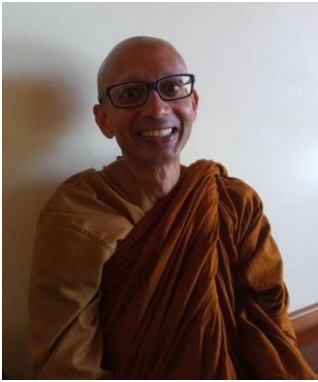
His five years in Korea was a wonderful experience and he often visited Buddhist monasteries there with his students. He returned to Australia and completed a master's degree in linguistics/TESOL and then worked in educational development in universities in Sydney for several years.

After that he returned to Melbourne to support his ailing father. It was in these years that his latent yearnings grew into an overriding aspiration to live a spiritual life and he started spending more and more time at monasteries, including Newbury Monastery in Victoria, where he met some monks from Bodhinyana.

He was ordained as a novice monk by Ajahn Brahm in 2021. It felt like a coming home, and he loves everything about being a monk. Every day, Venerable Mettāvihārī tries to live up to his name, which means “abiding in loving-kindness”.



Samanera Rahula



Samanera Rahula, known as Nuwan Gomes at birth, was born in Colombo Sri Lanka in 1975 into a Buddhist family. He has no siblings and grew up mainly in his fathers' ancestral home in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.

After completing his A levels in Sri Lanka, he moved to Perth to further his studies in December 1995 and completed his Bachelor of Engineering degree in Mechatronics at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia.

Following the completion of the degree he commenced his professional career as an Automation and Control Systems Engineer based out of Melbourne, Victoria.

In 2009 Samanera Rahula got to hear about a popular Bhikkhu known as Venerable Ajahn Brahm and his inspiring talks and books.

Not long after, he got to read the books 'Opening the Door of Your Heart' and 'Good? Bad? Who Knows?' by Venerable Ajahn Brahm. These books inspired him to go in search of the teachings of the Buddha himself, which led him to the Sutta Pitaka. Since then, he has read and contemplated the teachings of the Buddha, whenever time permitted in his busy career. The reading and contemplation of the teachings, combined with living virtuously, made him realise that the life of a disciple of the Buddha would be the next step.

Following a career of over 17 years as an Engineer, in December 2020, he ended his career as an engineer and arrived at Bodhinyana Monastery pursuing ordination under Venerable Ajahn Brahm. Subsequently he was ordained as an Anagarika on the 3rd of February 2021 and then as a Novice (Samanera) on the 17th of February 2022.





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"Go forth, o bhikkhus,
for the good of the many,
for the happiness of the many,
out of compassion for the world,
for the benefit, for the good,
for the happiness of gods and humans.
Let not two go by one way.
Proclaim the doctrine
that is beautiful in its beginning,
beautiful in its middle, and beautiful in its ending.
Declare the holy life in its purity,
completely both in the spirit and the letter."

Mahavagga
Vinaya Pitaka

