



“This Stupa will be very significant for Buddhist spirituality and Tibetan culture.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Ian Green – introduction

Ian has been a Buddhist for over 35 years. It began when he traveled to India in the early 1970's. Here he was struck by how "spirituality was a very big part of their culture. It underlined to me how materialistic our Western society is". Towards the end of his Indian vacation Ian visited the holy city of Varanasi on the Ganges and traveled to nearby Deer Park. He remembers the tranquility there, which was in contrast to the busy, noisy India he had been experiencing up until that moment. He felt totally at ease at Deer Park - as if he had come home. He was also overwhelmed by a great monolithic thing at Deer Park which he said "seemed to have incredible power".

Ian Green was looking at the Great Stupa of Sarnath which marks the spot where the Buddha first taught, and is one of the six holy places of Buddhism. After visiting Deer Park, he purchased a book, What is Buddhism? where he read about Buddhist concepts such as karma and reincarnation. "I had the feeling that I knew all these things, even though I had not seen them written down before," he says. Ian now accepts that in previous lifetimes he had exposure to Buddhism...and it seems he had "no choice but to become a Buddhist."

In 1981 Ian's father offered 50 acres of bushland just out of Bendigo in Victoria to Lama Yeshe to start a Buddhist Centre. Lama Yeshe laid out a master plan for the Bendigo bushland and since then Atisha Centre, Thubten Shedrup Ling and The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion have grown to form a major centre of Buddhism in Australia.

The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion has become Ian's life work. The Bendigo stupa was the inspiration of the late Lama Yeshe, a Tibetan monk who was one of the first lamas to teach Buddhism Westerners. This Great Stupa, which is currently being built in Australia, will be the same size and design as the Great Stupa of Gyantse in Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said of the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion: *“At this moment, when the Tibetan cultural heritage is facing extinction, this Tibetan style Stupa will be very significant for Buddhist spirituality and Tibetan Buddhist culture. Support for such noble work is a good method to create virtuous karma.”*

Ian Green is the Chief Executive Officer of the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion Ltd. He is also Chairman of Dalai Lama in Australia Ltd, the company that organises the tours of Australia by His Holiness.

Ian and his wife Judy have been involved with the development of Atisha Centre and the Great Stupa since 1981. Judy and Ian also manage the Jade Buddha Project.