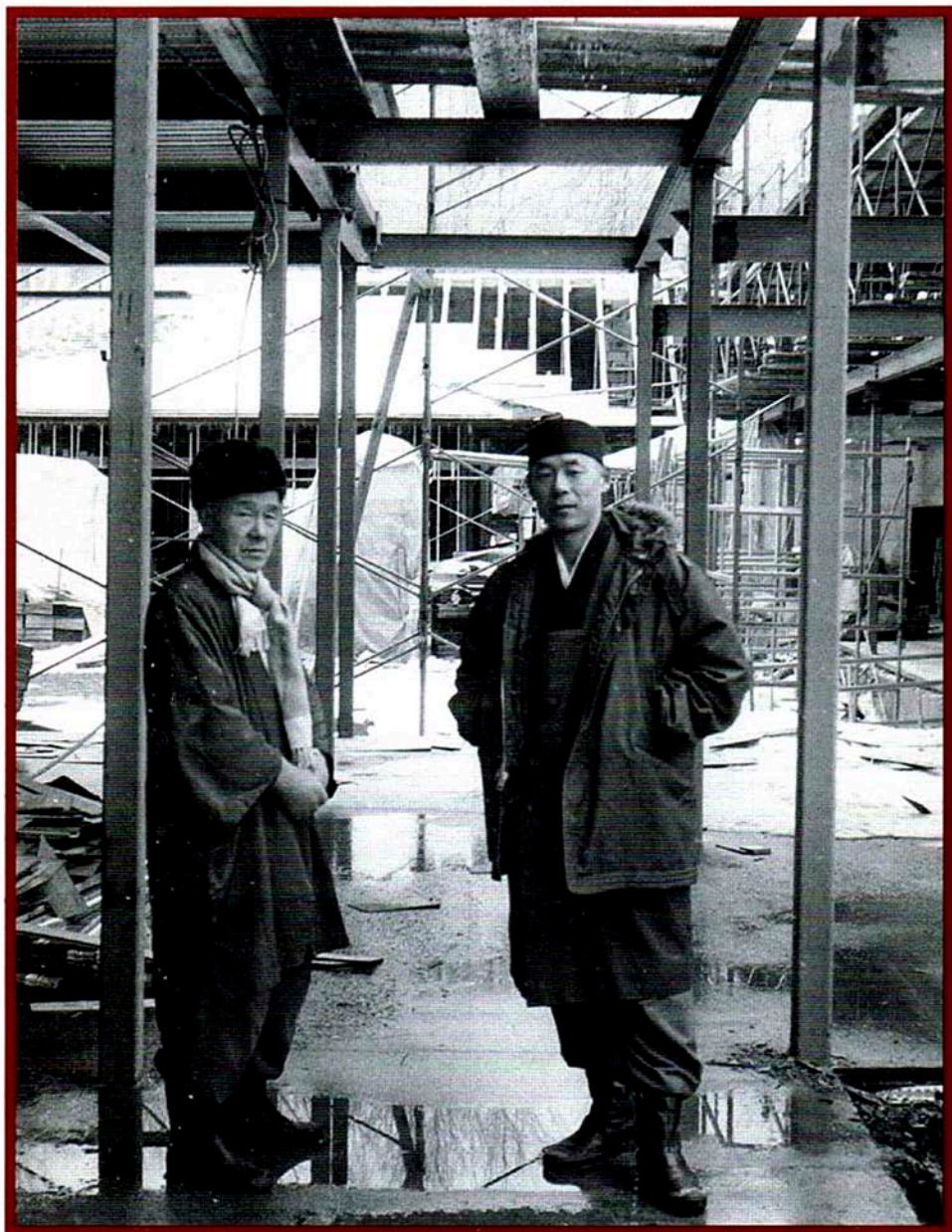
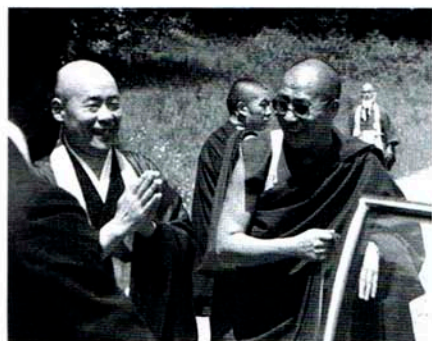


30th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
DAI BOSATSU ZENDO KONGO-JI



Soen Roshi and Eido Roshi during construction of Dai Bosatsu Zendo

JULY 15, 2006



Roshi and the Dalai Lama



Roshi and Yamakawa Roshi



Tani Kogetsu Roshi's first visit to Dai Bosatsu Zendo with monks from Shogen-ji



Roshi and Shubin Tanahashi at Nyogen Senzaki's grave



The guest house as zendo, 1974



The artist Takeda-san at work on the large drawing of Kannon that now hangs in the Dharma Hall

Schedule of Events for July 15, 2006

12:00 Noon

Dedication and chanting for all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

Chanting for Patriarchs and to requite their Dharma Beneficence

Chanting for deceased Dharma Brothers and Sisters

Installation chant for new Protecting Deities

Speeches by dignitaries

2:00 PM

Lunch

This booklet of remembrances was published to share the incredible impact that Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji, Eido Roshi and the practice of Rinzai Zen have had on the lives of so many members of the Sangha and a chance for them to offer their thanks.

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Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji

223 Beecher Lake Road, Livingston Manor, NY 12758-6000 Tel (845)439-4566 Fax 439-3119
office@daibosatsu.org

Editor, Graphic design: Banko Randy Phillips; Proofreading: Jokei Megumi Kairis

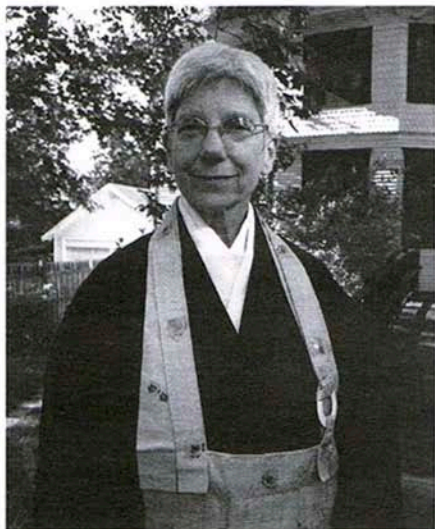
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Roko Sherry Chayat, Abbot Zen Center of Syracuse, Hoen-ji

Memories of Dai Bosatsu Zendo's Beginning Days



It's as clear as though it were yesterday: following an evening sitting at the New York Zendo Shobo-ji, Tai-san, as Eido Roshi is then known, asks all officers to come up to the meeting room on the third floor. I'm librarian, so I join the others. There's a suspenseful silence, and then he tells us that the perfect property for a country retreat center has at last been found. It's on 1400 acres in the Catskill Mountains, surrounding a sparkling lake, with a lodge house formerly owned by Henry Ward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

"What do you think?" he asks us.

"This is so exciting!" I burst out. I don't know why, but it seems as if my life has just changed.

Soen Roshi comes, and loves the place immediately; he and Tai-san name it International Dai Bosatsu Zendo. Starting from the July 4th weekend of 1971, sangha members spend work weekends clearing land of rocks for construction of a gatehouse and preparing the lodge for sesshin use. Bill Johnstone is named chairman of the Building Committee, and Father Maxima, a Japanese painter and Greek Orthodox priest who is a friend of Soen Roshi's, spend several months at DBZ painting a mural in the Dharma Hall of the lodge house depicting the Buddha's transmission to Mahakashapa. Tai-san asks Soen Roshi to become Abbot of Dai Bosatsu Zendo, and Nyogen Senzaki is named Honorary First Abbot. The first five-day sesshin at DBZ, attended by 23 students, is held from September 5, 1971, with alternating periods of zazen and work practice. On September 13, 1971, the third anniversary of Shobo-ji, the first Zen Studies Society ordination takes place, for Daiko Chuck Carpenter. He becomes resident director of DBZ, joined by Maishin Mick Sopko, Myoko Carol Snyder, Daishin Steve Levine, and Richard D'Eletto.

On one of our weekend visits, a large bronze Buddha is precariously rowed to the other shore and is seated on a rocky ledge overlooking Beecher Lake. The first New Year's Eve ceremony at DBZ is held at the end of that eventful year.

The first seven-day sesshin at DBZ, attended by some 20 people, is held March 1-8, 1972; on the last day, the ashes of Hoko Deborah Matthiessen, wife of Peter Matthiessen, are interred in the newly named Sangha Meadow. Later that month, we have sesshin at Litchfield, Connecticut with special guest Sochu Suzuki Roshi, sub-abbot of Ryutaku-ji. Soen Roshi arrives in August, driving across the United States with Tai-san after their sesshin at the Los Angeles Bosatsu Kai, and the second seven-day sesshin at DBZ is held in early September. At this sesshin, for the first time, Soen Roshi sings "Atta Dipa," the last words of Shakyamuni Buddha, which he had seen inscribed on the lid of a box of the Buddha's relics while in India earlier that year.

On September 15, 1972, Eido Roshi receives Dharma transmission from Soen Roshi, is given the name Mui Shitsu ("True Man without Rank"), and is formally installed as Abbot of both New York Zendo and International Dai Bosatsu Zendo. Eido Roshi's 40th birthday is celebrated on October 1.

On January 17, 1973, some 20 sangha members gather at DBZ for the first Rohatsu sesshin there. On March 28, at the age of 88, Hakuun-shitsu Yasutani Ryoko Zenji Dai Osho passes from this life; Eido Roshi dedicates the DBZ sesshin of April 20-27 to him. Construction on the new monastery begins, and we learn that the inflation caused by the fuel crisis will make it necessary to raise funds to add to the endowment for DBZ. Eido Roshi asks Margot Wilkie, Peter Matthiessen and me to work on an informational fundraising brochure.

The first harvest of the garden at DBZ is celebrated at Thanksgiving in 1973, and our first full eight-day Rohatsu sesshin is conducted by Eido Roshi at Shobo-ji. We begin the tradition of reciting the *Diamond Sutra* each day. During a teisho, Eido Roshi tells us the moving story of Aiho-san's will, in which she makes the following inspiring request:

"At the moment death comes, for eyes, I would like to keep looking at Gempo Roshi's Commentary on the *Gateless Gate*... for ears, I would like to hear the melody of the "Ode to Joy"... for nose, I would like to smell the fragrance of Misho ('gentle smile') incense; for mouth I would like a drop of spring water from Dai Bosatsu Zendo; for body, I would like to hold my husband's hand; and for mind, Let True Dharma Continue."

In the spring of 1974, a Dai Bosatsu Evening is held at Japan House. We perform *Togan Koji*, a Noh play; Eido Roshi speaks about the meaning of Namu Dai Bosa and about Zen practice; a number of us sit zazen on stage; a long line of haiku scrolls are stretched across the stage, and Soen Roshi reads and speaks about each. Pointing to the calligraphy "Great Laughter," he leads everyone in the auditorium—about 300—in great laughter. We end the evening with chanting of Heart Sutra and Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo and then, the

entire hall chants *Namu Dai Bosa*.

That same spring Eido Roshi asks my first husband, Shoro Lou Nordstrom, and me if we would like to be coordinators of the first summer residency program. "We would love to!" we both exclaim. Lou has a tenured teaching position at Marymount College, where I've been working as publications manager. We've been living in a little house in Rockland County that was constructed in the Depression era by our elderly friends Norma Millay (sister of the poet Edna St. Vincent Millay) and the painter with whom I've been studying, Charles Ellis. We arrange to sublet the house and, as soon as classes end, we drive up to DBZ and move into the bedroom off the zendo on the second floor.

Other enthusiastic sangha members join us, and we begin our communal life, clearing rocks to expand the garden and planting a large variety of vegetables, including corn, which Eido Roshi assures me won't produce before frost. His realistic assessment turns out to be quite correct. Daily zazen with our small group is augmented by sesshin with Soen Roshi, who is now spending more time at DBZ, and Eido Roshi. Lou and I work with Eido Roshi on the book *Namu Dai Bosa: A Transmission of Zen to America*.

At the end of the summer, which closes with a seven-day sesshin, it seems impossible to leave. Lou resigns from the Marymount faculty, and we remain at DBZ with five other students, living in the mostly unheated and quite drafty house, as the monastery construction continues. Preparing breakfast, I often find myself rushing out with my camera to capture the dawn sun coloring the mists over the lake rose and amber. As winter deepens, the water in the Buddha's bowl on the altar frequently freezes overnight. Before morning zazen we take turns going out in the old blue truck to plow and sand the road so that the construction crews can get up the hill. In late winter we tap for maple syrup. Incredibly, spring does come once again; the lake thaws, there's the sound of rushing water, the songs of returning robins and wood thrushes, the scent of daffodils.

In the summer, we're joined by a larger contingent of sangha members. The first of two summer sesshins is held from June 28 to July 5. On the fifth day, our first zazen in the new zendo begins. Eido Roshi tells us, "This floor has finally been laid. Now we must sit with all our might—we must be the nails and screws." On July 4, he takes the high seat for his first teisho in the new zendo, and begins, "At last a baby is born"—and is overwhelmed with tears, as are many of us. He asks Suigan Eddie Daniels to "play the teisho"; Suigan goes to the altar with his flute and plays "A Child Is Born."

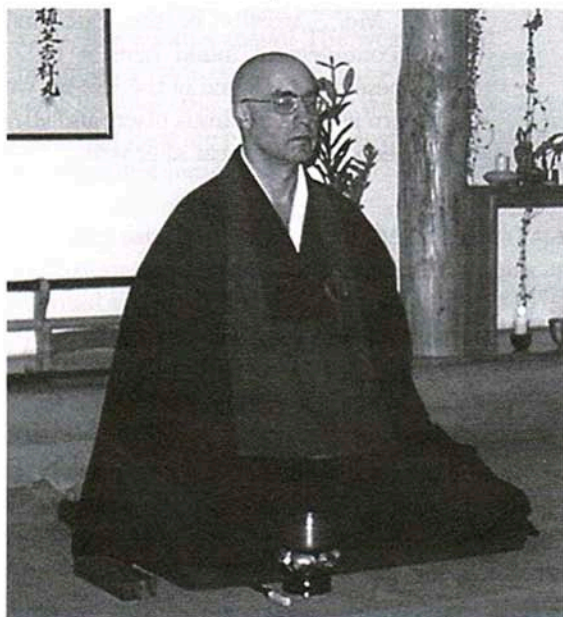
On August 3, we sit in the old zendo, and then leave one by one to go up to the monastery, where we kneel before Eido Roshi in the traditional *nivazume*

posture to request formal acceptance as a student at International Dai Bosatsu Zendo; then we go to our new quarters and continue sitting until all have entered.

On August 9, 1975, a Dedication Ceremony is held in the new monastery. "To the Deities of Dai Bosatsu mountain, lake and field," Eido Roshi intones, "On behalf of all the sangha, I ask your forgiveness for our destruction and pollution of rocks, trees, grasses and mosses and the nature of the Catskill Mountains, particularly by Beecher Lake. I would like to report about our work to establish a Zen monastery on this site where three years ago the ground was broken. I want to thank you for your protection from damage by earth, water, fire, and wind, and from any other source, and to ask for your continued protection of this monastery."

Soen Roshi arrives August 21, Dai Bosatsu Mandala Day, for a visit of several months, and we have our first seven-day sesshin entirely in the new zendo from August 30 through September 6, conducted by both roshis. Planning begins for the following summer's formal opening and dedication ceremonies, in which Dai Bosatsu Zendo will be offered as a place of true freedom in celebration of the United States of America's Bicentennial. And the rest is history.

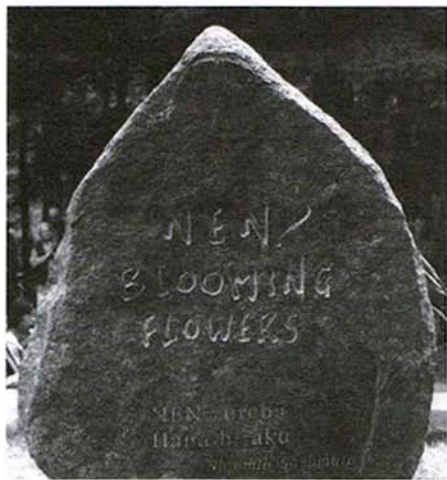
Genjo Marinello, Abbot DaiBaiZan ChoBoZen-Ji a.k.a.: Seattle Zen Temple



My first sesshin at DBZ was Holy Days ten years ago. Even though I had been training elsewhere in Zen for many years, coming to DBZ was a scary prospect. I was being sent by my ordination teacher, Genki Takabayashi Roshi to continue my Zen training. Not surprisingly, I was a little nervous, when I first arrived at the mother temple of Rinzai Zen in the Americas. Sadly, that first night I fell into a more isolated, alone, abandoned and

frightened condition than I could ever recall feeling before. Now did that have anything to do with the hospitality I was shown, or with Eido Roshi's sternness? Not a bit; nothing but kindness was shown to me, and I received nothing but compassion and some curiosity from Eido Roshi.

So where was this terrible fear, isolation and angst coming from? I know now that it was some haunting of old doubt and fear related to my deceased father. At one point during this pivotal sesshin, Eido Roshi quite naturally noticed that for a person who had trained many years, I looked more than a little discombobulated. He said, "Have you tried repeating Mu... with all your might?" And I remembered Mu... Oh, lovely Mu..., something to see me through the hell-realm that I found myself in. And, you know, working Mu didn't make any of it go away, but Mu... allowed me to face it, and not drown in it. Mu allowed me to breathe through my pain, and my gratitude grows. After awhile, once we have combusted enough on the zafu, something else arises. A vast appreciation bubbles up for all things great and small, along with deep gratitude and caring.



Speaking of caring, I am always impressed by how even the rocks at DBZ are given care and attention. Even a rock, any rock, is exquisite in its own way. And when our hearts begin to open a little more broadly, we begin to care for every rock and blade of grass. Likewise, we realize that each one of us is a unique manifestation of Mu... worthy of the care and encouragement found here at DBZ. These are just some of the lessons we learn at this wondrous place, and why I keep returning year after year.

With palms together,
Reverend Genjo Marinello

Zenrin Robert Lewis, Abbot Jacksonville Zen Sangha, Unzan Finding Footing

DBZ was only two years old when I first arrived for kessei. Its quiet elegance of today was yet to be. Then, as now, the off-white walls reflected the play of light and color coming in from the forest in summer and fall. But in winter those blank walls and empty spaces left a primitive and raw feeling. And the state-of-the-art equipment behind the scenes was off in the future.

In those days I knew everything, and so must have been nearly the worst Zen student ever to darken DBZ's doors. The crunch came at Rohatsu. The nights seemed endless and worse than pointless. We'd been repairing the road and leading water away from it, and during sittings I was obsessing practically inch by inch on taking that road down the mountain. And then worrying about going bonkers from makyo (visual delusions) appearing on the wall I faced in the Dharma Hall.

Worst was sitting there in the Zendo caught in a grim triangle: the wretched pain; the lust like a bad pornographic movie with no plot, much less any resolution; and the thought-streaming drama running through the noggin at top speed.

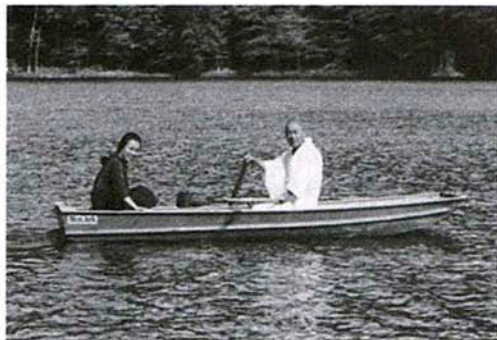
In the middle of all this the Jikijitsu silently got the keisaku and came down the row. I got my palms together. To my complete surprise, he struck me so very hard and accurately that I was immediately headed in the right direction. This was far beyond all expectation. Temporary as the effect was, even now it seems to have been decisive.

A couple of years later, with no warning, leaving me no chance to say thanks and goodbye, he left. I can never be grateful enough for his junkei (keisaku work). Never!

Seigan Ed Glassing

There is a power at Dai Bosatsu Mountain. I don't know if it was always there or if the Zendo situated on its top magnifies this energy like a crystal. Each time I drive up the road from the gatehouse I feel like I am entering another realm. It is another realm! The weather is its own making, the clouds, the wind, the snow, despite conditions elsewhere- this mountain has its own power. Stars seem brighter, the moon is ...well, more moonish, and the animals seem to know that they are protected. How did Roshi find this place - or rather, how did the place find him?

I recently saw some pictures of the "old days" at the Beecher house, before the monastery was completed. Longhaired hippies in robes, kinhin in the grass, an informal tea ceremony amongst wild flowers. The idealism and optimism in all the faces is so readily apparent. One can feel they knew this was the beginning, that they knew that they were pioneers in the true sense of the word. They knew somehow that all their hard work was for something far greater and larger than them. Seeing these pictures, I feel that their blood, sweat, and tears are in the foundation of Dai Bosatsu Zendo, both literally and metaphorically. At this time in the 1970's, I was only a child, not knowing anything. But seeing these photographs some thirty years later, I am humbled by their efforts. That much I know. It is to their legacy, their spirit and their work that I am indebted for my Zen life. Thank you.



They say a picture is worth a thousand words. In one photo, a youthful “Tai-san” is in work clothes; slim, his hands dirty from digging and building. In another, Roshi and a smiling Aiho-san are in a rowboat together on Beecher Lake. The genuine happiness on their faces is contagious. When I see them today, they still seem to have this spark of optimism,

idealism, and a hope that their mission will be for something larger, something grander. Happy Thirtieth Anniversary to Dai Bosatsu Zendo! May this mind extend over the whole Universe.

Fujin Butsudo

United We Sit

After sitting for a few months at Shobo-ji, I read somewhere about the existence of a “mountain retreat center” related to the same tradition and under the leadership of the same teacher. I knew I had to go, and silently knew if I went..... other things had to drastically change in my life. Not that I was totally contented with my livelihood and activities, but it held together so to speak. I was able to keep looking almost normal, not without great effort though. I finally went, and the tsunami occurred as expected, or maybe was it a treacherous mud-slide. I clearly remember my feeling upon first viewing the zen hall: I saw a huge field to cultivate oneself. It seemed literally enormous, and filled with endless possibilities. Upon returning to Manhattan, the words kept pounding me day and night: “What on earth are you doing with your life??” I kept denying how often and strongly they struck me. Yet, to listen to them meant to start my whole life all over from scratch. Could I do that?? Did I even have a choice in the matter?

On one Saturday afternoon, the senior student of the aikido dojo where I was then training, who originally gave me the address of Shobo-Ji and encouraged me to do zazen, invited me to an exhibition with artwork by a fellow Aikido student. I hesitated but then accepted the invitation. Steve drove through Manhattan, parked his car, and then we walked a few blocks. At one point, we passed a small church with a few steps leading to the entrance. A tiny old man was sitting in a wheel-chair at the bottom of the stairs, seemingly waiting. Countless people passed him, yet he didn't heed any attention to them. When I passed him, he called me out: “Hey, could you please help me up the stairs?” I froze, as I saw my own father there, nailed on a wheel-chair. I called Steve, since he hadn't paid any attention to

my lingering behind, and knowing I couldn't lift the man and the wheelchair all by myself. Steve didn't seem to have understood what was going on, and laughing at me he cried from the distance, "Hey, come on, you can't help everyone out there!" Upon hearing these words, all my doubts about my future at Dai Bosatsu Zendo crumbled down. Without judging what had just happened, in an instant I knew what I had to do. The next morning I started packing my belongings and making arrangements for my first kessei at DBZ. I never even thought about returning. Thinking it over I wonder whether this man in the wheelchair was a *real person*, or just an apparition visible by myself only, who was waiting there to help me make my decision. Whichever the case, boundless gratitude to you, unknown Bodhisattva!

On this 30th anniversary, I would like to fondly recall all those known and unknown Bodhisattvas who have sustained my practice and my life during the past 15 years. Of course Eido Roshi and Yamakawa Roshi still try to train in vain the dullest of their dullest students, with inexhaustible patience. But lately I start to become aware of how much I owe the sangha of both Dai Bosatsu Zendo and Shobo-Ji. Every single meal that I ever accepted during the past 15 years was offered to me by the sangha so that I can prove Steve wrong; and demonstrate not only that can we, but we *must* help *everyone* out there. With the past anniversary announcements and fundraising, I was moved to tears by the sangha's genuine concern for the continuation of this beautiful tradition on our mountain. Everyone gave what they could, and some even went beyond. Some offered their skills and time, others gave generous contributions, even though they couldn't attend any of the events, still others offered kind words and moving letters. We at Dai Bosatsu can only carry one aspect of the practice. There is a whole lot more which needs to be endorsed by the sangha at large. The sangha responded, and it is a tremendous encouragement for future generations of zen students in America. I have no doubt or fear whatsoever whether DBZ can survive in the decades to come. With the concern and warm heartedness the sangha has displayed, I am more than confident that for many many, many years to come, indeed, "United we sit"!

With Joy and Gratitude
Fujin

Doshin David Schubert

Heaven and Earth meet on Dai Bosatsu Mountain

Congratulations Eido Roshi! You have had such a dynamic influence on countless people. I count myself as one of the luckiest people having met you! Everyday your Dharma resounds in my life like a Bonsho rung at dawn. Who would I now be if karma had not shown me the way to you and Dai Bosatsu Zendo? How would I now be if you had not shown me such patience and

kindness, and forced me to face my fears and lack of self-confidence? I don't know. The golden years spent as a resident at Dai Bosatsu shine alone! It is impossible for me to select one memory or event that can fully represent the richness that knowing you has instilled in me. Every moment, everywhere the DBZ mandala manifests; therefore I choose the following true event to exemplify the uncanny nature of your legacy. Heaven and earth meet on Dai Bosatsu Mountain...

I believe it was 1996, the 20th anniversary of DBZ's founding, that Eido Roshi reintroduced the full Dai Bosatsu Mandala Day ceremony, to be commemorated every 21st day of the month. It was the same service that Soen Roshi and Nyogen Senzaki performed 'together' across the Pacific Ocean. This is one of the most powerful chanting ceremonies and always leaves me energized for days. On one such evening in 1996, Eido Roshi and the DBZ residents were sitting in zazen before the beginning of the ceremony. The air was thick and humid and the sky darkened with clouds. No breeze, no birds seemed to sing. "Myo ho rengo kyo..." the chanting thus begun! Soon a roll of thunder seemed to echo from the mokugyo's rhythm. "...A flash of lightening in a summer cloud." Then the wind blew down from Dai Bosatsu Mountain and entered the open Zendo doors, making the candles flicker and delivering the smell of impending rain. Flash, Crash! The thunder seemed to erupt from the center of the Zendo where Roshi sat motionless. Then it happened; heaven exploded in a barrage of hail! It pounded the Zendo cedar roof and kinhin deck (to this day you can still see some of the pits it made in the wood). As Jisha I raced to close the doors as the hail bounced into the corridor. "Namu Dai Bosa, Namu Dai Bosa, Namu Dai Bosa..." our chanting continued. As quick as it began the hail stopped, and a cool mist slowly descended the mountain. Roshi did the dedication as the last thunder rumbled in the distance. The mountain was happy.

Ippo Keido Marc Hendler

To have spent 7 years as a resident of Dai Bosatsu Zendo was a blessing that I was fortunate to be able to experience. To have known Eido Roshi for 14 years as the recipient of his love, compassion and unconditional friendship is another blessing. Combining these two – residence on this beautiful mountain combined with Roshi's presence – the gratitude I have is like a lightning bolt that shoots up and down my spine.

Anyway, after four years as a non-ordained resident, I had started to wonder if I was merely escaping from the pressures and vicissitudes of daily life. I had recently met a Japanese children's book illustrator and we had started a correspondence. She had written to me asking about Zen meditation. I sent a reply explaining Koan practice and dokusan, giving her two examples: "Why is only One Peak not white?" and Goso's buffalo.

She sent back some cute sketches – one of a buffalo with his tail stuck in a window and her “answers” to the koans. She also wrote, “It must be nice to sit around and think of these funny stories all day instead of having to work for a living and pay your bills.” This comment cut to the core of my dilemma.

Shortly thereafter, a banker from Tokyo made an overnight visit to DBZ and at morning meeting he addressed us residents. He said, “I wonder what terrible things must have happened in your lives to induce you to seclude yourself away from the secular world. My life is SO busy with work- I’m constantly answering e-mails or making important phone calls- I couldn’t imagine escaping from all that to come to a place like this and meditate.”

Roshi, always well known for his impeccable hospitality and deference towards guests immediately addressed him, without anger or annoyance, but with a forceful stern manner. He said, “These people (DBZ residents) gave up comfortable lives with their families and friends. Some relinquished lucrative careers- they came not to ‘escape’ but to confront themselves and to unceasingly investigate the great matter of life and death. Their efforts are enormous. It is YOU,” pointing a finger at the banker, “who is the one escaping with all your telephone calls, meetings, e-mails, et cetera.”

There was a silence and then morning meeting resumed in a jovial spirit as if the whole incident never took place. I was bursting with pride at Roshi defending us like that and helping me with the answer to my genjo-koan. Later that evening, I ran with all my might to dokusan to profusely thank him. And I said, Now I realize why I’m here and not merely escaping from the world.

I shall never forget Roshi’s reply. He said, “Ippo, maybe YOU are here trying to escape. Even Mu practice can be a form of escape and aversion from life’s problems. But while you are here, this is your chance to confront whatever it is you want to run away from. Ceaselessly, CONFRONT, CONFRONT, CONFRONT. Confront fearlessly. And if there is fear, then confront that as well.”

I have not always been able to follow his heartfelt exhortation. My habitual reaction when confronted with difficult situations is to run away. But little by little, with each sesshin and each dokusan, those words (along with his other teachings) are gradually taking root somewhere in my being. I can’t imagine going through this life without this practice, Eido Roshi’s love and compassion and this magnificent, elegant structure called Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji.

My debts are enormous. I sincerely hope that I can repay them and requite

Eido Roshi's beneficence during my lifetime. My heartfelt congratulations to Eido Roshi on the 30th anniversary of Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji.

Ippo Keido

Zenshin Richard Rudin

Today.

Seisen Norah Messina and Tetsugyu Ray Messina

We early members of the Zen Studies Society were fortunate to be in at the beginning - American pioneers exploring the uncharted territory of inner space. All our energy became focused on making Eido Roshi's impossible dream come true. Apart from fund raising and other activities - we would help in clearing the space on the construction site.

This photo of an impromptu ceremony showing Roshi, Bill Johnston, the architect, Tetsugyu and Seisen and others was taken in May 1974 when Eido Roshi dedicated the start of what is now the imposing entrance of DBZ. The Monastery now seems to be such an integral part of the landscape - it appears as though it has been there forever.

Once standing with Soen Roshi by the lake I asked him if this place reminded him of Japan - he said quietly with a far away look in his eyes - "Ancient Japan."

Seisen & Tetsugyu



Tetsugyu Ray Messina and Seisen Norah Messina, far right second row

Bunrin Madeline Schreiber

Our Dharma Karma

*The waves of Dharma have found the shores of the modern world,
And even now they continue to break and crash.
Our zendo has channeled the precious waters for countless beings,
While still courageous enough to teach about impermanence and karma.
I have been able to see with my own eyes that whatever comes together comes apart,
And that the merit of our Dharma Karma goes on and on and on . . . in its own way.*

Bunrin Madeline

Eshin Brenda Shoshanna

The impossible dream has been dreamt! Unbelievably, we are celebrating the 30th anniversary of DBZ. When I first came to New York Zendo, we attended sesshin at Litchfield, Ct. At that time, the property was just acquired and DBZ consisted of sketches on paper we looked at during morning meeting in New York. "Keep these in your mind," Eido Roshi informed us. Looking at the drawings of an authentic Japanese monastery, I felt as if I were being taken on a trip back through the centuries. It hardly seemed possible it could come to life here in New York. But it did.

The early sesshins at DBZ were held at the guest house on the lake. We sat close together bathed by the sunlight that came in through the glass doors facing the lake and bathed by the warmth, intensity and liveliness the early sangha shared. Sitting in sesshin, listening to the incredible, inspiring teishos of both Soen Roshi and Eido Roshi, life turned 180 degrees around. It seemed that anything was possible, that everything could happen. And it did.

The Zen pioneers arrived. Unforgettable characters joined the sangha, and without their uniqueness, dedication, and sense of adventure, this difficult practice may not have been able to take root. I remember with great gratitude those who uplifted and supported not only my practice, but the practice of us all – in particular, Aiho-san Yasuko Shimano, Roko ni-Osho Sherry Chayat, Dogo Don Scanlon, Jonen Sheila Curtis, Kanzon Bruce Rickenbacker, Peter Gamby, Daijo Vincent Piazza, Rodo Harold Weissberger, Wado Viiki Gerdy, Kujū Sara Birnbaum, Shoro Lou Nordstrom. Most of us lived near the zendo and one another. We were tremendously close, providing enormous sustenance and inspiration.

Eventually, we moved into DBZ, a formal Japanese monastery. Step by step the journey has brought new difficulties, strength, understanding and joy. Over

these precious years I have learned many, many things from Eido Roshi and am forever grateful to him. One of his teachings that has moved me most has been his incredible ability to persevere. No matter what happened, no matter what obstacle or challenge presented itself, Eido Roshi continued right on. His amazing power of diligence and dedication is rare. This example is so deeply needed not only as our zen practice ripens, but as we continue in planting this monastery in foreign soil.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank Eido Roshi for his extraordinary efforts. Not only my life, but the lives of many would never have been the same without it.

May Dai Bosatsu Zendo have many more anniversary sesshins. Onwards to the next thirty years!

Honan Yoshiaki Amakawa

My favorite memory of my time at DBZ occurred during the very first sesshin (Rohatsu) I attended in 1988 only three months after starting zazen at Shoboji. Although I am Japanese, it was the first time I heard the word "sesshin" and I had absolutely no idea what was in store. (No one told me about it, either!) I really looked forward to the peaceful mountain retreat away from the civilization, of which my wife in fact became extremely envious. Interestingly, Roshi seemed very encouraging and even welcoming when I asked for his permission to attend.

Well, it didn't take even one full day to realize the grave mistake I'd made. I was simply not used to sitting such long hours for so many days. On the second and third days, physical pain became almost unbearable and sitting became stressful. On my fourth day, sensing my blood pressure going up, I went to Jisha who confirmed it to be very high. She told me that it was up to me whether to continue or not. So, I decided to bring it up to Roshi during dokusan. When Roshi heard my "case," he said very gently but matter-of-factly: "As far as I know, nobody has died on a cushion...yet." At that moment, I didn't know how to react since I was expecting a little more reassuring "comment." I just replied: "Is that so?" I decided to continue for the time being. However, as I lay in bed that night, I began to think about the worst-case scenario for the next day, heart attack or stroke resulting in my death. Then, a somewhat strange yet comforting thought came to me: DBZ might be an ideal place to rest because my funeral could take place right here and the Sangha Meadow was right there, and everything would be taken care of.

On the fifth day, my anxiety continued until the last sitting when Roshi and

his attendant slowly passed each one of us. They carried a lantern in the darkness. When the lantern passed right in front of me, it instantly reminded me of the soft, gentle light I had seen when I was in a coma due to high altitude sickness (pulmonary edema) in a village clinic in Bolivia in 1987. It was the same soft, gentle light that gave me complete contentment and peace. I was overwhelmed by the lantern light. Tears of infinite gratitude welled up from deep within me.

The next morning, in the morning service, I took ATTA DIPA to my heart again with infinite gratitude: ATTA DIPA, VIHARATHA, ATTA SARANA, ANANNA SARANA, DHAMMA DIPA, DHAMMA SARANA, ANANNA SARANA (Know! You are the Light itself. Rely on yourself. Do not rely on others. The Dharma is the Light. Rely on the Dharma. Do not rely on anything other than the Dharma).

I would like to thank Eido Roshi for the “grandmotherly” advice without which I would have left the sesshin that turned out to be the most memorable.

Myojo Sara Wexler

3 AM, Dai Bosatsu Day, the 4th of the month, and I am driving 60 miles from Woodstock to Dai Bosatsu to arrive for morning service.

Morning service is over. We walk downstairs, put on our shoes, and go outside. In the early morning light, we form a line with Eido Roshi leading, and start to walk, our feet scrunching on the gravel.

We arrive at Sangha Meadow, which looks over the lake. We chant “Dai Segaki” for all known and unknown deceased Dharma brothers and sisters and hear the names of all buried in the meadow. Each is given a stick of incense to place wherever we wish in the meadow, and I am brought closer to my loved ones.

It is time to line up for our walk (scrunch, scrunch) to the guest house patio, close to the lake. With sunlight shining through the early morning mists on the lake, Roshi walks down to the dock and with palms in gassho faces the Buddha across the water. We, the sangha, chant “Namu Dai Bosa” and Dai Bosatsu day is over.

Back at the Zendo, we sit in zazen until the breakfast bell.

I eat and return 60 miles to my home, returning month after month, year after year for Dai Bosatsu day at my spiritual home.

Namu Dai Bosa, Namu Dai Bosa, Namu Dai Bosa

Myochi Nancy O'Hara

Remembrance of Things Past

October 7, 1988: my first day on DBZ Mountain, my first taste of zazen. It wasn't what I was looking for, but I was so confused that I didn't know what I was looking for. I only wanted to stop hurting. I was there to attend a retreat led by Boun Nancy Berg. I didn't know her, I didn't know the person who gave me a ride, I didn't know Roshi (I later learned that he was on sabbatical in Japan), I didn't know where I was going, I didn't know who I was, I didn't know anything about Zen. I was scared.



Donge

Stepping from the car, just outside the ground floor doors of the monastery, I was greeted by a bald, black-robed monk with arms outspread in a welcoming embrace. This theatrical, operatic, costumed gesture from Donge – my first ever monk who immediately became my favorite – was far from the somber image of a monk that I had held in my brain. And it watered the seed in my heart that had been planted at the foot of the mountain – the long ride up had begun to calm my nerves and wash the city stress from my pores – and I knew without knowing anything that I was coming home.

When I left the mountain at the end of that first weekend, I no longer wanted to die; I left that part of me on the cushion. And though Donge is long gone (he died of complications from AIDS in 1992) he is always there to greet me, open-hearted, eyes and mouth grinning broad, to help relieve me of whatever difficulty-du-jour I am doing battle with. And each time I leave, no matter how arduous the struggle, my burden is always a little lighter.

Today, when I travel up to DBZ for sesshin or weekend retreats, I arrive freer than ever and leave freer still, thanks to all the Zen monks and nuns and Dharma brothers and sisters who came before and after Donge and me. And most especially thanks to Eido Roshi and Aiho-san for whom there was no monk with open arms waiting on their first journey to this land and up DBZ Mountain. And who, with their courage and steadfastness, have set a sublime example. I am honored to be but one of the many who call DBZ their spiritual home.

Myochi Nancy O'Hara

Genno Linda King

Find Your Place

I had always been interested in the idea of meditation, the practice I found absolutely impossible. Crazy mind and anxious body, I was too hyper to be quiet. Yet I longed to be, longed to just be in peace. No actions required.

I learned Myochi was having a weekend retreat at a Zen Monastery in the Catskills. People I knew were going. I wondered if I had the guts to join them. Although I felt quite intimidated both by my difficulties with meditation and also by my ideas about the austerity of Zen sects, I decided to go.

The journey seemed long and the destination remote. I remember being overwhelmed by the beauty of the woods as we came up Dai Bosatsu Mountain (slowly, the road was quite bad then). We arrived at the Zendo and were greeted by Doshin. My first illusion was smashed immediately. In direct opposition to the strict and forbidding Zen person I was expecting, Doshin told jokes (the hot dog vendor and the Zen Monk), was gentle and full of kindness.

Myochi said we should go into the zendo and find our place so that when services started we would not be wandering about aimlessly. So I did. I found my name, then standing in front of my cushion alone in the silent zendo, a thought came to mind. I said to myself "It sure took a long time to get here." As soon as I thought these words, I realized that I didn't mean that day's journey but the whole journey of my life up to that second. All my life I had been traveling, and finally after so many wrong turns, I had finally reached my destination.

Sitting was hard for me, the mind and body rebellious, but still I continued. The last day I sat near the lake amid the fall foliage, the deer were close by and as the afternoon sun lowered, the brilliant leaves were reflected in Beecher Lake and everything turned to gold. At that moment I realized I was in my breath, in my body, nowhere else... just there. This amazing and singular occurrence convinced me. I decided that I would continue sitting and I did. In time I became Roshi's student and began doing sesshin. Had Roshi not decided to take the harder road and build this place and teach this practice I have no doubt that I would still be wandering, looking for answers to questions I didn't know how to ask. Nothing can express my gratitude to him and to this practice, but I will never cease trying to do so.

Many years have passed since then, many sesshins have come and gone. As a result, my understanding of the world has changed, my understanding of myself has changed. But in reality nothing has changed at all, I have simply found my place.



Kabindra Shakya (a descendant of The Buddha) with Daishin Pawel Wojtasik (right) at DBZ (New Year's Day 2003.)

Daishin Pawel Wojtasik

Around 1997 I was undergoing an 'existential crisis'. Seeing my state, a doctor put me on antidepressant Zoloft. Around that time I was talking to the Polish monk Banzan. I asked him about kessei. Banzan said emphatically, "Kessei is great!"

I told Roshi I was feeling apprehensive about living in an institution. He said "An institution? This is not an institution. We live here." I was immediately made comfortable by his welcome.

I decided to sign up for kessei at DBZ. Arriving in September 1998 I was immediately directed to see Roshi. I

After the first month of kessei I began to feel better. All the Mu shouting was taking effect. Without consulting with my doctor I lowered my dose of Zoloft from 75 mg daily to 50 mg. Next month brought further relief as I was feeling more and more integrated into the life on the mountain. A new experience for me, being part of a community.

I lowered the dose further, to 25 mg. During the third month I was not only feeling better, but I was (along with many others) becoming enthusiastic about... just being alive. I decided I did not need Zoloft anymore, and reduced the dose to 0mg. I haven't been on anti-depressants ever since that kessei.

I was jokei during one of the sesshins around 2002. Sunday morning following sesshin, as usual, we had a short morning service, sarei and one period of zazen. My role as jokei was to empty the cup before sarei, so that an offering of tea could be made.

I quickly emptied the water in the cup and replaced it on the altar. Tea was served, preceded by the jishas filling the altar cup with tea. The monk who had been jokei on numerous occasions (whereas I was a mere beginner) thought that I forgot to empty the cup and decided to teach me a lesson. During a short break after sarei, when everyone was replacing their teacups behind them and getting ready for zazen, the monk came up to the altar, picked up the cup, came up to me and poured the liquid on my head and robe. He thought the cup was filled with water which I had forgotten to empty. In actuality, it was tea.

I sat that period of zazen drenched. Amazingly, my mind became vast and calm as an ocean, and I had the best sit of the sesshin.

Daishin Pawel Wojtasik

Koge Eileen Danville

I have been a student of Roshi's for over ten years. There isn't one specific incident that I can remember as having a greater impact than another. What is most important to me is the subtle changes that have occurred over that period of time. My life is much richer because of this practice; my emotional life has greater depth and color; I see life situations clearer; I am successful in my career; my relationships with family and friends more accepting; my appreciation for life has broadened and deepened and a sense of well-being pervades my life. There are many more changes too numerous to list but what I want to emphasize is the daily practice of sitting and paying attention which is essential for truly developing our life. Roshi, Gassho, Gassho, Gassho.

Saiun Atsumi Hara

My very first sesshin at DBZ was the one to celebrate Shobo-ji's 30th anniversary. And now it is the 30th anniversary for DBZ. In 30 years in one's life, everything can happen; finishing one's education, getting a job, getting married, having kids or even one may die. "Thirty years" is a veritable epitome of life. Eido Roshi has accomplished this milestone twice and I feel honored to join him to celebrate both of them. Zen says, "Practice 30 more years!" so that you can have many lives in your life!

Banko Randy Phillips

One of the first teishos I went to by Roshi dealt with having gratitude. I realized that while I had a lot to be thankful for somehow I really did not feel gratitude. It bothered me and I set out to try to "fix" the situation. So I set out to practice feeling gratitude with the hopes that someday it would take root!

Sometime later on a beautiful spring afternoon I was sitting zazen in the zendo on my second sesshin at DBZ. It was towards the end of the week and I was exhausted. Nothing was going "right" and I was so tired of trying to work on my koan- not really knowing how or what I was supposed to be doing. It was all a bit overwhelming. About halfway through the sit a young woman across from me started to gently sob (we were a full house so the extra third row was in place and we were packed in).

Somehow I extended myself to her with my thoughts and breath. As I concentrated on her seeming distress I also started to let go of my preoccupations. At some point something rather amazing happened. I was no longer trying to do anything, even comfort my fellow dharma sister and had

entered the present in what for me was a new way. I think that all of us have had one of those “no snowflake out of place” moments, and this was mine. But it was also an organic feeling of richness, fullness and of unbounded generosity. It was as if this feeling of generosity was wafting like a fragrance off of all things in nature. It was truly a “what more need ye seek” kind of feeling. And the feeling of genuine gratitude that followed was also organic. I no longer had to “practice” gratitude.

What had kind of frightened me before (things just as they are) now took on a whole new vibrancy. I was in search of the miraculous and here it was hidden in the middle of boring every day life! It was then that I realized the power of this incredible practice.

So the heartfelt gratitude that I feel towards Roshi, Aiho-san, the monks, nuns and residents of DBZ, the sangha, and the many dharma brothers and sisters that came before me is in my case really beyond measure. Thank you all. Congratulations to all on this, the 30th Anniversary of DBZ.

Banko

Daiden Charles Young

DBZ 30th anniversary thought

I used to be afraid of the dark. I didn't notice it much after I left the Boy Scouts in eighth grade and stopped sleeping outdoors regularly. Then I moved to New York where it's never dark and I forgot that I was afraid altogether until I started doing sesshins at DBZ in 1998. One of my first assignments from Roshi was to go for a walk at night. I made it about 50 yards down the driveway, had a vision of my obituary on the front page of the New York Post--ZEN ANARCHIST EATEN BY MOUNTAIN LION--and turned back.

On subsequent outings, I went farther and farther down the driveway until walking out to Sangha Meadow or the Jizo stone became part of my ritual. A psychologist might say I conquered my fear by gradual habituation. I would say yeah, but my fear was also replaced by the aesthetic pleasure of experiencing the DBZ garden/wilderness after dark. You never know when you're going to see a doe and her fawn bounding around in the moonlight, or a porcupine waddling off to suck the fluid out of somebody's brake lines. Pondering an intractable koan, you never know when the wind chimes will sound a little encouragement from the patriarchs. Staring up into the night sky that just isn't available in Manhattan, you never know what star will grab your attention with light waves that started their journey millions of years ago.

I can't say that I've lost all my irrational fear, but I have had a powerful lesson in seeing what's there, not what's in my imagination. My hope for DBZ's 30th anniversary is that it will offer such lessons for a thousand more years, and that all large predators in the Catskills come to appreciate the karmic implications of a vegetarian diet.

Daiden

Soun Joe Dowling

At DBZ Jukai 2000

*the mountain wind
blows a little cloud
reflecting on Beecher Lake*

*in Sangha Meadow
wooden roosters crow
why not: a new day is dawning*

*the beaver plods along
the lakeshore still as gray
clouds form atop the mountain*

*a dweller on the zendo threshold
my teacher the pillow
the diamond cutter of the breath*

Jimin Anna Klegon

In August 2002 Roshi came to Poland. At that time I was still considering myself a relative newcomer to DBZ, not really familiar with Roshi's teaching style. So I thought it would be possible to be a little bit with him and a little bit visiting my family and friends. It became clear though right from the start that the real reason I was there was to be with him and any "part way" of doing things was not going to work.

As the main event of the trip, we went to Auschwitz-Birkenau. There is a lot to see in Auschwitz, which is a museum, but I was struck by the fact that Roshi didn't seem that interested in the historical documents and was rather eager to go to Birkenau (the actual death camp) to have a Segaki ceremony.



Jimin Anna Klegon, third from left

So after seeing a few buildings in Auschwitz we took a ten-minute ride to Birkenau. The day was hot beyond belief - sun and no wind. Six of us walked on the tracks in the heat from the entrance gate to the memorial wall where we planned to set up a temporary altar. Suddenly we realized that we forgot the rice offering from the car and Daishin had to run back to get it. While waiting for him I followed Roshi with an umbrella to protect him from the scorching sun.

We set up the altar. Jiun spread a thin silk scarf right on the cobblestones and Roshi knelt on it. At that moment I realized that what we were doing was real, was deep.

We lined up on two sides and began chanting. As soon as we opened our mouths, the sky turned dark and the wind began blowing so strong that it took my umbrella. A sheet with the chant text flew out of my hand and clung to the face of the person standing next to me. Then we heard thunder. There was no rain, just that thunder, and wind, and the dark sky. We continued our chanting but now it was transformed - it came from the very bottom of our being.

I was deeply moved. Standing there, a Polish person among her ancestors, I was offering to them the most precious thing I had. And they responded.

As soon as our ceremony ended, the clouds parted and the wind stopped. The sun resumed burning and the air stood still.

That single event transformed my view on life and death.

Eiko Ellen Kerr

We have all heard Eido Roshi speak about the True Man Without Rank. Maybe due to my Asian upbringing, some esoteric aspects of Buddhism do not seem so bizarre to me, but I do struggle with duality and labels, as do we all here in the West. Nonetheless, I did have an idea of what this True Man Without Rank might be like, and certainly this was something to strive towards.

So, sesshins and sits at DBZ and Shobo-ji over the years... And then one day, before the sun was even close to breathing over Dai Bosatsu Mountain, sesshin participants gathered at DBZ's front entrance for a Mandala Day ceremony. Beautiful, if tired, chanting, the very cold air of winter coming in...

Then Roshi stepped outside, turned to face Sangha Meadow, a long stick of offering incense in his right hand.

What happened next is of so subtle and true a beauty, words must fail to circumscribe it. This Zen Master, honoring all the ancestors and Bodhisattvas in our lineage, simply raised his hand and traced a circle in the air, the glow from the incense tip cutting through the pitch darkness.

That was it – a subtle movement, a ceremonial one at that, that any one of us had likely seen numerous times.

But in that few seconds – I can't explain it – Roshi transmitted something to all of us, something powerful, forceful, and real, just like Joshu's Mu – bringing us into the lineage, offering his humble gratitude like a raft large enough to carry us all, even if we weren't aware of what was going on. The words that came into my head as I watched were "splayed wide open" and "showing his guts for Dharma." True Man Without Rank.

In a teisho months later at Shobo-ji, Roshi described his early beginnings in the Zen Studies Society, saying that, well before Shobo-ji's construction, he'd sometimes find himself so hungry (having arrived in New York without much money and no official zendo yet) that he would drink and drink water, then walk around the city for hours.

Again, a subtle comment. But can any of us actually see ourselves wandering the oppressively humid sidewalks of sweltering New York summers, so hungry that our stomachs hurt, filled only with water? And in a "strange land," at that, unfamiliar with the culture, far from home, knowing hardly anyone? I've asked myself since, What in any of our lives we would make such sacrifices for, without request for recognition or recompense? Can any of us claim to love something so much, be so committed to something, that we would do

the same? It hit me that Roshi has in fact sacrificed his life for the Dharma, for our sake. For decades, Roshi, Aiho-san, and numerous others have worked to support this beautiful practice.

Roshi, you have irrevocably changed our lives and the course of Dharma here in the West. You might respond that this has been nothing more than your karma. But this Sangha owes you everything. We'll start with one breath, one sit, at a time.

Eiko Ellen Kerr

Goho Stephen Rossi

For My Teacher

*This dawn
wisps of mists
rising from a still lake
are quickly absorbed
by the empty sky
as it grows
brighter and brighter.*

To Eido Roshi

Jukai 2002

With gratitude

悟峰

Goho Stephen Rossi



Maple syrup harvesting, 1974



Tetsugyu Paul Reps and Roshi



Yamakawa Roshi and monks participate in sesshin at DBZ



Roshi's Dharma transmission
1972



Roko ni-Osho (2nd from left) in 1974



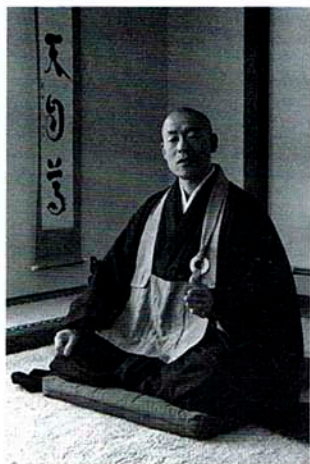
Roshi leaving the port of Yokohama for NY in 1960



Roshi's samu, 1974



Tea master Yamada (left), Soen Roshi, Roshi and others at Beecher lake



Roshi in 1976



Soen Roshi (center), Roshi (right) and a monk from Ryutaku-ji



Soen Roshi (center), Aiho-san to left and Roshi to right



Soen Roshi at DBZ



Constructing the Bonsho Tower in 1975