Editorial by Cathryn Doornekamp

Namaste. Welcome to the spring edition of The Lotus newsletter. How readily the seasons move on.

The cycles of nature are the constants that remind us the only thing which is certain in life is change.

So once again, as the winter wanes, visitors to the Centre are greeted by a row of daffodils inside the front gate. Oh! How merrily their hearts sing as they occupy this space in time!

This edition of The Lotus contains part one of a three-part series written by Founder-Director Eric Doornekamp about The Lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat. Also featured in this newsletter is an article entitled What is our Asana in life?

Of interest in October, may be an Iridology workshop or a Meditation & Relaxation course with facilitator Eric Doornekamp. Please refer to page 8 for more details.

Cathryn and Eric would like to take this opportunity to thank Selwyn Williams for teaching some of the Monday and Tuesday yoga classes during recent weeks. This enabled them to attend open evenings at various colleges to decide on secondary education for Ananda, their 13 year old son.

Yes, You heard right! Young Ananda is now a teenager! He stands taller than his mother, and at the rate he's growing, he'll be overtaking his dad in no time!

Cathryn is about to celebrate a special occasion, her 50th birthday! Members and friends are warmly invited to attend on Sunday 13th October, so be sure to mark this date in your diary. A potluck shared vegetarian lunch is scheduled at 12.30 p.m. followed by a visit to the Sanctuary.

A reminder that the deposit date is drawing near for those who are interested in attending a yoga retreat with Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, at Tatum Park, 28 – 30 March 2014. Please refer to page 5 for registration details. An official welcome and mantra session for retreat participants will be held in the Sanctuary behind the Lotus Centre with Dr. Ananda, before leaving for Tatum Park.

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The Lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat

by Eric Doornekamp

Part One: Early Beginnings

In September 1971 a group of 'hippies' met to set up a new yoga centre in Wellington. This meeting took place in the 'happy days of flower power', a movement interested in love and peace through interpersonal growth.

At the time I had only just returned from a yoga teacher training course conducted by Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri, at Ananda Ashram in Pondicherry, South India.

I rejoined classes held by Terrence Hawkins at the Wellington Hatha Yoga Group. (“Taffy” was my teacher for eight years). Several students expressed a desire for more yoga classes. The outcome of the above meeting was the establishment of The Lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat.

Thus I was appointed as the Director-Founder of The Lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat. An elected committee took care of the necessary administrative matters. The reputation of the Centre led to a growing membership. In the following year we became and incorporated society.

The Centre consisted mostly of young people, who lived in a community. A group of twelve or so residents participated in daily yoga and meditation. Every one shared the workload of tending the organic gardens. Others had jobs outside the Centre and paid rent. There was always a warm welcome to anyone who called in for a chat.

The Centre advocated strict rules about alcohol and the use of drugs, so common in those days. I was aware that some of the 'inmates' experimented with mind altering substances. Rather than kicking them out I helped them with practices that advocated a 'yogic high'. Most of the time they responded well!

It proved a special time for those living at the Centre. As one member of the community remarked: “I felt it was the happiest time in my life.” Our motto: “Be loving and sharing” which applied unconditionally.

The Centre at 129 Aro Street in Wellington spread rapidly over three rental properties. The classes incorporated hatha yoga and raja yoga to train teachers.

129 Aro Street

We rented more space at 127 Cuba Mall in Wellington. Classes were held in hatha yoga, massage courses, cooking, and meditation. Several teachers gave freely of their time on a voluntary basis.

In the weekend we met on Saturdays to listen to guest speakers and share a communal meal in the evening. We ran monthly camps at hired venues, attended by 40 – 50 participants. I was invited to teach yoga at gatherings in different parts of the North and South Island.

Swami Gitananda and his family visited us in 1970 and 1975 holding weekend seminars and giving many lectures which drew crowds in their hundreds. It must be said that yoga was in its heydays.

Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Maharaj
Swami Abhayananda from the Divine Life Society made many visits. So did Reverent Karmayogi (Lou Postlewait), from Henderson, Auckland. We sponsored Zen Master Roshi from Japan.

The Centre published several books written by myself and others. They included recipe books. The most successful was *The Amrita Cook Book*, named after the well-known Vegetarian Restaurant. (Sold 20,000 copies).

Yoga literature included: *Be fit with Yoga, Relax with Yoga, Yoga Therapy, Gems of Wisdom, Yoga with Veronica*, which became the forerunner of a NZTV series.

*Massage for Relaxation* and *Yoga Humour* appeared in successive years. All publications were printed on our own press.

The biggest event in the history of the Lotus Yoga Centre was the move from Wellington to Paraparaumu in 1985. We were ready to make the shift to a retreat and found a perfect location at 91 Ruapehu Street. It was an old colonial homestead, in a semi-rural setting and peaceful surroundings.

What made the Centre so successful in those years? I believe the time was right for many people to regard yoga more seriously. The search was on for an expanded level of awareness at physical, mental, and spiritual levels.

The social aspects also played a role, hence the success of the yoga gatherings we held regularly. The so called 'hippies' might have been somewhat misguided but they were happy to share in each others lives. It marked the beginning of a new holistic view of life. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds.

The materialistic outlook of society at large was due for a complete change in attitude. This seems to have been reflected in the way of life at the Centre. It wasn't the 'business' side. Class fees were not high, books sold at affordable prices, seminar fees were kept within reason. All students who came to yoga could afford the low prices.

We want to hear from senior members about their early association with the Lotus Yoga Centre. A sense of humour makes the story more plausible!

**Editor's Note** – Two more articles on The lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat are scheduled for publication in sequel to this article:

*Part Two: 'In the here and now' will feature in the December 2013 edition of The Lotus.*

What is our Asana in Life?

Asana is the third limb of the 'eight limbs of yoga' as codified by Maharishi Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras.

The common translation of the Sanskrit word asana is seat or posture.

It is little wonder then that the real meaning of asana has become greatly misconstrued. When someone mentions yoga, physical postures are often what foremost comes to mind. Interestingly, Patanjali does not make any reference to particular asanas in the sutras. He describes asana in yoga sutra 2:46 as sthira sukham asanam, a steady and comfortable state.

In order to gain insight into the meaning of this sutra, we need to understand where Patanjali is coming from. Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani says in his book Understanding the Yoga Darshan, that for the great Maharishi Patanjali, asana is not about physical fitness. “It is all about a state of being wherein we are steady and at ease with ourselves. It is not a mere physical practice. That inner state manifests itself physically in a body position.”

And so to understand this sutra in light of the physical practice of asana, Dr. Ananda says we can say that one needs to practice asana until one feels at ease in it. “Practice makes perfect and perfection brings grace and ease.”

So what is this steady state Patanjali refers to? “We are steady only when the mind is calm. When we are steady the mind becomes calm too.” “The link between these two”, Dr. Ananda says, “is awareness and control of breath. Through asana we can start to observe ourselves while we balance on our hands, on our feet, on our head, on our tail bone.”

“Why did our great rishi give us such instructions?”, Dr. Ananda asks. He says they wanted us to develop awareness, to be able to bring our focus within and find the balance that exists within ourselves. “When we have that physical balance, slowly and steadily, emotional and mental balance will follow.” Ref: Understanding the Yoga Darshan, Page 193.

“The state of balance and ease is asana” concludes Dr. Ananda. “It is not only when you are in Nataraja asana, but also when you are walking down the street or when you are waiting for your dosa in an Indian cafe. Asana is a state, very much like ahimsa or brahma-charya. For Maharishi Patanjali these are all states of being that enable us to become true humans and truly humane beings, rather than what we are today: human “doings”. Being, not doing, is the essence of asana.” Ref: Understanding the Yoga Darshan, Page 193.

Asana also relates to our attitude in life. Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani speaks of the relationship between asana and attitude in A Yogic Approach to Wellness. She says the practice of Hatha Yoga provides an important method for cultivating a personality capable of choosing the right attitude to take in any given situation. “How can this be so?” she asks. “Let me explain,” she says. “The English word attitude according to the dictionary, means the position of the body or state of mind regarding some matter. Funk and Wagnall's Standard College Dictionary further explains: Attitude is a synonym of position which means location or orientation in space. It also means a chosen point of view or opinion.”
Meenakshi says, “Attitude is thus closely related to position of body, for the way we hold our body also indicates our attitude or state of mind. In Sanskrit, the word asana springs from the root asi or to be, therefore asana also reflects a state of being.”

Meenakshi points out that asana in modern Yogic contexts has come to indicate merely a gymnastic contortion of the body. But, in essence she says, asana also means attitude or bhavana, or state of being. “Asana reflects the bhavana, and also can produce the bhavana.” Thus Meenakshi says, it logically follows that we may use asanas consciously, to help construct positive attitudes, or bhavanas. “The asana helps us to choose the correct point of view or position of both mind and body towards every situation in our life.”

“In Hatha Yoga, every possible position which the human body is capable of is explored; the body is turned upside down, bent forward, bent backward etc. The body poses are numerous and the body is made flexible, capable of assuming any position the mind requires. Since body positions reflect attitude or bhavana, a flexible body will aid in cultivating a flexible mind, one which is capable of seeing a situation from all possible angles, and then, consciously choosing the best possible position to take in regards to it! Thus bhavana, attitude and asana are intimately related, each dramatically affecting the other!”

Ref: Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, A Yogic approach to wellness, Chapter 6: Yogic Attitudes toward being and wellbeing.

Questions to ask during everyday life:

What is my asana?

What is my stance?

Where do I stand in relationship to the situation I'm in?

Yoga Retreat with Dr. Ananda

Of interest to students of yoga may be “an ashram experience” with Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

28 – 30 March 2014

Venue: Tatum Park, Levin

Editor's Note - Dr. Ananda was born in Pondicherry, South of Madras, in India. He grew up in Ananda Ashram, founded by his parents Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Mahraj, one of the greatest yogis in the last century, and Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, a renowned writer and yogini.

Author of 19 DVDs and 21 books on Yoga, Dr. Ananda is a Yoga Therapist and Gold Medallist in Medical Studies, with Postgraduate Diplomas in Family Health and Yoga. Chairperson of Yoganjali Natyalayam and ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry, South India (www.icyer.com), he is the Honorary President of the Gitananda Yoga Association of Australia and has travelled extensively, teaching in the UK, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, South Africa, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Registration Details:

Early Bird Fee: $450.00 (includes accomodation, vegetarian meals and Gitananda Yoga Association membership).

A Deposit of $150.00 is required by 30th October 2013 to secure a place. Balance is due 1st February 2014.

Enquiries to Cathryn Doornekamp or Ann-Maree stoneylea@vodafone.co.nz
Try Yoga if you're feeling tired

by Eric Doornekamp

Nowadays one of the most common complaints is being tired all the time or “TAT” for short. It may seriously affect our physical and mental state of general wellness.

Stress is often the major problem. To stop worrying is easier said than done. A health check may indicate medical reasons.

How can we boost our energy levels? Yoga is most helpful in overcoming tiredness. Gentle stretching, learning to breathe correctly, peace of mind are amongst its many benefits.

Let's implement a plan of action to see what is happening in our life. Perhaps less “busyness” may offer answers to wasting energy.

Here follow some therapeutic ways towards improving depleted energy. Take time out and pursue a hobby. Avoid becoming a slave to work. Eat healthy, home-cooked meals. Remember what you eat is important but what is eating you is too!

Recharge your batteries and invigorate the body. Relax jaded nerves and aching muscles. Deal with negative issues. Brighten your face with a smile.

Take a walk along the beach and enjoy the benefits of fresh air. Breathe deeply to overcome seasonal depression. Spend time in the company of family and friends.

Did I hear you say, “Oh! I haven't got time for any of this stuff?” Well, you may be surprised how a little reorganising can improve our quality of life. It has always done wonders for me!

The Lotus Yoga Centre offers a wide range of classes for variable grades of fitness. There is even an Early Bird yoga class at 7.00 am every Saturday morning. It may be the motivation you need to get started on the right footing for the weekend.

News from the Centre

IYTA Yoga Day

The Centre's resident yoga teacher, Cathryn Doornekamp, had the good fortune of participating in an IYTA (International Yoga Teachers Association) professional development Yoga workshop entitled “The Joyful Journey” presented by Allie McMillian, Rosemary Weaver and Trish Dye, held at the Lotus Yoga Centre on 29th June.

The workshop provided an ideal opportunity for Cathryn to be reunited with Trish Dye, her tutor for the 18 month IYTA Yoga Teachers Training Course, 1999 – 2000.

Trish guided workshop attendees through a fun moving meditation and meditative dance, while Rosemary lead the “yoga in pairs” component of the workshop. Allie conducted the reflection and professional development session, based on the Map of Meaning adopted for yoga.

Shake up Call

The Centre’s resident terrapin, Kurma had a jolly good 'skake up' on Sunday 21st July when a 6.5 magnitude quake hit! The water in which she was emmersed turned into a raging sea, as the waves caused by the tremour lashed against the walls of her tank!

Despite the turbulence, Kurma negotiated the swells with remarkable courage.

Needless to say “Whare Ora”, the solid old homestead survived the quake unscathed.

AGM

Cathryn and Eric are pleased to report that the Annual General Meeting of the Centre on the
26th July was well attended. It was heartening to have the support of so many members. Those in attendance enjoyed home-made apple crumble and an organic vegan/gluten-free banana cake for supper!

Honorary Membership

We warmly welcome Taffy Hawkins as an Honorary Member of The Lotus Yoga Centre for the forthcoming financial year 1/4/2014 – 31/3/2015.

The appointment was made by Members at the AGM, in recognition of Taffy's long standing contribution to yoga and his ongoing interest in the Lotus Centre over the years.

Taffy was Eric Doornekamp's first yoga teacher at the Wellington Yoga Hatha Group, where he attended two classes per week for eight years from 1960 – 1968. To this day, Eric feels greatly indebted for all the knowledge Taffy imparted.

Helping Hands

Cathryn and Eric Doornekamp would like to acknowledge the many 'helping hands' that go on behind the scenes at the Centre in the nature of karma yoga.

Anthony Britton for continuing to provide expert help with computer matters.

Alistair MacArthur for clearing blackberries, and tending to the matai and kahikatea trees he planted around the pond eight years ago.

Patricia Batt and Brian Elsmore for weeding the flower garden inside the front gate, the herb garden and staking up pittosporum trees.

Brodie Andrews for weed-eating and carrying out minor repairs to fences and the side ramp.

Sainy Roberio for pruning and trimming trees.

Virginia Moth for mowing lawns.

Help in the garden is always more than welcome. If you'd like to be of service in this way, please contact Eric or Cathryn.

Housekeeping

A few housekeeping reminders to those that attend classes and courses at the Centre.

Cellphones

Out of consideration for others, please turn cellphones off while the class or course is in progress.

Parking

Parking is inside the grounds, either alongside the Centre or in front, not on the road.

When a class or course is in progress, there is room for 8 cars to park comfortably on the sealed areas: 3 in front of the Centre and 5 in the driveway alongside. The first to arrive may park directly in front of the garage, allowing 4 more cars to park in the length of the driveway.

Any extras may park on the grass verge outside the front gate, or on the grass area to the immediate left just inside the front gate.

When dry, cars may park on the lawn in front of the Centre. Orange road cones indicate the lawn is too wet to park on.
Special Offer
Discounted Book Sale
Recipes from the Farmyard
$5.00 (Was $10.00)

Be Fit with Yoga
$2.00 (was $5.00)

The Great New Zealand Walk
$2.00 (was $5.00)

Upcoming Courses

Meditation Course
Regular 4 week introductory block courses in meditation are held on
Thursday evenings 7.30 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.
at the Lotus Yoga Centre
with Facilitator Eric Doornekamp.

Course starting dates:
5 Sept 2013, 3 Oct 2013, 7 Nov 2013
The aim of the Meditation Course is to reduce stress and achieve peace of mind, increasing energy levels.
You will learn that by controlling your breathing and becoming more aware of your habit patterns, you have the key to liberation.

Cost $45.00  Repeats $30.00
Prior enrolments are essential.

Iridology Workshop
Which one of the five Iris types are you?
Find out on
Sunday 20 October 2013
10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
with Course Facilitator Eric Doornekamp

In this ½ day workshop you will learn what the reading of the eyes reveals:
* Constitutional strengths or weaknesses
* Nutritional requirements
* Inherent (genetic) strengths and weaknesses
* Toxic build-up in the body
* The condition of your elimination channels.
Which ones can you improve?

Cost $35.00 prepaid. Bookings Essential
Products for Purchase

Organic Produce

Surplus organic produce from the orchard and vegetable garden is available by gold coin donation.

Supplements

Malcolm Harker's Herbal Remedies and Lifestream Spirulina tablets and powder are available on request.

Practitioner range supplements are available by appointment.

Full Members receive a 10% discount

Books

The following books published by the Centre are available for purchase:

- **Amrita Cookbook**
  *Melanie Walker* - $18.00

- **Recipes from the Farmyard**
  *Bruce Collins* - $5.00 (discounted)

- **Nectar of the Lotus**
  *Eric Doornekamp* - $5.00

- **Be Fit with Yoga**
  *Eric Doornekamp* - $2.00 (discounted)

- **Relax with Yoga**
  *Eric Doornekamp* - $10.00

- **Yoga Humour**
  *Eric Doornekamp* - $9.00

Full Members receive a 10% discount on books not already discounted.

Postage is extra.

Therapies by Appointment

Reiki

with Graeme Richardson

**Level 3 Reiki Practitioner**

**Member of Reiki NZ**

Reiki is a wholistic form of healing that enhances physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

It utilises the presence of the universal life-force to support the body's self-healing ability. The recipient draws on this energy as needed, taking an active part in the healing process.

A deep sense of relaxation, inner peace, increased vitality and improved sleep patterns are amongst the benefits reported.

Stress, tension and worry are alleviated.

Reiki also assists in the relief of physical pain or discomfort caused by injury, illness or disease and speeds up recovery after surgery.

Graeme is available by appointment on Wednesday afternoons during term time and most afternoons during school holidays.

**Cost**

- **$40.00** – 40 minute session
- **$160.00** – Five session concession

For more information or to make a booking please contact Cathryn Doornekamp.
**Massage**

Eric Doornekamp has 40 years experience in massage.

Swedish massage involves deep tissue therapy to relieve stress. Oriental massage on pressure points stimulates the flow of qi or energy in the meridians.

The benefits are well documented such as soothing nerves and relaxing sore muscles, increasing circulation.

**Cost**

- $30.00 – ½ hour
- $45.00 – 1 hour

**Back/Neck/Shoulder Therapy**

Eric has 40 years experience in treating backs, necks and shoulders.

Muscular and skeletal structures are examined and massage is applied to loosen up tight muscles and to relax the body.

Gentle manipulation is applied to free up the neck, spine, and limbs to realign immobile joints.

Specific programmes including flexibility and strengthening exercises are suggested to improve fitness.

**Cost**

- Initial consultation $45.00 – ½ hour
- Subsequent consultations $40.00 – ½ hour

To make an appointment please contact Cathryn or Eric Doornekamp.

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**Naturopathy/Iridology**

Eric Doornekamp is a natural therapist with 35 years experience as an alternative health practitioner. His motto is "Nature Cures".

The aim is to draw on the curative powers inherent in each person.

Using a holistic approach, Eric assists in this process by prescribing a health regime, such as detoxification programmes with herbs.

Vitamins and minerals are used as complimentary medicine.

Iridology may be used as a form of diagnosis.

Iridology looks at health patterns in the eyes. It is frequently used to examine a person's status of well-being.

Abnormal markings in texture and colour of the iris may reveal the physical – mental state of the body. It is a useful tool in the preliminary diagnosis of an illness before there is a serious breakdown in health.

A **free ten-minute Iridology assessment** is available by appointment.

**Cost for Naturopathy/Iridology:**

- Initial consultation $45.00 – 1 hour
- Subsequent consultations $30.00 – ½ hour

To make an appointment with Eric please contact Cathryn or Eric Doornekamp.