

Visiting Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien

by Myoren Kumiko Yasukawa

I'd like to begin by expressing my deep gratitude to the Rinzaï-ji Board of Directors for flying me to Vienna to visit the Austrian Sangha of Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien upon their invitation. I must say that it was indeed an incredible and fruitful experience.

Events:

April 17-22 Five-day Sesshin with Noritake Shūnan Rōshi in Walsberg

April 22 - 3pm World Peace prayer at St. Stephen's Cathedral with Dom Pastor, Toni Faber and Noritake Shūnan Rōshi

7pm Dinner with all board members together with

Heinz Vettermann, Vice-president of Austria Buddhist Association

April 23 - 12pm Groundbreaking ceremony (*Kikō-shiki*) at Bodhidharma's new BergZendo (Mountain Zendo) recently purchased in HoheWand, attended by the HoheWand city Mayor and a local priest

April 24 - 9am The Vienna Boys Choir at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna

2pm Boat cruise in the Danube

5pm Noritake Rōshi invited all members for dinner

April 25 - 6:30pm Zazen & Dharma Talk by Noritake Rōshi at Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien

Farewell party after the Zendo

The Go (Five-day) Sesshin took place where the Bodhidharma sangha rents an old farm house in a beautiful countryside called Walsberg about 2 hours away from Vienna. 36 participants including all the Board of Director members put their wholehearted effort into the Sesshin with Noritake Rōshi & Okajima Osho and Kigen Osho. Quite a few familiar faces were there, including Anneliese Zoble, Roshin Ingrid Prinz, Andrea Binder, Claudia Martini, Alexandra Moskovchuk, Hogen Heribert Harter & Myotai Yvonne Kossmann from Bodhidharma Zendo Augsburg, Germany, and Eshin from ZVC in Canada. Noritake Rōshi gave Teisho daily with 3 Dokusan, as he did at Mt. Baldy last July. I was able to help as Jisha (Inji) in support of Noritake Rōshi & Okajima Osho. The Sesshin concluded right after the Teisho with Sosarei on the 22nd.

All sesshin members then rushed to Vienna for a World Peace prayer at St. Stephen's Cathedral with Noritake Rōshi and Dom Pastor Toni Faber. About 50

members of Bodhidharma Zendo attended to witness this special ceremony of Buddhist & Catholic prayers for world peace. Noritake Rōshi conducted the same ceremony with a delegation of 30 visitors from Japan in 2007. He was deeply touched this time by how local Austrian Buddhist members joined the ceremony.

Program at World Peace prayer in St. Stephen's Cathedral:

- Greetings from Dom Pastor Toni Faber and Noritake Shūnan Rōshi
- Buddhist ceremony (Shō Sai Shū, Eko dedication, Heart Sutra)
- Catholic ceremony (Blessing)
- Music played by a member of the Sangha
- Gift exchange

The next day, the groundbreaking ceremony (*Kikō-shiki*) of the new BergZendo was held. The event was filled with excitement since a new contract concerning the property was signed during the Sesshin on the 19th. Over 50 members with their family and friends came together for this ceremony conducted by Noritake Rōshi. The new Zendo was named "Peaceful Light" as the Vienna Board requested from Noritake Rōshi. This event was attended by a camera crew for a local news station. HoheWand (means High Wall) is a mountain ridge in Lower Austria and is part of the Gutenstein Alps. The name of the location - Almfrieden means peaceful meadow. BergZendo is located at the top of the cliff. Its view is truly breathtaking.

Program at Groundbreaking ceremony (*Kikō-shiki*) at Bodhidharma's new BergZendo (Mountain Zendo) in HoheWand:

- Ceremony (Heart Sutra x 3, Eko dedication)
- Greetings & Blessings from City Mayer, Local priest, President of BOD, Kigen Osho and Noritake Shūnan Rōshi
- Sod-cutting with a shovel by everyone

One of the Board members, Wilma kindly took us to the Vienna Boys Choir at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, followed by a boat cruise in the Danube. Then Noritake Rōshi invited all members of the Bodhidharma sangha for dinner.

The last day in Vienna concluded with evening Zazen at the Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien. Noritake Rōshi paid respect to Joshu Sasaki Rōshi & Genro Osho's altars as well as the Zendo altar that was hand-crafted by the Bodhidharma sangha. Over 30 members came to the Zendo to bid farewell to Noritake Rōshi, Okajima Osho, and myself, as we were departing the next day.

Program at Bodhidharma Zendo:

- Banka
- Zazen
- Dharma Talk
- Farewell Party

I'm deeply touched by the warmth and kindness that I received from the Austrian Sangha. They welcomed us with such enthusiasm and joy. Joshu Rōshi and Genro Osho's over 30 years of effort & teaching are alive in the Sangha and now with Kigen Osho. It is wonderful to see that the sangha's commitment to the practice is solid. Kigen Osho expressed how lucky he is to have come to the Bodhidharma Zendo fully supported and appreciated. It is his 5th year in Vienna this year.

The Board of Directors of the Bodhidharma Zendo (list below) extends their gratitude for the generous donation Rinzai-ji & Mt. Baldy made for the new Zendo project. Attached is a receipt of the donation.





Board Members of Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien:

Karl Teki-O Gössler - President

Norbert Jinro Prochaska - Vice President

Walter Shinro Linemayr - Vice President and Treasurer

Wilma Favre - Vice Treasurer

Manuela Schein - Secretary

Gift received from Bodhidharma Sangha:

From BOD - Boxes of Coffee from Sacha Hotel for Rinzai-ji & Mt. Baldy

From BOD - Dana of € 300 for Myoren personally for great efforts concerning the visit of Noritake Roshi in Austria

From BDZ in Augsburg - Bars of Chocolate and cook book for Rinzai-ji

Many more Austrian sweets from the Sangha members.

Bodhidharma Zendo in Wein has very active & productive Facebook which most of sangha member has access and share information. You'll be able to review many pictures posted on the Facebook.

Bodhidharma Zendo in Wein

<https://www.facebook.com/tekio.zzen?fref=nf>

Bodhidharma Zendo Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1597822797130988/?fref=nf>



VIENNA REPORT

World Peace prayer at St. Stephen's Cathedral



New BergZendo - Peaceful light (Wakō) Bodhidharma Zendo in HoheWand



Groundbreaking ceremony (*Kikō-shiki*) at BergZendo



At Bodhidharma Zendo in Wien



Farewell party after the Zendo

