

# Waking up in the Bush

## A weekend bush retreat and the Dharma taught in an Australian vernacular by Buddhist teacher, John Allan.

The big events of the Buddha's life and teachings happened in the Bush. He was born in the forest and left a palace to attain awakening in the forest. Most of his teachings, including his first one, took place in the forest. Finally he passed away under trees in the forest.

Again and again he told his students to practice cultivation of the heart/mind in the forest.

"Waking up in the Bush" offers an opportunity to practice the Buddha's forest learnings in an Australian context as John Allan explores the Dharma at the Lao Wat Buddhavarn. John Allan will teach in the companionship of the Venerable Santititho, Phra Khamphaeng and fellow monks, and the lay supporters of the Wat.

"**Just one candle dispels the darkness**" is his theme and he will reflect on engaged Buddhist practice and the spreading of peace in times of war, conflict and social upheaval: peace within, peace in the family, peace in community, peace abroad.

John's teaching style is interactive and the Retreat will be conducted as a camp in the bush, outdoors, under stars and by open fires.

*"Take delight in the forest and empty places, practice there," - Lord Buddha.*

Women and men, long-term Dharma farers and beginners, all will find John's teaching style refreshing and enlightening.

For the duration of the retreat, participants will be asked to take the five Buddhist precepts (mind of kindness, contentment, truthfulness, simplicity, clarity) and join the routine of the Wat, rising early and not eating from noon to next morning.

### John Allan, Dharma Teacher

John Allan has walked the Buddhist path for 30 years. A time of intense meditation practice and study in the early 70's, including brief ordination in the Thai Forest Tradition, built a foundation to learn from many traditions.

John runs a weekly groups in Byron Bay and Lismore called "Reading the Book of the Heart" to provide ongoing encouragement for women and men exploring spiritual life and engaging in their own authentic path with confidence, passion and an intimate sense of purpose.

John was a psychotherapist in general practice for 15 years and prior to that, a fine wood worker and community artist.

For 10 years he ran the first groups in NSW for men overcoming violence and abuse. For 9 years and counting, he has co-ordinated annual "Standing Up Alive" Men's Gatherings.

In 2001, in full ceremony, John was empowered as the first non-Yolngu custodian of the Rainbow Serpent or Witij Dreaming, by Elders of the Galpu Clan of Eastern Arnhem Land and named Witij. This Law is the most ancient continuous tradition, symbol and teaching of compassion, healing and peace on the planet.

John is also a local and national facilitator with Rural Australians for Refugees; a director of the Spirit of the Land Foundation which aims to build bridges of understanding between indigenous and western cultures; and chair of the Lismore Arts Council.

### About Wat Buddhavarn

Wat Buddhavarn is a Buddhist monastery supported by the Lao community of Sydney. It backs onto the sandstone bushland of the Georges River Reserve.

Participants are asked to carry in the warm clothing, shelter and sleeping gear that they need. Also sit cushions and camp chairs if needed. The Retreat will begin at 6 pm and participants are asked to arrive and set up camp before that time.

A closed Retreat, participants will be expected to stay without any coming or going or making any outside contact till after the close of the retreat on 4 pm Sunday afternoon.

Breakfast and lunch will be served on the Saturday and Sunday. Hot drinks will be available at all times.

### Dana

Both John Allan and the monks of Wat Buddhavarn are supported to teach the Dharma by the generosity (Dana) of those who hear the teaching.

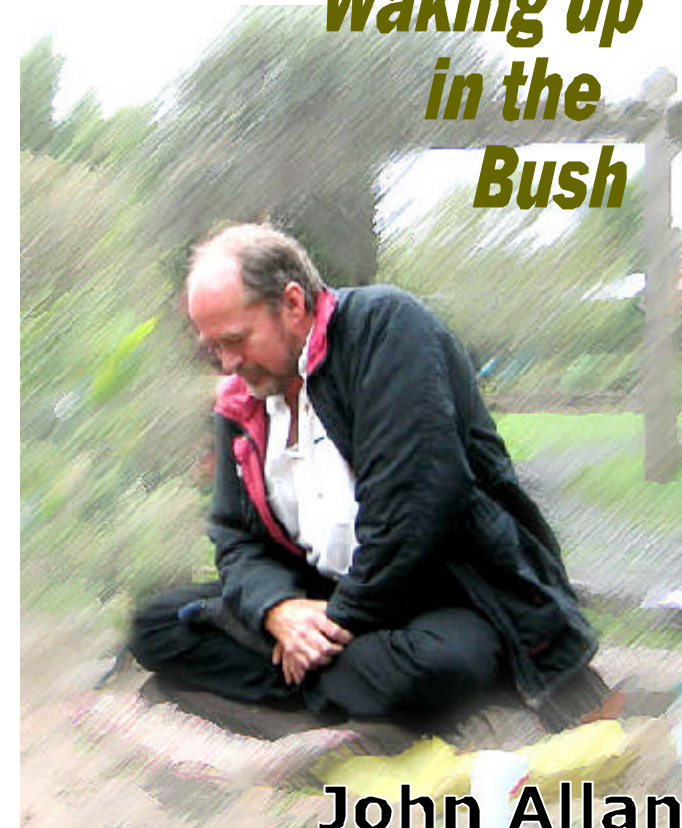
To cover the expenses of setting up the Retreat and providing food, a registration fee of \$40 per head will help cover basic costs; teachings by Dana.

To assist with catering, please confirm participation by 5 pm Thursday 18 September.

Telephone bookings and inquiries:  
Graeme Dunstan 02-4634-1287 [graemedunstan@rainbowregion.com](mailto:graemedunstan@rainbowregion.com)

Further information: <http://www.peacebus.com/WakingUp>

## Waking up in the Bush



**John Allan**

*in companionship with*

**The Venerable Santititho**

Phra Kamphaeng and fellow monks.

From sunset **Friday 19**

to the afternoon of **Sunday 21 September 2003**

at **Wat Buddhavarn Forest Monastery**

Minerva Road, Wedderburn NSW

Registration fee \$40 (teachings by Dana)

Telephone bookings and inquiries

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