

Dear friends of the Meditation Centre Beatenberg,

On 11/12 June this year, following two years of postponements, the time had finally come! On this sunny early summer weekend, we were able to celebrate our anniversary together with many wonderful people. Statistics attest to around 140,000 overnight stays in our 22 years of existence. And when you consider that each day entails the effort of exploring one's own mind, this was a truly auspicious occasion! A house festooned with prayer flags and flowers greeted the guests, together with cosy seating areas inside and outside. With energetic support - including some former centre cooks - the kitchen team conjured up a constant supply of wonderful food on festive white tables for the entire event. Opportunity for so many cheerful encounters, old and new, for sharing memories and for enormous gratitude! In addition to the pleasures of socialising and dining, there were also programme highlights, serious and light-hearted, including some thoughts from Fred von Allmen on the meaning of retreat practice. There were also congratulatory messages from the USA, England and Germany. An exquisite sitar tabla concert with the musicians Peter Klatt and Stefan Lehmann rounded off the festival's formal section, before the evening's elated energy was expressed in dancing to entirely different melodies. The Board of Trustees appreciates the wonderful preparation and organisation of the anniversary, both by the house team and by Fred and Ursula. A big "thank you" goes to all those who made this event possible through their efforts.



## **COURSES**

In 2022 we were again concerned with managing the Corona situation, and courses did not take place with full occupancy. From time to time there were, and still are, suspicious cases and positive test results. Fortunately - and thanks to the experience gained so far in dealing with Corona - there were never any mass infections.

As a consequence of the courses for young adults that we have been offering for many years, an encouraging number of meditators in their 20s and even some teenagers are now finding their way to the centre. The main group of participants is between 30 and 50 years old, but 60- to 80-year-olds are also well represented. To ensure the continuity of the teaching, four new teachers will be trained over the coming years by Fred von Allmen, Isis Bianzano, Rainer Künzi and Irene Bumbacher. They are the selected long-term practitioners Doris Eckstein, Kathleen Royston, Kathrin Weyermann and Nicole Fasel.

Of the numerous courses conducted last year, a mere selection is presented here:

The course with Bhikkhu Analayo and Yuka Nakamura “The Practice of Breath-Mindfulness” scheduled in May took place exclusively online with 42 participants.

We are very pleased too that the traditional 2-week summer course with Carol Wilson from the USA, Fred von Allmen, Ursula Flückiger, Ingeborg Mösching and Irene Bumbacher could take place on site again this summer.

In June, for the first time at the Centre, we welcomed Shaila Catherine from the USA for a ten-day “Concentration and Insight Retreat”. The silence of the retreat was only occasionally interrupted by the chirping of birds, the howling of military aircraft and heavy thunder. Shaila, who was in Switzerland for the first time, said that the centre was “the most beautiful meditation centre in the world”, which was of course most flattering ...

In October, Ajahn Sucitto from England, assisted by Bhikkhu Samvaro, taught an eight-day meditation retreat for the second time. Practically half of the meditators on this course were long-term practitioners. It is also heartening that our lengthiest three-week-retreat took place, for the first time since 2012, in the form of a 4-week retreat. This was under the competent guidance of Ariya Baumann, Isis Bianzano, Samuel Theiler and Rainer Künzi.

In September, Fred von Allmen came to the Centre with a film crew of six people who are making a documentary film about the work of the much-revered Chan Master Sheng Yen. Many years ago, he led a memorable course at our centre. The film focuses on the dissemination of his teachings in Europe.

## **HOUSE TEAM**

This year again there were changes in the house team. At the end of January, our long-time caretaker Nikolaus Rechberg left us. We would like to thank Nikolaus for his energetic, devoted and humorous commitment as well as his keen eye for detail. And we are pleased that he has found a new task to match his talents. We were able to recruit Miklos Szilard, who was already popular with the team as a volunteer, for maintenance/housekeeping duties. Since July, our external assistant Silvia Haufe has been supporting the team in the office. She lives in the vicinity of the centre and works partly at home. Also this year, Margit Tilley, with her many years of experience as a staff member, was available to support the Centre Office in the many tasks related to registration. We would like to express our sincere thanks for her generous commitment.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCES**

As elsewhere, administrative work is also becoming ever more time-consuming, not least due to an enormous number of last-minute registrations and cancellations as well as unannounced participant no-shows. This repeatedly leads to unfilled places despite long waiting lists. The Board of Trustees has therefore adjusted the deadlines and fees for registrations and cancellations and added a clause to the registration process to only accept those with a binding intention to participate. Cancellations of kitchen helpers at short notice likewise entails much additional, often frantic, effort. The office team must also deal with occasional last-minute withdrawals of Zoom assistants, on whom we depend. Although the number of online participants in hybrid courses varies considerably overall, we will continue to offer some courses in hybrid form, as many people much appreciate this type of participation.

After 9 years of stable course prices, there will be another increase this year. Inflation, rising food and energy prices and more expensive airline tickets for teachers from overseas do not go unnoticed. Furthermore, owing to Corona, course enrolment is still somewhat limited, and we have incurred pension fund increases for the team, major renovations and other items. We can now offer payment of course fees and donations with all major credit cards and Twint. Of course, there is a lot to say about the current financial situation of the Centre and the use of the funds, but this would well exceed the scope of this annual report. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all those who have generously supported the Centre this year through financial or material donations and voluntary work.

It is also worth mentioning that the three foundation board members Kathrin Baumann, Yuka Nakamura and Samuel Theiler have revised the website and written new texts.

## HOUSE AND GARDENS

After a lengthy planning phase, work on the roof renovation began after the summer course. On the north side of the east wing, the roof was covered with Eternit as before, while the south side was equipped with photovoltaic modules with a total output of 30 kWp. Thanks to optimal weather conditions, the commitment of the house team and the energetic and enthusiastic help of volunteers Samuel, Sandra and Jeanne, the roof refurbishment went tremendously well. In October the work was completed, and since the beginning of December, the photovoltaic system has been in operation, which will cover a portion of our future electricity needs. Surpluses in off-peak times are fed into the public grid.



We hope that this report has given you an impression of the past year at the centre and look forward to welcoming everyone to the “blissful hill” in 2023.

May our efforts be dedicated to the welfare of all beings!

For the Centre

Catherine Felder

Ursula Flückiger