

OPENING SPEECH BY IAN GREEN AT **Vien Giac Temple** 2011
PRESENTED BY THICH LINH TUONG

NAMO BUDDHAYA
NAMO SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA
NAM MO BON SU THICH CA MAU NI PHAT

Respect to Venerable Abbot, Venerable Sangha, Honoured guests,
Brothers and Sisters.

It is with great regret that my wife and I cannot be with you at the opening ceremony of the Jade Buddha and holy relics showing at Vien Giac Temple. Especially as we have heard so much about Vien Giac and we have had the opportunity to meet Most Venerable Thich Nhu Dien in Australia and USA.

Our doctor has suggested that we take a break from travel for a few months. We are both very well – just a little tired.

The Jade Buddha has taken us all on a remarkable journey. It began in the year 2000 when a massive boulder of Jade was discovered in the far North of Canada. It was 18 tonnes of gem quality jade and nothing like it had ever been found before. It was called “the find of the millennium” and it was given the name “Polar Pride”.

In early 2003 I flew to Vancouver to view Polar Pride. I then spoke to my master, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and that night he had a vision that this boulder would become a Buddha that would change the world. The next day Rinpoche told me “You must turn this jade gem into a Buddha as a holy object to offer to the world.”

It took another 5 years of great effort by my wife and I as well as thousands of people around the world who offered their time and money to create the world’s largest gem-quality Jade Buddha.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche named the Buddha “The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace”. He said “It will illuminate the world and bring inconceivable peace and happiness and help prevent the destruction that is happening so much in the world, including war.”

Rinpoche said if you leave the Buddha in one place, then only a few can see it - but if take the Buddha around the world then billions of beings can receive its blessing of peace and harmony.

After being carved in Thailand, the world tour began in March 2009 in Danang in Vietnam. From Vietnam the Jade Buddha travelled to Australia, Canada and USA.

So far 5 million people have come to pay homage to the Jade Buddha.

After Germany the Jade Buddha travels to Sweden, Norway, and France and Sri Lanka before returning to Asia in 2012.

When the tour is eventually over in around 5 years the Jade Buddha will come to its final home at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion that we are building in Bendigo, Australia.

Our aim is that this world tour will inspire everyone who sees the Jade Buddha to find peace...peace in their home, their schools, their work and most importantly peace in their heart and mind.

We know that it is not possible to achieve such a magnificent event as you have here at Vien Giac without the contribution and cooperation of hundreds and perhaps thousands of people. We congratulate the organising committee on their great work.

Our prayer is that the lasting legacy of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace tour of Hannover will be to inspire everyone to find a peaceful resolution to their differences so that they can work in peace to benefit all.

May the Buddhadharma flourish. May peace break out around the world.

NAM MO HOAN HY TANG BO TAT, MA HA TAT

To commemorate this occasion we wish to present Most Venerable Thich Nhu Dien with a photograph of consecrating the Jade Buddha on December 1st 2009 in Sydney, Australia.