



Jade Buddha for Universal Peace World Tour

Opening speech given by the Mayor of Fairfield City and State Member for Cabramatta, Mr. Nick Lalich, MP. On the Occasion of the Unveiling of the Jade Buddha, at Minh Quang Temple, Canley Vale NSW, Australia, 22nd August 2009.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we stand, the Cabrogal people of the Darug nation.

I would particularly like to acknowledge their elders both past and present.

We acknowledge your rich culture and your unique role here in the Fairfield region. Your heritage and traditions are important to us all and part and parcel of the great history of Australia.

Senior Venerable Thich Minh Hieu, Abbot of Minh Quang monastery; Venerables in the Sangha;
Mr. Ian Green, Chairman of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace project, and his wife, Judy Green;
Distinguished Guests, the Buddhist Community, and Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome everyone. It is my great pleasure to be here with you all for the official opening of the “Jade Buddha for Universal Peace”. I am delighted that the Jade Buddha has been brought right here to Fairfield City.

In June, I wrote a letter of support for the permanent housing of the statue in the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo, Victoria. I was happy to support this initiative as the values of peace that accompany the Jade Buddha are values I see in my community.

The Fairfield City community has a great appreciation of the importance and benefits of positive promotion of multiculturalism and living in harmony. Our City is home to more than 133 different cultural groups – we have a great thirst to learn more about their cultures.

Apart from being a symbol of community unity and cultural diversity, the Jade Buddha has already proven to be a large scale tourist attraction. Almost 4 million people visited the Jade Buddha on its recent tour of Vietnam.

Before it makes the journey to its final home in Bendigo, I understand the Buddha will be touring Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. What a gift for both Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike!

The jade Buddha has already been on an extensive journey, from when “Polar Pride” was discovered in 2000 to its formation and carving and final praying and vowing process in 2008.

I'd like to thank Mr. Ian Green and his wife, Judy for their work in bringing the Jade Buddha to Australia and Fairfield City.

I hope everyone who visits the Jade Buddha will take time to reflect upon peace – peace for the world; peace for their relationships; peace for their families and friends, peace at work; and peace in their mind.

I extend my thanks to Senior Venerable Thich Minh Hieu and the Minh Quang monastery for hosting this wonderful exhibition.

I hope you will all encourage your friends and families to come and visit the Jade Buddha before it continues on its journey.

Thank you.