

Phra Bhavanaviteht (Luang Por Khemadhammo) OBE

Ven. Phra Bhavanaviteht (Luang Por Khemadhammo) was born in England in 1944 and after a Grammar School education trained as an actor at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama and at Drama Centre London. From 1966 till 1969 he was a National Theatre player and during that time developed an interest in Buddhist meditation. In 1971 he set off on a pilgrimage to the Buddhist Holy Places in India, travelling overland, and from there went on to Thailand. He was ordained a novice on Boxing Day 1971 in Bangkok and on New Year's Day 1972 he journeyed to Ubon where eventually he met Ven. Ajahn Chah who allowed him to join Wat Nong Pah Pong. In May of that year in the presence of Ajahn Chah and members of the Wat Pah Pong Sangha he was ordained as a bhikkhu. The next few years were spent at Wat Pah Pong and its various branch monasteries. In 1977 Ajahn Chah was invited to London and Ajahn Khemadhammo accompanied him as one of his attendants. It was during that summer that responding to some invitations Ajahn Khemadhammo began visiting prisons and that has continued to this present day. After some years he was invited to Warwickshire and in 1985 founded The Forest Hermitage near Warwick where he has been the Abbot ever since. Also in 1985, Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy was founded with Ajahn Khemadhammo as its Spiritual Director. He's been involved with Warwick University and for many years has taught its Buddhist Society and functioned as unofficial Buddhist chaplain. He was appointed an OBE in HM the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2003 and made a Chao Khun by the King of Thailand in 2004. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in 2013 and presented with the title Aggamaha Saddhama Jotikadhaja in Myanmar in 2015.