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# Ogyen Choling Trust Fund

Annual update (1.1 2007-31.12.2007)

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Once again, we are glad to update you on the activities of the Ogyen Choling Trust fund for the past year, 2007.

## Purposes of the trust fund

- To ensure the long term maintenance of the buildings, the temples and the museum
- To sustain the traditional religious observances and rituals
- To provide a place for religious studies, research and solitude
- To revive and encourage traditional skills and provide a market for local handicrafts
- To provide financial support to deserving but economically deprived students in Tang valley

## The Museum

In August the textile room was finally opened. By a happy coincidence, HRH Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck visited the museum on the day of the formal opening. The main displays in the textile room are a raw silk *gho* (man's garment) and a *kira* (woman's garment) from the family heirloom, estimated to be over 100 years old. Other samples include cotton, woollen and raw silk fabrics.



HRH Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck in the newly opened the textile room

During the year 2007 we recorded over 640 paying visitors to the museum. This number does not include the Bhutanese visitors who do not pay any entrance fee. Among the visitors of special mention are HRH Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck and His Eminence the Ganteng Trulku. The group lead by His Eminence was probably the first group of visitors who came by helicopter. They could literally land

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at the doorsteps of Ogyen Choling. In contrast a group of 3 pilgrims from Lunana (Gasa district) who visited the temples and the museum had walked for 21 days.



Pilgrims from Lunana



The youngest museum visitors in 2007

### Library Preservation

Ogyen Choling was extremely fortunate to be included in a digital library project funded by the Endangered Archives Programme of the British Library. The project was conceptualized and carried out by one of Bhutan's foremost scholars Dr. Karma Phuntsho, Cambridge, UK. The objectives of the project were to preserve the manuscripts in digital copies and to make them accessible to scholars and monks (see box). Working with 2 cameras it took Dr. Karma Phuntsho and a team of research staff and assistants over a month to complete the work.



Digitalizing under progress in Ogyen Choling



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**The importance of digitalizing old manuscripts** (Text by Dr. Karma Phuntsho)

The collection of books in Ogyen Choling hold immense literary and artistic value, and tremendous religious significance for the local community. They have so far survived in good condition despite their long existence without proper archival facilities. Scholars estimate some of the books to be a few hundred years old.

The project covered over 1700 titles including 18 volumes of manuscripts of rDo rje Gling pa's teachings. It also photographed several volumes of works of secular and cultural content and a few volumes of incomplete manuscripts and floating folios. Building on the catalogue by Prof. Samten Karmay, the project produced a detailed catalogue using xml editor.

The master copy of the digital images will be kept in Ogyen Choling and copies will be deposited in the National Library and Archives of Bhutan and the British Library for safe keeping.

**Electrification**

Parts of Tang valley were fortunate to be included in the government's electrification program. This was made possible thanks to funding by the Austrian Government. Already early in the year the electric lines were in place. In spite of the cost, it was decided to make provisions for electricity throughout the complex. The Bhutan Power Corporation kindly provided underground access cables to the main building to avoid cables and poles interfering with the aesthetics of the complex. The cost for material and installation was by far the most important expense for the year. Unfortunately the connection to the main grid was delayed beyond the date initially envisaged. Based on the revised programs the valley is expected to be connected to the grid sometime in March 2008.

**Documenting physical structures**

Mr. Pierre Pichard has made good progress with the drawings of the Ogyen Choling complex. Pierre came back in November for 10 days to do some final verification of the measurements. It has been agreed to present the drawings in form of a book with chapters on related topics contributed by various authors.

In collaboration with the dendrology section of the Renewable Natural Resource Research Centre Jakar, the age of some of the prominent trees in the compound could be estimated. The oldest tree, a massive blue pine located in the south side of the complex, was estimated to be 233 years old! As soon as electricity is available we will also attempt to date selected timbers used in the Chamkhang (dance house) and the main temple.

**Future plans**

As it is now over five years since all the buildings were roofed with CGI sheets it is high time that the roof be painted. The painting will be contracted to a painter from the village. Other works with high priority include:

- Repair and re-vitalise the Chamkhang (dance house, said to be the oldest building in the complex)
- Dating selected wooden elements
- Improve guest house facilities
- Making a new main gate to the complex
- Wall around the area between the temple and the main gate
- Changing the pervious kitchen room and the adjoining store room into a room for guides and a guest room
- Construct a common toilet to be used during festivals and rituals

Although we will be giving high priority to these activities it is not likely that we can start or conclude all of them during the year 2008.

## Financial report

After 2 years of red figures, our balance has become positive, in spite of the substantial investment made in the electrification of all the buildings. In the year 2007 the trust fund received contributions from 15 donors (groups and individuals). We would like to extend our warmest appreciation to all of you. In addition the income generated from museum fees, guest house and sale of books has increased. Thus, the financial year showed a record income of over 8 lakhs! The most significant expenses besides electrification, were loan repayment, salaries and scholarship/academic prizes.

Donations	Currency	Amount	Amount Nu
Anonymous through Dr.Karma Phuntsho	Nu	460000	460'000
Amis du Bhoutan	Euro	600	33'600
Mrs. Lisina M. Hoch	Fr	1000	33'000
Mr. H. R. Schraff	Fr	808.25	26'672
Ms. Françoise Beckmann	Fr	325.3	10'735
Ms. Freny Maneksha	Rs	10000	10'000
Prof. Martin & Kungold Menzi,	Fr	300	9'900
A friend from Switzerland	Fr	300	9'900
Ms. Fabienne Grossenbacher	Fr	300	9'900
Mr. Herbert Roder	Fr	200	6'600
Mr. George Plok	Nu	5000	5'000
Visitors Oling	Nu	3000	3'000
Mrs. Lydia Wespi	Nu	1580	1'580
Aum Nima Om	Nu	1000	1'000
Visitor Oling	USD	20	780

Assets and loans	Nu
Long-term investments	80'000
Loan	350'000



Exhibit textile room

Income	Nu
Donations	621'667
Guest house	93'700
Entrance fee museum	96'600
Museum books sold	8'700
Interest on bank deposit	15'000
CGI sheets sold	9'000
<b>Total income in 2007</b>	<b>844'667</b>
Negative balance 1.1. 07	21'566
Balance 31.12. 07 <sup>1</sup>	121'694
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>701'407</b>
	844'667

<sup>1</sup>Oling: 41'800; Thimphu: 79894

Expenditures	Nu
Electrification <sup>1</sup>	375'000
Loan repayment	100'000
Salaries <sup>2</sup>	96'000
Scholarships, academic prizes	34'100
Loan (interest)	36'000
Other expenses	60'307
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>701'407</b>

<sup>1</sup>Museum, Temple, Guest house;

<sup>2</sup>Temple care taker and assistant curator

## Appreciation and warm wishes

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our well wishers, friends and donors to the Ogyen Choling trust fund. It is only through your support and encouragement that Ogyen Choling continues to carry on from year to year.

We would also like to wish each of you a very Happy Losar (New Year), and may the **Year of the Earth Male Rat** be filled with joy, peace and happiness.

For additional information consult our webpage: <http://www.geocities.com/ogyencholingmuseum> or write to [kcrjakar@druknet.bt](mailto:kcrjakar@druknet.bt)