
Ogyen Choling Trust Fund



Annual update (1.1 2010-31.12.2010)

Purpose 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 year 2010 was once again a good and rather uneventful year for Ogyen Choling. We, the family were somewhat distracted by our own personal commitments, but this period of near dormancy prompted us to think hard and make serious decisions about our commitment to Ogyen Choling. The founding curator of the museum, Kunzang Choden hopes to relocate to Ogyen Choling in a year or two, in order to fully dedicate her energy and resources to fulfil the purpose of the trust.

In the past few years Ogyen Choling has seen many changes such as the advent of mobile phones and electricity but the one change with the biggest socio-economic impact is undoubtedly road access. With the opening of the bridge across the Tang river in October 2010, the road has finally reached Ogyen Choling village. The bridge was built by Helvetas with some additional financial support from the Elysium Foundation. It will directly benefit about 150 households. Although we are all grateful for the improved accessibility to the village, we do somewhat lament the loss of the idyllic charm and beauty of Ogyen Choling as an isolated and “unspoilt village.”



New bridge over Tang river

The Museum

This year the museum received 952 paying visitors. This is a substantial increase compared to 630 in the previous year. With the government’s policy of increasing the number of tourists and the better accessibility with the bridge we anticipate that the number will increase even further.

The conservation of the artefacts in the museum is a continuous concern. We have been receiving occasional advice from experts, although it has not always been feasible to follow through on every good suggestion. With electricity and the arrival of a deep freezer we could finally start treating the wood print blocks which were heavily invested with wood worms. Although this is a very un-Buddhist action, sometimes we are challenged to do strange things for the posterity of the words of the holy masters!

The posters for the architectural display are ready for printing. The room in the ground floor of the *utse* has also been prepared and we hope that the exhibit will be on display with the start of the next tourist season. We continued working on the textile room and have initiated one corner that allows visitors to touch and feel the fibres and fabrics. We anticipate the visitors will enjoy this opportunity to gain a richer experience by being able to feel the texture and heft of these uniquely Bhutanese textiles.

Ideas for additional displays have matured and initial work has begun for a display on the life of the late 10th incarnation of Thuksay Rinpoche who passed away in summer 2010. With the strong link between Ogyen Choling and the last two holders of the Thuksay lineage (Spiritual son of Terton Pema Lingpa) we feel it is appropriate to have a simple display on their lives and their interactions with Ogyen Choling. The rooms are in the Chamkhang (Dance house), which is the place where the 10th incarnation liked to stay when he came to Ogyen Choling. Incidentally it is also the oldest building in the complex.



The Chamkhang

The guest house

No major financial investments were made for the guest house. We are grateful that many visitors and tour agencies are coming back again and again, and bring newcomers to Ogyen Choling. Although we have only 8 rooms with a maximum capacity for 15 guests, there have been times when we had to accommodate as many as twenty people. In our experience, our guests have been wonderfully flexible and accepting of these constraints.

Book in preparation

The manuscript has further evolved and is presently with the publisher. The publisher indicated that the final product will be ready sometime in 2012. It is anticipated that the combination of personal experiences narrated by Kunzang Choden and Ugen Rinzin who grew up in Ogyen Choling, the views of the renowned Bhutan historian Dr. Françoise Pommaret and the drawings and descriptions by the renowned conservationist architect Pierre Pichard, will appeal to a wide readership.

Web page

Some of you have been inquiring about the whereabouts of our the Ogyen Choling web page. The web master, Gyalsten K. Dorji (21st generation Ogyen Choling family), has completely redesigned the webpage. Please check it out at www.oling.bt. Some parts are still under progress. We would welcome and appreciate your inputs and suggestions for further improvement.

Continuing works

Finally the boundaries around the main entrance gate could be measured and clarified by the land commission. We can now take up the project of rebuilding the main entrance gate to the complex and replace the temporary barbed wire fence with a permanent boundary wall around the temple garden adjacent to the main gate.

We are also planning to re-introduce a modest losar celebration (lunar new year), inviting the village elders. While this is not anything comparable to the losar celebrations in the past it will be at least a symbolic honouring of an important tradition in the Ogyen Choling household.

Financial report

We would like our supporters and friends to join us in the celebration of a significant financial landmark. The trust is finally coming out of the red! Thanks to the income generated through the museum fees and the guest house and your generous support it was possible to completely repay the loan taken for building the guest house. We start the new year with a positive balance of Nu 213'591. We take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all of you for your continued support and contributions. The amount generated by the Ogyen Choling activities (guest house, museum) was Nu 304'500. The income has increased substantially due to higher number of visitors to the museum. As in the previous years, the most significant expenses besides salaries and loan repayment were scholarship/academic prizes.

Donations	Nu
Lisina Hoch	43'000
Martin & Kungold Menzi	11'250
Anna Schluemp	11'750
Fabienne Grossenbacher	9'400
Herbert Roder	8'600
Heinz Buergin	9'200
Amis du Bhutan (France)	25'000
Vincent (through Amis du Bhutan)	30'500
Christian Engi	22'000
Anne Lieberman	1'000
Claire Gerard	6'000
Undisclosed	8'800
Total	186'500

Assets	Nu
Long-term investments	80'000

Income	Nu
Donations	186'500
Guest house	161'700
Entrance fee museum	142'800
Museum books sold	5'200
Total income in 2010	496'200
Balance 1.1. 2010	72'516
Total	568'716
Expenditures	Nu
Loan repayment	100'000
Salaries ¹	104'000
Scholarships, academic prizes	52'100
Other expenditures	99'025
Total expenditures	355'125
Balance 31.12. 2010 ²	213'591
Total	568'716

¹Temple care taker and assistant curator
²Oling: 8'051; Thimphu: 205'540

Looking forward to the Year of the Rabbit

With this picture of the two playful rabbits in the entrance of the *Tshug lhakhang* we extend our warmest wishes and heartfelt thanks to all of you for your constant support and good wishes for Ogyen Choling. May the year of the rabbit be a happy and successful one for all of you.

For additional information consult our webpage:
<http://www.oling.bt> or write to kcrjekar@druknet.bt

