



# Ogyen Choling Foundation

Quarterly Newsletter

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## Introduction

This year the quiet rest period in January was relatively short as the celebrations of Longchen Kuchod (Death anniversary) took place then. Additionally, a solar specialist, Eduard Wirth was also on site in January to offer technical support for the alarm system, the lighting, and the unreliable power supply.

The most important activities/events during the first quarter of 2024 included:

- Rituals and celebrations
- Exploring options for an alternative power supply
- On-line studies for the Assistant Curator



*Aie Dolma feeds the pigeons in front of the temple before she starts her daily circumambulation*

## Rituals and celebrations

As in past years Tang Rinpoche led the ceremony for the Longchen Kuchoed in the main temple on 28. January. This year 40 monks participated in the day long prayers. The community came together for the evocative prayers in the temple.



*Monks performing ritual for the Longchen Kuchoed and villagers taking home the Tormas after Zhingdrup*

We welcomed the year of the Male Wood Dragon, which came with a roar and a promise of new and positive beginnings as well as renewed strength and vitality. To welcome the year, the Foundation and Heritage House came together with the community to observe the time-honoured celebratory rituals in the temple, where prayers were chanted and greetings were exchanged. Afterwards we all enjoyed a hearty lunch in the sun.

Shortly after the new year celebrations the annual prayers for peace, Shingdrup, were observed over three days. Once again the entire village came together for this occasion and pooled their resources with the Foundation to make offerings at the temple as well as for food and fees for the ritualist. It is always heartening to see how such events bring out the best in people, a sense of collaboration and harmony among the community members.



## Alternative power supply

We were fortunate to have the inputs of Eduard Wirth and Dorji, who worked in Ogyen Choling from the 20.-25. January. They worked to repair and re-install the burglar and fire alarm systems. They also made recommendations for the improvements of the lighting in the museum and the guest rooms and the installation of an alternative power supply system. Although the alarm systems could not be fully repaired, this input was very useful, particularly their advice on an alternative power supply system, We feel this is a necessary investment because of the erratic and frequent blackouts seriously affecting the operation of the museum and the guest house. Following the recommendations by Eduard Wirth we have established contacts with a well-known Bhutan based solar company, ZhenPhen. With their expert help we placed an order for of 15 KW system which will be sufficient to provide all required power for up to 10 hours (not including the electric heaters). The material has already been shipped and we are confident that with the help of ZhenPhen we will have a system in place for the forthcoming autumn season.



*Eduard Wirth and Dorji replacing wires for the alarm system*

The cost of the material and shipping was US \$ 13'750. Thanks to the generosity of a donor (G. and A. Tardy) we could cover most of this. We are, however, still looking for an additional US \$ 2500 to cover the full payment.

## Staff news

The Assistant Curator, Phunthsho Tenzin began his online studies in art history with the School of Oriental and African Studies ( SOAS) in January. He could schedule time for his studies, and at the same time continue his duties for the museum. He successfully completed his course at the end of March. Phunthso Tenzin found the studies challenging, nevertheless he thought the courses were relevant to his work and broadened his knowledge on the subjects of Asia's art Histories and Exploring and Analysing Arts.

Chador Tshering (incharge of maintenance) was in Gelephu for 4 weeks for Desung Training. Happily, on completion of the training, he received his National Citizen Identification card. Thankfully, during his absence, we were fortunate not have any major breakdown in the electricity, water or sanitation systems.



*Chador Tshering after completing the Dessup Training*

## Other news

### *Interactions with Tang Central school*

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, the birth anniversary of His Majesty the King, the Tang Central school invited the Foundation to join their celebration.. The Executive Director was invited to speak to the students on the occasion. It was also a good opportunity to personally hand out the cash prizes to the top academic achievers for the year of class 8 and class 10.



*Foundation Executive Director interacting with the students of Tang Central School*



### *Expert visits*

Dr. Ariana Maki, Associate Director Tibet Centre and Bhutan initiative, University of Virginia, an expert on Tibetan Buddhist art stayed with us. We had the opportunity to look at the murals in the temple together and discuss the paintings. It was gratifying to hear her positive comments on quality of the paintings the detailed carvings on the offering table.



*Dr. Ariana Maki examining the details in the temple*

## ***ECCD***

Even though we have only six children who come to the ECCD on a regular basis we have decided to keep the facility open. The parents of the children appreciate this service as it is in close proximity to their homes. The Centre was formally opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March with a small ceremony. The presence of the children in the compound definitely creates a pleasant atmosphere for all, the residents as well as the visitors.



*Opening of the ECCD on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March*

**Best Wishes to All,  
Ogyen Choling Foundation**