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# CHORTEN

## *Stupa Edition*

No.8

### New Benefactors

We welcome the following new benefactors for this issue: **Claire Atkins** (West Aust.), **Ven Ineke Berrety** (France). Many thanks on behalf of us all to these generous benefactors for their support for Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Stupa.

### Feng Shui advice from Lillian Too

World famous Feng Shui authority, Lillian Too, has given the following advice regarding the Stupa.



“The entrance to the South is excellent. Please make certain that the entrance must be oriented correctly, i.e. it must face between 172.5 to 202.5 degrees - this is the direction South and you have to measure correctly.  
Please arrange water offerings here

outside the door, or a water feature - anywhere near the door is fine - and this is excellent up till the year 2003. After that remove the water feature and replace it with something more solid like a low wall of some kind. These two suggestions are based on the “stars” at the front entrance which by the way are auspicious. Put your offices in the West where you are presently planning to make Store rooms. That would be a huge waste since this part of the Stupa will be lucky.

On the East side where you are planning to put Plant, you must put some kind of metal feature here to press down on very unfortunate unlucky stars. Here there is the double 5s and this is dangerous. On no account use this part of the Stupa for offices or to have people here. They will fall ill, and it could even be fatal. The centre of the Stupa must be kept as quiet as possible and since this is where the Gompa and main altar will be this should be OK.

I really don't like the location of the toilets. The female toilets in the SE will affect the financials of the Stupa management. The SE is traditionally regarded as the prosperity corner and placing a toilet here seriously afflicts the Stupa's financials.

The male toilets in the SW are not so bad.

The room in the NW of the Stupa where you say “Plant” should be used for something important. This part of the Stupa is a very vital and important

location. Paint it white inside and use it maybe as the office of the person in charge.”

### From little seeds a Stupa garden grows



Tom Earnshaw, a professional gardener in Bendigo has taken on the task of growing the trees for the gardens which surround the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling stupa.

After extensive research into varieties of trees which would provide summer shade, winter light and autumn colour, along with a suitability to the Bendigo climate and soil, three trees were chosen for the stupa gardens: Claret Ash, Golden Ash and Japanese Maple. In his role as a gardener, Tom comes across these three trees as seedlings. Often, Tom is called upon to remove these seedlings from existing gardens. Tom now has a brief to collect and nurture 200 Claret Ash, 200 Golden Ash and 100 Japanese Maple trees for the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling stupa.

## Relics from HH Sakya Trizin

HH Sakya Trizin, the head of the Sakyapa order, has kindly made an offering for the Stupa. These will be placed with other offerings and relics within the Stupa itself. His secretary writes that "His Holiness is very glad to learn about the progress of your giant stupa."

## City "Fathers" give solid support to Stupa

On Thursday November Five a presentation was given to the opinion leaders of the Bendigo region on Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling. Over 30 people attended the luncheon at Sandhurst Club. Presentations were given by Peter Hargreaves, Robert Cook, Ian Green, Venerable Thubten Gyatso and the Mayor of the City of Greater Bendigo, Cr. Maurie Sharkey. In his address the Mayor said:



"I would like to thank the Stupa Promotion Committee, and it's Chairman Robert Cook, for organising today's luncheon.

You can see that this project is not only breathtaking in terms of its size and dimension but in terms of what it can do for our region - not only from a spiritual point of view but also in terms of our economy.

I want to place on record today the fact that the City Council is a firm supporter of the Stupa project. So far the Stupa Committee has briefed five State Government Ministers on the project and we have been pleased to lend our support to those meetings.

As has been stated today, there is concern that the immensity of the

building proposed could lead some people to think that this is beyond a community like Bendigo. The same thing could have been said about the Chinese Museum, Discovery Science and Technology Centre, plans for the John Quick Museum and so on. This sort of project is not beyond Bendigo.

We do ourselves no favours by thinking small - in fact we got caught up in that bind before amalgamation. Since then we have enjoyed a new lease of community confidence. We can achieve big things. To make this project happen it needs the support of us all. Our task is to take what we have learned today and to act as unofficial ambassadors. We must aim to persuade others that this is a credible and worthwhile project deserving of support from the highest levels of Government and community. On behalf of the City of Greater Bendigo I commend the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor stupa project to you and wish its backers every success. I know that with your support we can achieve our goals."

## Wanted: Structural Engineer

The Tse-Chen Cho-Khor stupa needs the services of a structural engineer to take our plans to the next stage. The engineer should be experienced in innovative concrete techniques. Please address all questions to the architect Peter Weiss, C/o the project office at the address shown on the back page.

## Foundations hoped to be laid in 12 months

The schedule we have set ourselves for the Stupa calls for the laying of the foundations by the end of 1999. With planning proceeding well and with donations on track this date is still looking achievable - particularly if we obtain the services of an engineer as advertised above. We'll keep you posted.

## Meet our architect

Peter Weiss was born in Melbourne. He graduated in Architecture from RMIT and practiced in various firms in Melbourne and Tokyo before moving to Alice Springs and Broome in Outback Australia to work on remote Aboriginal community housing. Peter, his wife Kerry and their brand new daughter Annabelle are keen members of Atisha Centre community.

Peter is the Architect responsible for the design of The Stupa of Universal Compassion (Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling), the Visitor Reception Centre and the overall Stupa site.



## THE ARCHITECTURAL CHALLENGE

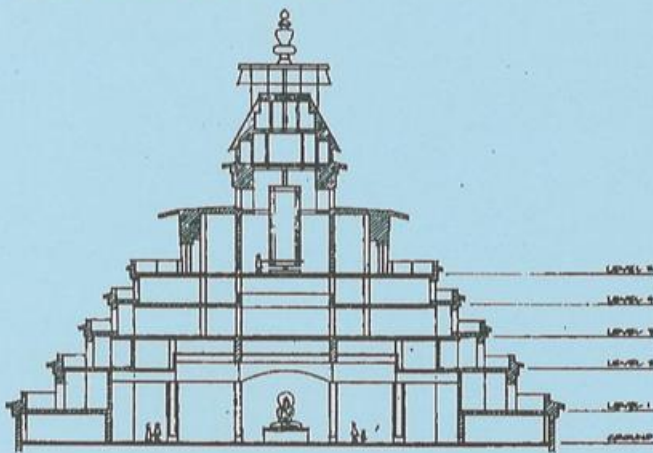
Creating a building designed in the 15th century to last 1,000 years

(by Peter Weiss)

Architecturally and structurally the design brief for the stupa is unusual in a number of ways. While the exterior will be an accurate full scale re-creation of the 15th century building it will differ in many significantly ways from the original. The Gyantse Stupa is in fact almost completely solid (with the exception of the many small shrines which are accessed from the perimeter terraces).

The Stupa of Universal Compassion (Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling) will have a similar arrangement of external shrines, however it will also have to accommodate a number of functions within the Stupa itself. The most important of these is a 400 seat Gompa with ancillary spaces such as toilets, offices, storage areas and air conditioning plant. In addition there will be a system of stairs, elevators, and fire escapes providing public access to all major levels.

A reference library incorporating research and tutorial rooms is also being considered on the upper levels of the main structure. On the Bumpa level of the Stupa will be four cardinal shrines and in their midst a large prayer wheel.



*Some of the early architectural drawings done by Peter Weiss.*

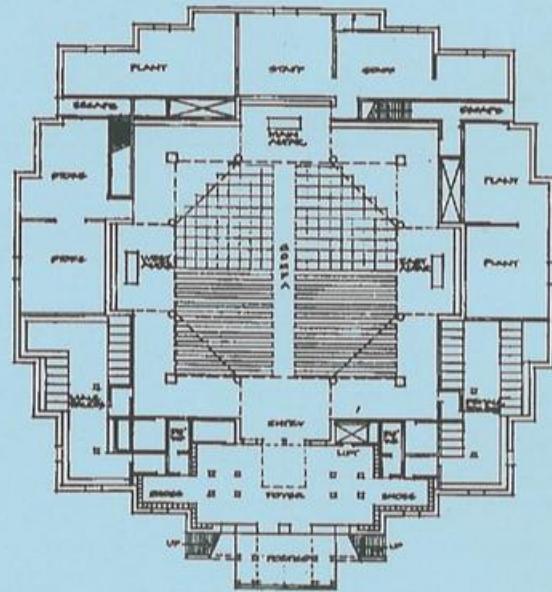
*This drawing shows a cross section of the Stupa. The Gompa takes up the Ground Floor and Level One. A Library takes up Level Three and Level Four. On Level Five is the Bumpa with four cardinal Shrines and in the centre of these Shrines is a large prayer wheel.*

*On each level there are shrine rooms encircling the Stupa.*

Design of the stupa is like solving the Rubic Cube. Each time you move one piece it impacts on several others. Nevertheless it can be built. It is no where near as complicated as a building like the Sydney Opera House and definitely not the like the Maitreya statue.

As with any building, an efficient, cost effective structural and construction system is required. Unlike most buildings however, this brief stipulates that the new stupa be able to withstand the ravages of time for at least a thousand years. While this is structurally feasible far more attention will need to be given to the use and detailed design of construction materials than would normally be the case. The original building is made of mud, stone and wood. At this stage our stupa is expected to be constructed largely from, the somewhat less romantic materials, steel and concrete. We know that many modern concrete buildings have life spans of perhaps only 100 years. However the precedence for longevity does exist. For example, the Pantheon in Rome is constructed from concrete with rudimentary steel reinforcement, and it is nearly 2000 years old.

The Gyantse stupa evolved in a much drier environment than that of South Eastern Australia (despite our recent drought - the driest two years on record). The tiered terraces of the stupa essentially form flat roofs for each level below. This will necessitate great care in devising efficient water disposal and water proofing. We are aware that these considerations must be designed into the structure as an ongoing maintenance program for a thousand years will be difficult to guarantee.



*This drawing shows a plan view of the ground floor of the Stupa (that is "first" floor for our American friends). The floor is mainly taken up with the Gompa. The Gompa will sit between 400 and 500 people (and incidentally therefore the Foyer will have to be big enough to accommodate 400 to 500 shoes). Also on this floor can be seen Offices, Store-rooms, Toilets and Stair / Lift access to the floors above.*

The building presents many challenges. For example the provision of a lift (elevator) to all public floors within a stepped building shape without intruding into the internal space or effecting the external appearance. (The latest approach to this is a combination of lift and concealed wheelchair ramp). Providing natural light and ventilation to the Gompa is also difficult when the interior is surrounded by shrines on each level.

As if these challenges were not enough our designs must conform to contemporary building codes and standards without compromising the original external form.

I have been working on the design of the Stupa of Universal Compassion (Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Ling) for over 12 months. And in many ways my work has only got underway. There will be a role for the Architect until the building is completed and the shrine rooms and Gompa are finished being decorated. And yet for me the hardest part is to maintain mindfulness of the true purpose of the project and of my motivation. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama said:

*"Those working on the project, from the very beginning, their motivation should be very sincere. Fame or personal gain - they should think about these. They should dedicate all their activities and energies of building the Stupa to the benefit of all sentient beings - service to Buddhadharma. For a Buddhist, such motivation is considered very, very important - very essential."*

**The Great Stupa  
video available**

A 50 minute video on the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Stupa and the trip to Tibet to study the Gyantse Stupa is available. The video provides a fascinating insight into modern Tibet as well as a complete background on the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Stupa. To order please send \$50 to the Tse-Chen Cho-Khor Stupa project office (price includes postage).

**Tse-Chen Chor-Khor Video offer**



15 McKenzie Street Bendigo VIC 3550 Australia.

Please supply..... copies of The Great Stupa video priced at:

- \$50 Australian each (including postage) within Australia & NZ
- \$50 US each (including postage) International

Total \$.....Aust. or \$.....US

I require PAL format  or NTSC format (Unless specified PAL will be supplied)

First Name..... Second name.....

Address..... P/code..... Country.....

Please find enclosed cash  cheque  Please debit my Bankcard  Visa  M/card  Amex

Card No                Expiry Date...../..... Signature.....

If you would like a friend to go on this mailing list or for further information please contact Ian Green,  
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