



Gaden Khachoe Shing Tibetan Buddhist Monastery
 Dagom Gaden Tensung Ling Tibetan Buddhist Monastery
 Gaden Samdrup Ling Tibetan Buddhist Monastery

The Garuda

Winter 2010

Pilgrimage to India

We went to India to celebrate the dedication of the new Shar Gaden temple and along the way had an opportunity to walk in the footsteps of thousands of Buddhists who went before us. This journey began on Oct. 23 with three monks and 16 lay students heading to Mumbai, India.

Our first visit was to the Kanheri Caves in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. These caves were carved out of cliffs as a place for monks to study and practice Buddhism. They date from 1st century BCE to 9th century CE. They were commissioned by royal families, merchants and others to support the monks in their efforts to practice the dharma.

In the center of some of the caves are large stupas. Thousands of intricate carvings of Buddhas, bodhisattvas and other Buddhist images cover the walls. As in other cultures, much of the ancient art in India is based on religion. So these caves and their art (sculptures, painting, etc.) and architecture are of interest to many historians.

After a quick plane ride south to Hubli, we stopped at Ven. Kuten Lama's favorite boyhood restaurant – Ayodhya – for tea. Then we drove through a part of the Indian



countryside few foreigners get to see. Fields of sugar cane, rice and corn next to tree-lined roads took us through the town of Mundgod and to a warm welcome by the Shar Gaden monks.

After we arrived and enjoyed tea, we settled into our rooms. The next day was a “play day” before the official festivities began. We met briefly with Abbot Geshe Losang Phendey and then Kuten Lama took us on a tour of the grounds. Everywhere we went preparations were underway – hanging flags, putting up banners, hauling boxes of supplies. But there was no apparent concern about preparations being completed “on time,” just a sense of purpose and excitement.

The celebrations began at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 28. A parade of monks carried pictures of lineage masters with a procession of senior monks and students following. Hundreds of people from all over the world sat with local Tibetans around the perimeter of the temple for prayers. The

younger monks sitting near us were very busy watching us most of the time.

What followed were an official ribbon cutting ceremony, a meeting of the Dorje Shugden Religious and Charitable Society and an evening performance by the monks of a monastic debate and traditional dances and songs. Over the course of the next three days were an education conference, a Je Tsongkhapa Long Life initiation, invocation and Lama Choepa at Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang's Labrang and Kangso.

Time at Shar Gaden seemed to go very slowly even though the days were filled with so much activity. We were so completely separate from our everyday life – no clock to watch, no work to do, meal times announced with a gong – but we also felt right at home. No one wanted to leave. But next on our trip was a visit to Serpom Monastery to the south.

We enjoyed a brief tour of the grounds and had an opportunity to see the new temple, still under construction. After a
(continued on page 2)

IN THIS ISSUE

India Trip	1
Beginnings/endings	1
DGTL/GKS News	2
Q & A with our teacher	3
Photos from India	4-5
Write Path	6
Mind Food	6
GSL News	7
Service Opportunities	7

Beginnings and Endings

Following a two-week pilgrimage to India with Ven. Kuten Lama, Ven. Jamyang Lama and students from DGTL and GSL monasteries, the staff of the Garuda ponders beginnings and endings. We invite you to enjoy the highlights of this past year as we celebrate the Tibetan New Year and the start of 2137 Iron-Tiger.

Letter from Bloomington

As this decade ends, we have so much to celebrate. On the surface it has been a relatively quiet year, but in many ways a time of deepening. The comprehensive teachings focused on bodhichitta have encouraged us to integrate into our lives in very meaningful ways what we studied and discussed.

The highlight of this past year was our trip to India for the opening of Shar Gaden Monastery. The good fortune of being present to participate in the ceremonies and celebrations which are of such momentous significance for the history of our lineage is difficult to fathom. The experiences we shared deepened our devotion to our beloved teacher Ven. Kuten Lama, our connection to our Gaden lineage, our admiration for all of the monks who have overcome so many obstacles and hardships for the sake of preserving the precious dharma, and our feelings of unity and connection with each other.

We entered caves carved from the sides of mountains into monasteries by monks many centuries ago. We prayed in front of the same statues of Buddha they lovingly created. So we felt the continuity, the majesty, the merging of dedicated efforts of the past and present. At Shar Gaden we lived and celebrated with the 800 resident monks. So we were present in both the newest monastery and in ancient monasteries.

We prayed and laughed and cried and coughed and traveled and shopped together. We helped each other. We shared so many unforgettable experiences—all arising from and dependent upon the blessings of our lama. This truth that was so transparently clear on our journey illustrated to us how this works in the same way in each of our lives all of the time. So we came back to our monasteries grateful, renewed, inspired and more dedicated than ever to our common purpose and goals together—the same goals that motivated the monks of ancient times and the members of Shar Gaden and Serpom monasteries. We are united with them all in our recognition of the value of the dharma teachings and the necessity of preserving their purity now and forever.

With warm wishes for a healthy and joyous new year,
—Suzy Fulkerson, President
Dagom Gaden Tensung Ling

UPCOMING DGTL / BLOOMINGTON EVENTS

Tibetan New Year (Losar):

Sunday, Feb. 14, 5 a.m.
Puja

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 9 a.m.
Prayer Flag Installation

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 6 p.m.
New Year's Eve Dinner Party
RSVP: 812-339-0857

New Introductory Class (Senior Students):

A new Introduction to Buddhism series will begin on April 4 at 10 a.m. The class will meet every Sunday. All are welcome.

Commentary on Lama Choepa Practice (Ven. Kuten Lama):

Sundays, 2:30 p.m., beginning Feb. 28

Vajrayogini Retreat:

May 14 - 27 (Gaden Khachoe Shing)
Permission is needed to participate in this retreat.
Please call the monastery for more information.

Dagom Gaden Tensung Ling Monastery

102 Clubhouse Drive
Bloomington, IN 47404
Phone: 812-339-0857

Introductory class: Sundays, 10 AM
Teachings: Sundays, 2:30 PM

See www.dgtlmonastery.org for other events

Pilgrimage to India

(continued from page 1)

delicious meal we were on the road again to Mysore. There we visited Chamundi Hill and the Mysore Palace before going to see Kundeling Rinpoche's monastery in the heart of the city. An extra day to rest and we were on the road again – north to Bangalore to catch a train to take us to Aurangabad.

There we visited the Ajanta and Ellora caves. Both are UNESCO World Heritage Sites and are undergoing preservation. Ajanta is known for the paintings found on walls, ceiling and pillars. The paintings were not put directly on the rock walls. After the surface of the rock was made as smooth as possible with hammer and chisel, the rough surface was coated with a layer of clay and cow dung mixed with rice husks. A top coat of lime was then applied and polished smooth. Then the paint would be applied. Many of the paintings have been lost, but the few that remain hint at how beautifully decorated the caves once were.

Teachers in this lineage have practiced the same prayers, chants and other rituals that we do today. So when we had an opportunity to do Lama Choepa in one of the caves, Kuten Lama explained that it was auspicious that we were able to carry on this tradition.

On our second day in Aurangabad, we went to the Ellora caves. This set of caves is a mix of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain religions. Some features of all the caves were the same – channels cut into the rock to direct rainwater into large cisterns, windows and holes to let in light and fresh air – but the carvings and ornamentation were all unique.

On our last night in Mumbai before we returned to the United States, we had one last meal of spicy Indian cuisine with Kuten Lama. Sitting around the table talking and laughing, it could have been any meal at any time in any place. But it wasn't – it was the end of an historic trip that included an important time in our lineage. It was, in a word, amazing.

—Margo Pierce
Cincinnati



A 7-meter (23-foot) long representation of Buddha's parinirvana

Our Teacher Teaches:

A Few Thoughts on Beginnings and Endings

Resident teacher Ven. Kuten Lama answers some questions about the recent trip to India

What do Buddhist teachings have to say about beginnings and endings?

Generally, when we talk about the beginning and end, it's in relation to the journey of samsara. Buddhist teachings say there is no beginning of samsara, but there is the end of samsara. The reason there is no beginning is because we don't know the exact point when we each started our samsaric journey. But when we achieve enlightenment, when we achieve liberation from samsara, that is the end of samsara.

At a more individual level, we have this conception of beginning of time and end of time. Whenever we make a commitment to do something – say to meditate from 1 - 2 o'clock – we begin a journey, and if we achieve our goal, we reach the end; and if we have not achieved the goal we've committed to, we've not achieved the end yet. So a beginning and end has to be in relation to some work or something. In general, these cannot be explained without being mentally labeled.

Generally, whatever action you engage in depends on what you do in beginning, so setting your motivation is important. Other than that, in other mundane activities, whether a celebration becomes a dharma action or not depends on your motivation.

For example, we went to India this year. We all started and ended a journey at a certain time, but what we accomplished through this journey really depended on each individual person's motivation and experience. When I went to India, my mind was open to any kind of experience I would go through. Jamyang's motivation was that all people have good journey, good health and able to return back home safely. So there was a difference in the setting up of the motivations for the journey. Returning back, it seems like I have accomplished my journey because I went with an open mind, whereas Jamyang's motivation was that everyone have a healthy, safe trip – and some people got a little cold or things like that – so his journey was not completely satisfied.

So even though 20 people all went on the same timeline, the experience of the journey was very different for each individual person, depending on their initial motivation and concluding thoughts. So beginnings and ends are easy to use as words, but if you look at a deeper level, it is more difficult.

The main purpose of going to India was to celebrate the new prayer hall at Shar Gaden. Some people said that this was a new beginning for our lineage. Do you agree with this?

The journey to India this time depended on each individual's way of thinking. It was not exactly for the inauguration of a new temple, a new house. To continue to preserve the purity of the lineage, it is important to have a pure community. There are many obstacles and difficulties to preserve the purity of the lineage, so to continue to preserve the purity of Tsongkhapa's lineage, this new monastery was established. Basically it is nothing new; it is just to continue the wisdom tradition of great master Tsongkhapa, to preserve it.

Generally all phenomena, everything, is dependent origination, all actions are interdependent, any action depends on others...so this celebration of prayers was to mark that interdependence and to help the interdependent originations come into more positives, so any actions in the future will become more positive.

During a visit to one of India's ancient caves, we paused by a massive stone carving of a sleeping Buddha, said to represent Buddha's parinirvana, an apparent ending. What was the significance of that moment?

It shows impermanence. The longer explanation is because of our attachment to this human body, negative karma and delusion arise. It says to us we should not be attached to this physical human body, but rather we should utilize it to achieve ultimate Buddhahood, or more positive rebirths, or to make life essenceful or meaningful.



Preparing to arrive at Shar Gaden in Mundgod, India



A warm welcome from Shar Gaden Monastery



Visit with Abbott Geshe Losang Phendey



Over 300 guests from the local community and around the world attended the temple dedication



(L to R) Ven. Kuten Lama, a monk from Shar Gaden, Ven. Jamyang Lama, Jeff Ryan and Pete Eschelmann sit beneath the Dharmapala lineage tree tangkha



800 monks live and practice at Shar Gaden Monastery



Camera-shy young monk



The temple dedication ceremonies included visiting students



The new temple at sunset



Interior of new Shar Gaden temple



Kangso on the last day of the celebrations



At the train station and heading north



A Buddha in the Ellora Caves



Students testing at Serpom



The Ajanta Caves in Aurangabad, India



Historic Buddha and paintings in a cave



All of the caves and adornments were carved by hand



Lama Choepa practice at Ajanta



Group picture at Ajanta



Three-story cave at Ellora

Write Path

Emigration From South Africa to the USA

I
In slow-motion arc a dolphin
leaps our life-change
to plunge
into the near future while

in a small row-boat
afloat the present,
we watch and plan.

II
Fastened to our chosen future
like a loop over button, the present
secures the garment at one point only:
the throat, singing.

By Jenny Kander



Ice Painting by Dawn Adams

Editor's Note: Write Path submissions are welcome from all. We seek high-quality poetry that explores our journey on the dharma path. Submissions need to be fairly succinct due to space limitations. Submit to Write Path at jheimer@indiana.edu. Please put "Write Path" in the subject line.

Mind Food:

Reviews of Books, Videos and Other Morsels

*Milking the Painted Cow:
The Creative Power of Mind and the
Shape of Reality in Light of the
Buddhist Tradition*

Tarhang Tulku
Berkeley, CA: Dharma Publishing, 2005

Dharma Path Start to Finish

"The beginning dharma student should never forget that the central practice of investigating and transforming mind can be conducted in different ways and different levels," writes Tarhang Tulku in the preface to this eminently readable and highly insightful book. Through his Nyingma Meditation Center in Berkeley, Tarhang Tulku has been at the forefront, since the 1970s, of presenting Buddhism to Westerners without diluting its content. He laments the easy mastery of dharma sought by Western students, which is aided by teachers, both Westerners and Tibetans, who cave in to pressures to make Buddhist ideas simple and digestible to their students rather than deal with their complexities. He points out that the Buddha taught the dharma in eighty-four

thousand topics, and that the expanse and complexity of Buddhist teachings require lifetimes of mastery.

So where does one begin?

With a "recognition of the centrality of suffering in our experience and with a wish to understand how it comes about," to cease our suffering, we need to turn inward, to an exploration of the mind. It is the mind that creates both samsara and nirvana. Until the three trainings of sila (ethics), samadhi (meditation) and prajna (wisdom) mature in our dharma practice, our mind continues to create the illusion that our experiences are real. Writes Tarhang Tulku, "The Western mind, fascinated with drama—television and movies, novels and plays—is familiar with this momentum. Even so, Western understanding scarcely suspects that its own daily dramas operate in a similar manner, a magical display generated through the rules and roles of prevailing fiction."

An expert on mind who has written a series of visionary books on mind's relationship to time, space and knowledge, Tarhang Tulku exhorts us to be constantly

aware of our samsaric mind—its limitations, its entrapments. Such vigilance could lead us to such a powerful ending, he writes, "that we may even be able to halt or reverse the momentum that drives samsara." Like the great Chandrakirti, who fed the monks of his monastery during a famine by milking the painting of a cow, thus demonstrating sunyata, an emptiness mind that could shape reality into any form it wished.

—Samrat Upadhyay
Bloomington

Editor's note: Any views expressed on this page are those of the individual contributors and do not represent the views of the monastery.

An Ending to Sam & Sara

Everything is impermanent, and with this issue, DGTL's Mark Beebe has decided that it is time to put to rest his cartoon strip, *Sam&Sara*. The staff of the Garuda want to warmly thank Mark for his years of generous service. Thank you for making us smile.

Letter from Cincinnati

What a year it has been at Gaden Samdrup Ling! What seemed like a path full of obstacles last January, turned out to be the beginning of a wonderful year.

Due to some Zoning and Building Department issues, it was not possible for us to continue using the farmhouse for our gumpa. After much discussion, the board decided to lease a 24' x 48' mobile classroom to serve as a temporary gumpa until the new monastery is built. The classroom was set during the first few months of the new year. Many Sangha members contributed their time, tools and material to install over 250 feet of underground electrical cable and construct a handicap ramp built to Building Department specifications.

Although we had hoped to have the new gumpa ready for Losar, we were not able to officially open until April. Our inaugural event was the Migtsema Retreat with the Je Tsongkhapa Long Life Initiation. An auspicious beginning! We are so grateful to our teacher, Ven. Kuten Lama, for his encouragement and direction during this time and we would also would like to thank

Ven. Jamyang Lama for all his efforts in getting the new gumpa up and running.

As wonderful as it was having a much larger area to serve as our gumpa, we received a truly wonderful surprise in June—the addition of three new statues. The hand-made statues of Je Tsongkhapa, Cittamani Tara and Manjushri were flown in from Nepal and were set in place by Kuten Lama, Jamyang and a few students. The statues were sponsored by people we don't even know, but someday we hope we will be able to show them our appreciation.

The next step was the adornment of the statues and filling them with thousands and thousands of prayers and incense. According to Kuten Lama, the rolling and placing of the prayers is usually done by ordained monks. However, he said that there was a time when his teacher, Ven. Zong Rinpoche, allowed the lay sponsor of a statue to help with the prayers, so many people rolled hundreds of prayers. The adornment of the statues was beautifully crafted by our monks, including Geshe Jampa Losel and a few students.

The statues were ready for dedication in

September; and with a full Sangha present (a full Sangha consists of 4 fully ordained Monks – Kuten Lama, Geshela, Jamyang and Lobsang Dorje), the statues became a truly beautiful and blessed addition to the gumpa and to our sangha.

As busy as the year was, we were able to have our yearly Kids Peace Camp in July and Tibet Fest in September. These events help us to reach out to the community and share our hope for a more peaceful and loving world.

The year ended with the pilgrimage to India for a few students from GSL along with our family at DGTL. There are many, many wonderful stories to tell, but we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Kuten Lama and Jamyang for everything they did to make this trip possible.

Words cannot describe the elation of chanting the same practices we have learned from Kuten Lama with over 800 Monks in a world a thousand miles away. We are truly blessed to have this gift in our lives.

—Steve Vincent
Board member

THE *GARUDA* is published by Dagom Gaden Tensung Ling Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, 102 Clubhouse Drive, Bloomington, IN 47404, and Gaden Samdrup Ling Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, 3046 Pavlova Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45251. Student contributions welcomed.

Adviser: Ven. Jamyang Lama
Co-Editors: Holly Stocking and Margo Pierce
Design: Mary Ziskin
Website: Roy Hernandez and Ven. Jamyang Lama
Writers and Editors:
Write Path: Julia Dadds
Mind Food: Julie Gifford

A Garuda is a creature with the torso and arms of a man and the head, beak, legs, and wings of a magnificent bird. In 2001, Kyabje Dagom Rinpoche, founder of DGTL, gave this newsletter its name. He explained that the Garuda is a symbol of fearlessness and that there is an auspicious connection between it and the monastery.



Service Opportunities

Our monasteries have established two projects that offer opportunities for direct service:

Sponsor a Monk

For just \$20 a month, you can ensure that a child will continue his studies and make a better life for himself and others. Instructions for sponsoring a monk and biographies of monks who need sponsorship are at our Web site: www.dgtlmonastery.org

Teach in a Monastery

Nik Aronoff of DGTL and Thomas Jones, a friend of our monasteries from England, have completed six months of volunteer service teaching English in Shar Gaden Monastery in South India. Similar opportunities exist at Shar Gaden and other monasteries in India. If you would like to volunteer, contact DGTL at dgtloffice@yahoo.com.

UPCOMING GSL/CINCINNATI EVENTS

Tibetan New Year (Losar):

Saturday, Feb. 20, 9 a.m.
Prayer Flag Installation

Sunday, Feb. 21, 6 p.m.
New Year's Dinner Party
RSVP: gsloffice@yahoo.com

New Introductory Class:

A new Introduction to Buddhism series will begin on April 2 at 7 p.m. The class will meet every Friday night. All are welcome.

Dharma Discourse:

Starting on Feb. 27 we will begin receiving teachings on a new text, *Guide to Bodhisattva Way of Life*.

Gaden Samdrup Ling Monastery

3046 Pavlova Drive,
Cincinnati, OH 45251
Phone 513-385-7116
E-Mail: gsl@ganden.org

Introductory class: Fridays, 7 PM
Teachings: Saturdays, 10 AM
Tara practice: Saturdays, 2 PM
See www.ganden.org for other events

Support Dagom Gaden Tensung Ling
 Tibetan Buddhist Monastery
 A Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation

Name _____

Address _____

City / State/ ZIP _____

Phone (work) _____ Phone (home) _____

E-mail _____

Yes, I wish to become a member of DGTL. My donation is enclosed. (Make checks payable to DGTL Monastery.)

Monthly Membership Pledge

- \$15 per month \$25 per month \$50 per month
 \$75 per month \$100 per month
 \$_____ per month

One-time Donation

- \$50 \$100 \$200 \$300
 \$400 \$500 \$_____ (other amount)

Mail to: DGTL Monastery Fund, 102 Clubhouse Dr.
Bloomington, IN 47404

Support Gaden Samdrup Ling
 Tibetan Buddhist Monastery
 A Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation

Name _____

Address _____

City / State/ ZIP _____

Phone (work) _____ Phone (home) _____

E-mail _____

Yes, I wish to become a member of GSL. My donation is enclosed. (Make checks payable to GSL Monastery.)

Monthly Membership Pledge

- \$15 per month \$25 per month \$50 per month
 \$75 per month \$100 per month
 \$_____ per month

One-time Donation

- \$50 \$100 \$200 \$300
 \$400 \$500 \$_____ (other amount)

Mail to: GSL Monastery Fund, 3046 Pavlova Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45251



Dagom

Gaden

Tensung

Ling

102 Clubhouse Drive
 Bloomington, IN
 47404-1828
 USA
 Phone 812 339-0857
 www.gaden.org

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 Bloomington, IN
 Permit No. 481