

Individual retreats with skygazing? Will be possible

written by Jitka Polanská



If you have a wish to support Shenten Dargye Ling, a place which has been blessed by many years of Yongdzin Rinpoche' s presence, a central place of gathering and practice of our community, you can do it now. A necessary and costly renovation of the farm house, the Longère, has been taking place since the autumn 2021. Khenpo Gelek' s plan is to transform the building into a facility for personal retreats. "There is a marvellous view over the fields and it is just perfect for the skygazing," he says. In the following letter, which we are happy to publish here, the team of Cogregation Shenten Dargye Ling explains what works need to be done. As a myriad of drops create an ocean, every, even small contribution counts...

Dear sangha sisters and brothers, dear friends of Shenten Dargye Ling,
We hope that you are all in good health and doing well despite this very difficult period we have been living through since March 2020. One good thing is that we have been able to get together and support each other via online teachings and practice. We hope and pray that the situation in the world will get better soon and that we can start the teachings and retreats again at Shenten Dargye Ling.

We are very lucky to have been able to enjoy, over many years, the possibility of receiving teachings

and initiations from our precious master and living Buddha Yongdzin Rinpoche, as well as from Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, here at Shenten. Thanks to our generous benefactor Loel Guinness they established this monastery and retreat center in 2005, and have been able to organize annual retreats with the help of many hard-working volunteers. Shenten Dargye Ling was recognized by the French Ministry of Interior as a Religious Congregation in 2006, confirming its status as a fully independent and authentic tradition.



The outside renovation was carried on by a team led by Monika Trojan. Monika, together with Pierre Averous and Alain Guéniot, is a member of the “building team” of Congregation Shenten Dargye Ling.

The buildings in Shenten are very old; the Château dates from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and the Longère from the 17th century. This means that it is absolutely necessary to carry out renovations and repairs continuously. Over many years, and especially in the past two years, we have been undertaking major renovations in the Château. In 2020-2021 the old sewage systems, water pipes and hot water boiler were replaced, and the rooms were painted. We also painted the rooms and corridors in the Pavillion.

Until now we have managed to keep the renovation costs affordable by doing a significant part of the work ourselves with the help of many volunteers. However, in the next phase we need to hire professional people who have special the skills and experience required for repairing old buildings. In this situation, we turn to you once again and ask your help and support in this project.

There is an urgent and unavoidable need to repair the Longère, the long building adjacent to the Château. The walls of the building have severe cracks all around, and the stones are becoming

displaced. It is absolutely necessary to repair and fortify the walls before they start crumbling and the building becoming unsafe to use. Old rain gutters, sewage systems and water pipes, as well as windows and doors have to be replaced. We began this project this autumn, but in order to be able to continue in the spring 2022, we must hire professional people with special skills to do the most demanding work.

In the second phase of this project, Khenpo Gelek has a dream and an earnest wish to turn one part of the Longère building into a long-term personal retreat facility for practitioners, with two rooms and bathrooms and a small kitchen. This would provide a perfect place to practice sun-gazing with a beautiful open view on the lake side. Khen Rinpoche's former house could also be transformed into a long-term retreat house with two rooms. For that, we need to build a small kitchen and fireplace and to install a hot water boiler.

Lastly, it is necessary to order and install a gate to improve the safety in the area and to protect the property from thieves.

All this costs a lot of money, which we cannot afford without your generosity. Our very rough estimate of the costs at this stage is around 60 000 - 80 000 euros. All contributions, however small, would be greatly appreciated and welcome in helping us to complete this important project in 2022.

A quote from Zermig, the middle version of Buddha Tönpa Shenrab's biography:

"If motivated by the mind of pure devotion, even one palmful of soil elevates the building and one palmful of water settles the dust, and each drop of water held in the palm and countless numbers of dust particles held in the palm are causes of joy, happiness and merit."

May Shenten Dargye Ling, the most important seat of the original Tibetan culture and tradition in the West, develop and flourish for years to come!

Please send you donations to our bank account specially for this purpose:

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Another view of the Longère.