



## **New Renovation Training Manual**

With the generous assistance of Heinrich Boell Foundation in Germany (<http://www.boell-china.org/>), Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center will launch a new project involving the creation of a training manual on renovating old buildings. The objective of this project is to modernize the protection of buildings, as well as to explore more practical and feasible protection methods, while keeping the aspects of the traditional architectural style manner.

In the Old Beijing, the presence of courtyards has gradually decreased as part of the natural backdrop to everyday life because there have been more and more courtyard houses entering the real estate market. The relationship between the protection areas and courtyard ownership has become clearer because of this. Currently, there are several professional real estate firms that specialize in courtyard selling. Today, buying courtyard houses has become a new and popular trend.

Apart from some high-grade courtyards, a large majority are private homes, which are not included in the Government public housing plan. Because of funding constraints, the transformation of private homes lack management and guidance from the state and therefore, residents are left with no option but to cheaply and gaudily renovate their old courtyard. This results in not only a devaluation of their property but also the damage of some historical and cultural traditions.

In order to protect the historical and cultural heritage and to avoid blind destruction, we have applied to B?ll Foundation for the funds to begin this project to give the courtyard house residents a deeper understand of the historical and cultural value of their home, as well as the proper way to maintain and renovate their home. We would like to thank the Boll Foundation for their strong support, which will also enable "Friends of Old Beijing" to network and develop into an integral part of the protection of Old Beijing.

Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center

## **CHP events**

### **Friends of Old Beijing**

---

#### **Hutongs Outside Preservation Districts: Reflections and Observations**

At the end of December, "Friends of Old Beijing" began a survey on the hutongs outside the historical and cultural preservation districts.? In the past two months, our volunteers braved the cold in order to do survey work in Old Beijing's four districts.? Although the survey documented their objective impressions on the condition of the

hutongs and some of the resident's opinions, there was no space on the survey for them to record their own personal thoughts so we invited them to share their views and impressions with us.

---

*Walking into the Hongxian Hutong (formerly known as Maxian Hutong), I saw a newly painted gray wall and red door. The muddy gray and a glaring red color did not match the hutong style. As I walked on, I saw an old wooden electricity pole and suddenly had a feeling as if I had just seen an old friend.*

*When I was a child, I used to run around wooden electricity poles just like this one. Many nights we would happily play our games under the glare of the lights of the poles.? The wooden poles compared to the cold cement ones seemed to have a life of their own. There were also very old trees planted to provide shade, which now also gives us light. My dear wooden pole, you are not only an electricity pole but you are the happiest memory in my childhood. I wish you another ten, hundred years here in this hutong...*

*Walking out of the lively SOGO department store, I arrived at a completely isolated street.? Looking around, I saw two contrasting scenes: one was a group of modern houses and the other was half of a demolished house. According to local residents, the demolition of this house began in 2001 but after demolishing half, they ran out of money. I continued down the street in the cold winter, and suddenly saw a scene that made me stop in my tracks. As I began to raise my camera to take a picture, a dramatic scene appeared before me: a woman holding a broom and plastic basin emerged from a doorway and began to sweep and pour water, setting the stage for my own personal street show.*

*To the south of Liulichang area at 94 Qiansungongyuan Hutong in Xuanwu District, there is a building with an advertisement for a candle shop, written simply on wood with no punctuation.*

*I think surveying hutongs outside of the preservation districts is more interesting than hutongs within the district. In Wang Jun's blog, he writes, "On China's cultural map, the southern part of Xuanwu District brings the past to today." Today when you walk in the area, you can go from an ancient temple to the garden of a former Qing officer. Walking through the hutong is like strolling through a temple fair where you can find all kinds of Beijing gems scattered everywhere.*

*Among the hutongs I am responsible for surveying, Lazhu Hutong gave me the deepest impression. It is called Lazhu Hutong because there used to be many small candle making workshops here. Now, it has been transformed into a Muslim delicacy street. In the early mornings, you can see long lines of people lined up at the restaurants for breakfast. Most of them are local residents but there are also some who live a little further away. I very much enjoyed the tripe at No. 12 Lazhu Hutong because it is very chewy but the sauce is a little salty.? After work, the barbeque stands come out and fill the street with smoke and the owners litter the streets with tables and chairs, blocking the streets and making it inconvenient for local residents to get around.*

Hutongs the above four volunteers are responsible for are all in Xuanwu District, among which Qiansonggongyuan Hutong is located in the south Liulichang Fengmao Xietiao District, an area that complements historic areas/landmarks. In 2005, 19% of hutongs in the old town of Beijing were in these districts. At present,

there are four historic districts in Xuanwu District. The “Controlling Detailed Planning for the Old Town” in 2006 gave clear protection principles for the Fengmao Xietiao Districts. Besides the south Liulichang district, the two other such districts are the area between Tianqiao and Zhushikou, which is located along the axis of the city, and the Xuanxi Fengmao Xietiao District.

Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center (CHP)

## **Media mobilization**

Editor: Zhang Pei

The following links are listed to provide additional information on cultural heritage protection. If there are issues with the links, please contact the websites directly.

"Liulichang Parking Lot Proposal"

Reporter: Wang Jialin, January 8, 2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://www.thebeijingnews.com/news/intime/2008/01-08/021@082239.htm>

"Fengsheng Hutong: an Ancient Tang Dynasty Graveyard?"

Reporter: Tian Beibei, January 22, 2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://www.jinzi.org/jinrongjie/html/60/n-660.html>

"Chinese Lantern Festival and Chess Nominated as Intangible Cultural Heritage"

Reporter: Wang Hui, January 30, 2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://gb.cri.cn/18824/2007/12/10/2625@1871275.htm>

"Specialists Called for the Preservation of Songgongci"

Reportert: Tian Beibei, January 31,2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://www.thebeijingnews.com/news/beijing/2008/01-31/014@103400.htm>

Cultural Bureau Reforms Ruifuxiang"

Reporter: Wang Hui, February 20, 2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://www.thebeijingnews.com/news/beijing/2008/02-20/021@080910.htm>

"Truck strikes Memorial Arch at Confucian Imperial Academy"

Reporter: Yang Siqi, February 24,2008, *The Beijing News*

<http://www.thebeijingnews.com/news/beijing/2008/02-24/011@051943.htm>