



北京文化遗产保护中心
Beijing Cultural Heritage
Protection Center (CHP)

Heritage Update

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Monthly Commentary

Dear Friends,

Since the beginning of spring, CHP has made considerable progress. We have 3 new staff members, all responsible for different projects and tasks. Diao Yuning (Doreen), who once worked at an NGO in Yunnan, is responsible for our "Renovation Training" program. Wang Wei (Ivy), a creative writer from Beijing, is responsible for our "Journalist Salon" project and external media. Carla Nayton, our 2008 Australian Youth Ambassador (AYAD) will formally take over the fund-raising initiative and some external media. Between our new staff and several volunteers, we now possess a large range of skills and talents. We hope to put these assets into good use to ensure successful completion of our projects.

In addition to our new staff members, our 2007 financial reports have been completed by our NPP volunteer, Gelan. Since we are an NGO with little experience, this is an incredible feat for us and has made us extremely pleased. We hope that this will help enhance our organizations' credibility and give our projects and development a positive effect.

Of course, we can not forget our more than 100 "Friends of Old Beijing" volunteers. Trekking through the hutongs during a rough winter, we hope that this spring will bring several pleasant and relaxing hutong tours.

"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade." ~Charles Dickens

Wishing you all a Happy Spring!

Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center

Articles

Another Threat to the Forbidden City?

CHP has become aware of a new threat to the conservation of the Forbidden City. Details are not clear, and the proposed project is shrouded in secrecy, but CHP understands that plans are being made to equip the Forbidden City with special facilities to receive participants in the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games that are to be held in September 2008.

Apparently the plan is to smooth over the paving of the Forbidden City to make it easier for wheel chairs, to lay wooden ramps across high entrance thresholds, and to install elevators to provide access for those with disabilities to the major raised halls.? No doubt these proposals all stem from a well-intentioned concern for the

rights of disabled people and a desire for China to be a good host for the Paralympics, but we feel that these proposals, if implemented, may damage the Forbidden City structurally, and will certainly detract from the historical authenticity of this World Heritage Site, in contravention of UNESCO guidelines for management and conservation.

Any plans for accommodating disabled visitors to the Forbidden City must be implemented in a transparent manner, with due regard for protecting the site and preserving its historical authenticity. We call on all who cherish this finest example of Chinese imperial heritage to make their concerns known, and hope that participants in the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games will join us in expressing our concern to the authorities about this plan. We call on the Forbidden City authorities to clarify their intentions so that we can all be reassured that any steps taken to enhance access to the Forbidden City respect the need to protect the historic integrity of the site. There are no doubt more reasonable ways of making the Forbidden City accessible to visitors with disabilities without installing elevators and laying ramps across high thresholds.

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Project Updates

Friends of Old Beijing

Friends of Old Beijing

["Friends of Old Beijing" Period Research Results - Resident Interviews](#)

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Announcements

Introduction to New Staff Members

Doreen:

Doreen (Diao Yuning) is from Chengde in Hebei province. She was nicknamed 'Bear' because of her chubby cheeks and passionate love for food. She grew up in the countryside and began her studies at Yunnan University for a career in social work.

During college she volunteered for AIDS prevention campaigns and upon graduating, she began work at a public health NGO. Training, project management, daily supervision, and designing of promotional materials were all a part of her job.

Joining the Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center as our renovation expert, Doreen is passionate about protecting both material and non-material cultural heritage. She hopes to one day be able to protect some aspects of her own village, including the legends behind the whispering stoves in the winter and the dancing sunshine in the summer.

Carla:

My name is Carla Nayton and I am an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development (AYAD). As an AYAD volunteer, I will be working with CHP for the next 9 months. I decided to apply for the assignment position at CHP because cultural heritage preservation is an area of research I feel very passionately about. My role at CHP will be varied but it will involve researching successful conservation cases and interviewing expatriate experts about cultural heritage preservation in China. I am looking forward to contributing to CHP's research projects and developing training manuals to assist with the creation of sustainable methods of cultural heritage conservation. I will also be working as a Donor Relations Officer, and I am both honoured and excited to be offered the opportunity to establish new fundraising initiatives at CHP.

I completed my honours degree in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Western Australia in 2005. My thesis focussed on the preservation of minority cultural diversity in Viet Nam. My interest in this area stemmed from a trip I took to the mountain minority communities in the far north of Viet Nam, close to the Chinese border. Following the completion of my thesis, I presented a paper on Viet Nam's mountain-dwelling ethnic minority groups (Montagnards) and sustainable cultural tourism, to the 2nd International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability, held in Hanoi in 2006. My research into the culturally diverse groups living in Viet Nam's far north is closely linked to the study of Chinese ethnology, but I have much to learn about China, as it is my first time in this amazing country. I feel incredibly lucky to be in Beijing at such an interesting time: the lead up to the Olympic Games; and I am eager to discover more about China's extraordinarily rich and vibrant culture.

Ivy:

Hi! My name is Ivy and I am new to CHP. I worked as a journalist for more than 2 years so I am familiar with this field. I am in charge of the Media Training program, including the Journalist Salon. I re-worked the structure and organization of the Journalist Salon and am creating a training manual so hopefully we will be able to work with media more easily. I am also in charge of organizing some volunteer activities, interviews with experts, updating the website and also serve as the communication assistant. Communication, relationship, and association between the media and CHP are my first priority here at CHP.

Media mobilization

[Saving China's Past](#)

Ian Johnson, The Wall Street Journal. March 15, 2008

[Raze High the Roof Beams, Comrade](#)

Holly Brubach, The New York Times Style Magazine. Spring 2008

[Police Arrest 26 for Damaging Prospective World Heritage Site](#)

Xinhua, People's Daily Online. February 19, 2008

[The Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage to Aid Conservation](#)

Wang Nan, ChinaCulture.org.March 19, 2008

[Colonial Charm, Cold War Landmarks](#)

Ben Blanchard, Globe and Mail.February 23, 2008

[Vancouver's Faded Beauties Get a Second Chance](#)

Kerry Gold, Globe and Mail.March 14, 2008

[An Antebellum Fix-up Project in the U.S.](#)

Sandra Fleishman, The Washington Post.March 15, 2008