



UNESCO  
Asia-Pacific Awards for

*Cultural Heritage  
Conservation*

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Top Award Given to Restoration of Principal *Chedi* at  
Wat Prayurawongsawas Worawihan  
in 2013 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards**

Bangkok, 3 September 2013 — The restoration of the principal *chedi* (reliquary stupa) in Wat Prayurawongsawas Worawihan temple in Bangkok, Thailand has been honoured with the Award of Excellence in the 2013 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. The award recognizes the work undertaken on the Phra Borommathat Maha Chedi and the attached hall, Pharin Pariyattithammasala, for its technical achievement and for the outstanding social impact sparked by the conservation project.

In June this year a panel of international conservation experts was convened to review and deliberate on the 47 entries received from 16 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. “We were particularly encouraged to see our broadest ever geographical range this year, spanning from the Cook Islands in the Eastern Pacific Ocean to the Islamic Republic of Iran at the far end of West Asia”, comments Tim Curtis, Chair of the Jury and Chief of the Culture Unit, UNESCO Bangkok.

Other awardees include:

Awards of Distinction:

- The Great Serai, Kabul, Afghanistan
- Lal Chimney Compound, Mumbai, India
- Khaplu Palace, Baltistan, Pakistan

Awards of Merit:

- Maryborough Railway Station, Victoria, Australia
- Enjoying Snow Yard, Beijing, China
- Tai O Heritage Hotel, Hong Kong SAR, China
- Royal Bombay Yacht Club Residential Chambers, Mumbai, India
- Otaki Town Hall, Chiba Prefecture, Japan
- Historic Buildings in Duong Lam Village, Son Tay, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Honourable Mention:

- Sail Maker's Shed, Broome, Western Australia, Australia
- Lost Bomb Shelter of the Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi, Viet Nam

The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme recognizes the efforts of private individuals and organizations that have successfully restored and conserved structures and buildings of heritage value in the region. By recognizing private efforts to restore and adapt historic properties the awards aim to encourage other property owners to undertake conservation projects within their communities, either independently or by seeking public-private partnerships.

The winners were selected based on how the projects reflected a clear understanding and application of various criteria, such as the articulation of the spirit of place, technical achievement, appropriate use or adaption, and the project's contribution to the surrounding environment and the local community's cultural and historical continuity.

Eligible projects must be more than 50 years old and the restoration must have been completed within the past 10 years. Buildings with a new use must have also been in viable use for at least one year from the date of the awards announcement.

Further information about the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation and this year's winning entries can be found at:

<http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/heritageawards>

The call for entries for the 2014 UNESCO Heritage Awards shall be made in October 2013.

Further details will be available on the awards website: <http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/wh/asia-pacific-heritage-awards>

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## Project profiles for 2013 UNESCO Heritage Award winners

### Award of Excellence

**Project name:** Phra Borommathat Maha Chedi and Pharin Pariyattithammasala of Wat Prayurawongsawas

**Location:** Bangkok, Thailand



The restoration of the historically significant *chedi* (reliquary stupa) and its attached hall has preserved one of Bangkok's most iconic religious monuments, combining an act of faith with a major engineering feat. The project has catalyzed extensive social impact in the multicultural historic district of Kadeejeen. In strengthening the interior structure while maintaining the external shell of the dramatically leaning *chedi*, the project demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of a unique architectural typology from the early Rattanakosin era. The technical interventions, combining the latest in scientific advances with traditional construction techniques, help to convey a sense of antiquity and feeling of age. The exemplary co-operation between the monks, specialists and locals has given a twenty-first century meaning to the age-old symbiosis between Buddhist monasteries and the lay community in sustaining a sacred complex as the centerpiece of neighbourhood life.

### Award of Distinction

**Project name:** The Great Serai

**Location:** Kabul, Afghanistan



Setting a precedent for conservation work in Kabul, the restoration of the landmark Great Serai is a valiant rescue of a historically significant nineteenth century merchants' palace. The site, which once served as the center point of the city's caravan trade, has been returned to its former eclectic grandeur. The project demonstrated technical solutions that not only conserved the original materials and traditional spaces of the structure, but also retained the historical context of the property. The engagement of the community in the restoration process is commendable in the way that it has renewed pride of place and raised awareness of the continued relevance of local cultural heritage. Now housing the new Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture, the restored building will make an important contribution to sustaining Kabul's cultural heritage.

**Project name:** Lal Chimney Compound  
**Location:** Mumbai, India



The conservation of the buildings which form the Lal Chimney Compound is highly laudable for its achievement in safeguarding a distinctive typology of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century urban community housing that had been left in ruinous condition and slated for demolition. Responding sensitively to each of the structures' unique architectural elements, the decision to reuse and conserve original materials and ornamental details helped retain the compound's authenticity. By keeping the original function of the buildings, the historic continuity of the community has been ensured. This project sets a benchmark for the conservation of community housing, a historically and socially significant form of heritage that is all too often neglected, and acts as an exemplary model for future initiatives.

**Project name:** Khaplu Palace  
**Location:** Baltistan, Pakistan



Once the former seat of government and one of Baltistan's finest royal residences, Khaplu Palace has been restored from a dire state of dilapidation. The work, undertaken with a high level of technical competence, addressed a range of challenges from structural concerns to historic landscaping in a manner that has retained the authenticity. The Palace has been reintegrated as a vital part of the community through its new function as a small-scale heritage hotel and Baltistani Folk Museum. The upgrade of the adjacent village's infrastructure and the creation of new livelihood opportunities have ensured improved well-being for local inhabitants in this remote rural area. The project is testimony to the success of the well-tested approach to mobilizing culture for sustainable development pioneered by the Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan.

### **Award of Merit**

**Project name:** Maryborough Railway Station  
**Location:** Victoria, Australia



The conservation of Maryborough Railway Station has breathed new life to a fine and rare example of a Victorian-era station built in the Anglo-Dutch style. The distinctive red brick-building had suffered from long-term neglect and earlier inappropriate repair works that masked its cultural value and detracted from its operational function. Through meticulous research and conservation interventions, the character and values of the place have been retained and the continuing function of the station has been enhanced. Undertaken as part of a broader urban revitalization scheme, the project has also uplifted the local community. Vic Track's decision to conserve the station is exemplary as a model to encourage further conservation of Australia's railway and industrial heritage.



**Project name: Enjoying Snow Yard**

Location: Beijing, China



Originally built as an imperial library, Enjoying Snow Yard is once again open to the public as a calligraphy museum following its successful restoration. The philosophy of “minimal intervention and maximum retention” guided the holistic reinstatement of the aesthetic, cultural and historical values associated with the historic architecture and traditional setting of the complex. Eschewing the temptation to replace old materials with new copies, the project focused on the restoration of the original timber structure of the main hall through the application of traditional building materials and methods, used in combination with new techniques. The understanding of the history of the complex has been further enhanced through the well-conceived site interpretation provided by the museum.

**Project name: Tai O Heritage Hotel**

Location: Hong Kong SAR, China



Through a pioneering public-private initiative undertaken through the Hong Kong government's 'Revitalising Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme', the once abandoned Tai O Police Station has been given a new lease on life as a heritage hotel. The project is particularly commendable for its involvement of local community members and former occupants of the building through an extensive cultural mapping effort that has greatly informed the restoration work and helped reinvigorate the distinctive character of the heritage property. Enhanced social and economic opportunities provided by the building's new use ensure the long-term viability of this historic landmark.

**Project name: Royal Bombay Yacht Club Residential Chambers**

Location: Mumbai, India



The restoration of the Royal Bombay Yacht Club Residential Chambers has renewed a distinguished Neo-Gothic architectural monument and one of the city's most prominent coastal landmarks. The project is commendable for its high level of technical competence and careful attention to preserving the authenticity of the building's design. This has been characterized by the retention of original spatial configuration and excellent craftsmanship in treating historical finishes and fixtures. By restoring the period character and functionality of the club, the project has successfully enlivened this Bombay Harbor icon.

**Project name: Otaki Town Hall**

Location: Chiba Prefecture, Japan



The conservation of the 1959 Otaki Town Hall has sensitively restored a once overlooked Modern heritage building at risk of demolition, thereby reinvigorating a historic public space for continued local use. In addition to the conservation work, which focused on the deteriorating concrete and steel structural elements, the project also introduced structural seismic reinforcement so that the building now meets the requirements of present-day building codes. The success of the project can be attributed to the commitment of multiple public and private stakeholders and the foresight of the Japan Institute of Architects. The rescue of the town hall draws attention to the plight of other imperiled landmarks of twentieth century Japanese architecture around the country.

**Project name: Historic Buildings in Duong Lam Village**

Location: Son Tay, Hanoi, Viet Nam



The project has restored five selected buildings in Duong Lam Village in a successful effort to showcase the value of vernacular wooden architecture in Viet Nam, which is increasingly threatened by deterioration, neglect and eventual loss. Through careful documentation and the revival of traditional construction techniques, the restoration has returned the buildings to their authentic condition and now assures their on-going maintenance by the local craftsmen trained over the course of the project. The exchange of knowledge among the carpenters, Vietnamese architectural historians and Japanese experts was a key feature in this commendable collaborative initiative. The Duong Lam Village experience established a noteworthy model for future conservation efforts in other rural villages across Viet Nam.

## **Honourable Mention**

**Project name: Sail Maker's Shed**

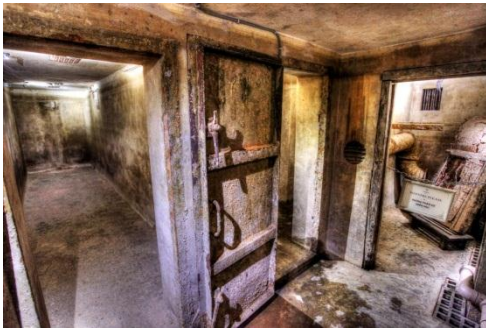
Location: Broome, Western Australia, Australia



The restoration of the late nineteenth century Sail Makers' Shed in Broome has saved a historic structure that may be small in physical scale yet significant in terms of its heritage values. As one of the last remaining buildings associated with the local pearling industry, it was saved from demolition and is now part of the Broome Museum. Located in an area which is frequently battered by storms, the shed has been structurally reinforced in compliance with modern building codes and is now safe for public use. Dedicated to keeping alive the memory of the pearling industry, the project has not only saved a unique heritage asset but has reinvigorated a sense of local pride among the Broome community.

**Project name: Lost Bomb Shelter of The Sofitel Legend Metropole Hanoi**

Location: Hanoi, Viet Nam



The restoration of the Lost Bomb Shelter has revealed yet another layer in the rich history of the Metropole Hotel, one of Hanoi's most notable heritage buildings. Forgotten for decades until its rediscovery in 2011, the bomb shelter has been preserved in its original condition, with the unobtrusive addition of new mechanical and electrical installations to allow the space to be accessible and safe for public viewing. Through its sensitive approach and thoughtful interpretation, the project provides a rare glimpse into an important chapter of Vietnamese contemporary history.