

## A Stupa (*Chorten*) at Serenity Ridge

### First Bön Stupa in US Consecrated During Summer Retreat



*Stupa with statue detail of Kuntu Zangpo* Stupas, or *chorten* in the Tibetan language, are an important part of Bön and Himalayan culture. Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, headquarters of Ligmincha International, now has its own stupa—the first Bön stupa in the United States and Ligmincha’s fifth stupa worldwide. The new stupa was consecrated during the 2019 Summer Retreat in a ceremony that included His Holiness Dawa Dhargyal Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and his family, and many monks.

Within the Nine Ways of Bön, Tonpa Shenrap—founder of the Bön tradition—explained and taught the construction of *chortens* as a part of the Fifth Way, “The Way of Virtuous Lay Practitioners.” Tonpa Shenrap had his disciples build the first *chorten*

as a support for doing prostrations and circumambulations, expressing and cultivating devotion, and as a way of making offerings to perfect the accumulation of merit and purify negativities.

*Chorten*

exist in many forms, each with a precise shape, measurements and other requirements.

However, three requirements common to all: they must contain relics of the buddhas; statues and images; and sutric, tantric and dzogchen scriptures.



Photo by the author. The stupa is a traditional Buddhist monument, known as a "Stupa" or "Chorten". It is a symbol of the Buddhist faith and is often used as a place of worship. The stupa is made of white stone and is decorated with colorful cloths. It is surrounded by a gravel path and a wooden fence. The stupa is located in a wooded area, and there are many trees around it. The stupa is a beautiful sight and is a great place to visit.





*Excavating the stupa site*





Vicki Wheaton placing texts in the stupa



Tsa-tsa of Sherap Chamma to be placed inside the stupa



Lama Yungdrung painting the stupa



Geshe Denma painting the stupa







*The shrine at the consecration ceremony*





*His Holiness the 34th Menri Trizin during the consecration*





*Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche offers a gift to Vicki Wheaton*

