

**Transcription: BV023.16.15**

**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

**Audio Recording: 2023\_0016\_0015\_002.mp3**

**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

- 1 INTVWR: Okay, this is James Binks. I'm a researcher at the Burnaby Village Museum here in the  
2 city of Burnaby. Today is July 31st, 2023. I'm sitting outside on the Heritage Village site of  
3 Burnaby Village Museum with two folks here. So, I'm sitting with –
- 4 LTS: Lama Tenzin, LamaTenzin Sherpa.
- 5 INTVWR: Lama Tenzin Sherpa, and –
- 6 LSS: Lama Sue Salter.
- 7 INTVWR: Lama Sue Salter. So, welcome thank you for joining me here today. So, you both  
8 have different relationships here to the city of Burnaby, but we, I invited you for an interview  
9 today, because of your different work in Burnaby specifically at a monastery would you call it, or  
10 a retreat centre?
- 11 LTS: It's a retreat centre, yeah. Some kind of a **00:01:00** –
- 12 LSS: A Dharma centre. Buddhist centre.
- 13 LTS: Buddhist Dharma centre.
- 14 LSS: Yeah, in Burnaby.
- 15 INTVWR: Right. All right, so before we get to that, a little more on that, I guess we'll talk about  
16 you, Tenzin. So, where are you originally from?
- 17 LTS: Original, I'm from Nepal.
- 18 INTVWR: Nepal?
- 19 LTS: I was born in Nepal in 1977, I guess. My family is Sherpa, my name is Tenzin Sherpa. And  
20 when I was a kid, when I was a kid, right, and that time, yeah, my, anyway, family's background  
21 is a little bit, how to say, it's in village, right?
- 22 LSS: Yeah.
- 23 LTS: It's difficult situation at that time, right? **00:02:00** It's a '90, I mean, more than '82  
24 something, right, at that time.
- 25 INTVWR: And why was it difficult?
- 26 LTS: Like I live in the village and –

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27 INTVWR: Which village, what's it called?

28 LTS: It's called, anyway, I, it's called Ilam like it's the province, I province, and I, my village's  
29 name is it's called [Sangkabung]. I'm born that village, and yeah, [Sangkabung] and, and that's the  
30 way, and, yeah, one day, like, my father, you know, he asked me to go to monk, right, because  
31 first they, we have some other than Lamas, there are, they are a Nyingma tradition, because we  
32 have a village as a monastery. That **00:03:00** monastery had Lamas they follow the Nyingma  
33 tradition, and that's how sometime the one Lama was asking some other family kids are going to  
34 monastery right, for monk and it's in south India, it's very far away, I guess it's like far away. And  
35 my father, they asked my father, I think they want to go, you know, for monk, right. My father  
36 says, oh, it's too far. And he don't want to send me. And then after that, we went to anyway, my  
37 father's send me to India, India, and that's where I grew up in India.

38 INTVWR: So, when did you leave your village in Nepal? **00:04:00**

39 LTS: I became monk 1989, yeah 1989 in Sonada monastery.

40 INTVWR: So, is that when you left Nepal in 1989?

41 LTS: 1989.

42 INTVWR: And you went to India?

43 LTS: India.

44 INTVWR: Which part of India.

45 LTS: Is East, East I think Darjeeling right, West Bengal, West, West of India.

46 INTVWR: West Bengal Darjeeling area.

47 LTS: Darjeeling area.

48 INTVWR: What was the monastery called?

49 LTS: It's a Sonada monastery.

50 INTVWR: Oh, yeah.

51 LTS: To learn to Kalu Ripoché, Kalu Ripoché that's where I went to the came Monk, 1982, and  
52 yeah, that was 1992.

53 INTVWR: 1992?

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- 54 LTS: 1992, yeah.
- 55 LSS: It must be, because you were 11, you said.
- 56 INTVWR: So, you arrived 1989 in the Sonada Monastery, and then 1992 you finished this?
- 57 LTS: No, that time, **00:05:00** 1992 I took a vow. I got in Monastery.
- 58 LSS: For [Geluk]?
- 59 LTS: No. It's [Getso]. General like –
- 60 LSS: General monk.
- 61 LTS: What is it about?
- 62 LSS: It's a novice monk, really, in the words.
- 63 LTS: It's 90, I think it's, I correct a year, 1982.
- 64 LSS: Right. Like it's 19, you said 1977.
- 65 LTS: Yes, he was coming up **[inaudible]**, right?
- 66 LSS: Yeah. It was 1989 when Kalu Rinpoche passed away. Yes, same that time.
- 67 INTVWR: So, you took the vow in 1982?
- 68 LTS: Yeah.
- 69 INTVWR: So, you were five years old.
- 70 LTS: I think there's 11 years old.
- 71 LSS: '89, you said.
- 72 LTS: '89, yeah -
- 73 LSS: You're saying the year Kalu Rinpoche passed away? Right?
- 74 LTS: Yeah.
- 75 LSS: Yeah.
- 76 INTVWR: Okay.

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77 LTS: And anyway, and yeah my teacher was [inaudible] **00:06:00** I took the vow, and that time  
78 I'm very new and totally different because I know Nepali a little bit, and like a totally different  
79 how do you say different culture right?

80 LSS: Right.

81 LTS: And I took vow and I wear the monk uniforms, right?

82 LSS: Right.

83 LTS: And that time I didn't know how to wear, and they –

84 LSS: Right. Yeah.

85 LTS: They helped me to wear, what we call a [saṃghāti], right? The uniform. And it's not very  
86 comfortable, like, since –

87 LSS: They love them already. Yeah. It's not easy.

88 LTS: It's very, very cold. And, they had me each day, you know but when we wake up, we have  
89 to wake up early that because like 4, 4:30 early morning, after that everybody we started very  
90 loudly, started Tibetan right. **00:07:00**, I have to follow all the rules as we, I learn, in Tibetan, and  
91 so.

92 LSS: Did you not know Tibetan, when you were young from Nepal?

93 LTS: No, I didn't know in Tibetan.

94 LSS: No Tibetan? Wow, yeah.

95 LTS: Just speak Nepali. And when I became monk, and I learn Tibetan, and I teach writing and  
96 mostly reading. Reading, is we have to wake up early in the morning, that's not the same time, I  
97 didn't know how to wear the [saṃghāti], uniform, but anyway, the other friends, they helped me.

98 LSS: Wow. That's good.

99 INTVWR: So how long were you living in India for? Quite a long time, I think.

100 LTS: Yeah. **00:08:00** same that time and until yeah, I think 15, 20 years, 20 years I was in Sonada  
101 Monastery.

102 INTVWR: 20 years, just at the Sonada Monastery?

103 LTS: Yeah.

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104 INTVWR: From 1989 –

105 LTS: Sonada Monastery yeah because we have second branch in Siliguri, in Siliguri, and I studied  
106 all the time in Sonada Monastery, after that we have second branch in the centre in Siliguri. It's  
107 called within Kanchakchudi in Siliguri, and after that we which, some of the monks have to live  
108 in Siliguri. That's the way we had there, how to say one is Sunatha, one is Salugara we have some  
109 kind of a –

110 LSS: Draw.

111 LTS: Draw, **00:09:00** we have a draw and we new Lamas like monks, and that I got the Salugara  
112 we have a Salugara Monastery same when we go to Sikkim Kalinbung, on the left side which is  
113 [inaudible] and that's the way and I live in Salugara, I must have stayed there 10-15 years and  
114 after that, I study the turning of Sangha lineage, and most of the day, writing, reading, and a little  
115 bit other things, right, how to make a [inaudible], during the puja you know [inaudible] instrument  
116 things, right.

117 LSS: Instruments.

118 P1: **00:10:00** We have to learn all, and we all have to take the class, this to me, and how to make  
119 a torma right?

120 LSS: Yeah.

121 LTS: When we do this feature, we have decoration, make a -

122 LSS: For traumas are sort of, you probably know, do you know what tormas are? They're usually  
123 made of dough and its offerings, representation of a deity. Or in terms of clearing obstacles, is  
124 specific ones, and they come in different shapes and, but they're very have to be done absolutely  
125 correctly for a Puja. It's very it's an important part and it's what a Lama, he would learn how to  
126 do.

127 LTS: Those all have to have to learn that and it takes a long.

128 LSS: Yeah, to get –

129 INTVWR: So how do you make it? What's the process?

130 LTS: Oh, it's, we usually when we do prayers, the Puja that time we make a dough, right?

131 LSS: Mm-mmm.

132 LTS: But it's barley flower.

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- 133 LSS: Yeah.
- 134 LTS: Sometimes here they make **00:11:00** oatmeal.
- 135 LSS: Yeah.
- 136 LTS: Yeah.
- 137 LSS: Six things within it are supposed to be like flour, sugar, butter, yogurt, milk, and there's one  
138 more.
- 139 LTS: Yeah. And we can put some blessing pills.
- 140 LSS: Yeah, the blessing, exactly.
- 141 LTS: The maximum blessing and but when we learn, we use what's called the clay, clay model.
- 142 LSS: Clay, yes.
- 143 LTS: We learn clay, clay and we call it mud, mud, right?
- 144 LSS: Right.
- 145 LTS: And that's what we learn. And sometimes we have to learn instrument things. Instrument,  
146 we have to learn.
- 147 INTVWR: Like musical instruments, right?
- 148 LTS: When you get a monastery, they do like different kind of instrument, right. Very long, and  
149 [gyaling], [dung dkar] and [rgya-gling] and cymbal.
- 150 INTVWR: So, you learned to play these instruments?
- 151 LSS: Right.
- 152 LTS: Yeah, and those all had to learn. And after we all done most things, and I thought, **00:12:00**  
153 I request to my teacher to do retreat. After that, right? Three year retreat.
- 154 INTVWR: Through a retreat.
- 155 LTS: Retreat is like three years. Three years. Three months. Three weeks. Three days. That's the  
156 retreat and after I talked to my teacher in a way like some of our master, right. And they say, okay.  
157 And then retreat was, I went to in Kalimpong, Kalimpong in Lava. It's called Lava. Kalimpong, it  
158 took one hour, get there. It's a high mountain, it's very cold.

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159 LSS: Nice.

160 LTS: And most of the mountain is like a forest, it looks like. And after 2018, 2018.

161 INTVWR: That was after 2018 you were in Lava, Kalimpong.

162 LTS: Kalimpong went to do, [inaudible] 00:13:00.

163 LSS: 2018 you went to do it, you couldn't be you were here though in Canada.

164 LTS: 2008, sorry, 2008 yeah and I mistake, sorry.

165 INTVWR: That's okay.

166 LTS: 2008, and that's the religious centre in Lava, right?

167 LSS: Yeah.

168 LTS: [inaudible] a lot about right when we're when we're went to retreat, it was a little bit, we  
169 were worried, you know? If we seek, right, and this is the main things, right? If we say, but when  
170 you go to retreat, and we always do prayers and pujas you know, weeks, because we wish, right?  
171 Everything goes smoothly and we have to cause and retreat, because if we seek and we have to  
172 come out, right? But the retreat centre is like, like there's one big house, and all have a wall right  
173 and they're not allowed to go outside even we cannot see 00:14:00 outside.

174 INTVWR: For three years, so you were inside this retreat?

175 LTS: Yeah.

176 INTVWR: So, you were inside this retreat for three years?

177 LTS: Inside the house, and then outside has a big wall, there's a one gate right and only allowed to  
178 return master, and it's like doing shopping.

179 INTVWR: So, you have somebody there who does the shopping and cooking?

180 LTS: And they bring food but yeah.

181 LSS: Did you do your own cooking there?

182 LTS: No, we don't allow to do cook in the kitchen.

183 LSS: Yeah, okay.

184 LTS: They have, we have a cook.

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185 LSS: A [matchin], yeah.

186 LTS: A [matchin], and a [matchin] cook, and most of the time, food brings from outside. We have  
187 to eat whatever.

188 LSS: Whatever comes.

189 LTS: What comes, yeah.

190 INTVWR: People make donations, right? Do they do that there?

191 LTS: Because there's a, [Jamiya Konburi], which has a big monastery outside. And our, our river  
192 is **00:15:00** a little bit, one, two kilometers up the mountain. And we have a, a help and he brings  
193 all the time, breakfast and lunch, dinner and sometimes one day he makes morning 9 o'clock tea  
194 and 3 o'clock we have our snack and tea, right. Otherwise, we have to eat whatever he brings.

195 INTVWR: Whatever you're given.

196 LTS: Yeah.

197 INTVWR: So why did you go to this place, this three-year retreat? What is the purpose of going  
198 there?

199 LTS: Okay, monastery, we study all those things right and it's rooted is I feel like some kind of a  
200 when you, go to school right and after you graduate –

201 LSS: Graduate.

202 LTS: And something and when we go to retreat, some kind of -

203 LSS: It's like college, university, more advanced education in Buddhism.

204 LTS: Yeah. Some kind of a **00:16:00** I feel like similar and after when we went to retreat, we have  
205 to do this very busy schedule, they have to have four foundations, you know those things, to  
206 practice, after that, all the schedules [inaudible] masters change right, every, for the foundation  
207 we have to do six months, but our master six or seven months, we had to do four foundation  
208 practice.

209 INTVWR: Four foundation practice?

210 LTS: Four foundation, yes. It's called **[inaudible]**. Four foundation practice, beginning. Like this  
211 is the main foundation.

212 LSS: Yeah.



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213 INTVWR: So, you were already a monk, right?

214 LSS: Preliminary.

215 INTVWR: Like in English, we'd say a monk. before you go to the retreat –

216 LSS: Right.

217 INTVWR: Before you go to the retreat. But when you go to the retreat, you advance sort of. Is  
218 that what happens, that how it works?

219 LTS: Yeah and after we study, it's the very step, and after one year, and retreat master give  
220 **00:17:00** us title, Lama, that we go retreat and after that we got the Lama title.

221 LSS: After one year?

222 LTS: After one year.

223 LSS: Right.

224 LTS: We have to do like, for foundation **[inaudible]**, right? All those things. And after one  
225 year, we did master, when we start the yoga right **[inaudible]**. After we do inside yoga, also  
226 things, for your practice, and after one year, retreat masters gives the title Lama, but when you're  
227 outside monk, even call a Lama. It's called the general name right like a Tenzin, before they call  
228 Tenzin.

229 LSS: Right.

230 LTS: Yeah, when I finish a retreat and after one year, my retreat master puts my room on above  
231 my room, Lama Tenzin and gives that title. That's when you finish the retreat **00:18:00** comes  
232 out and then they everybody calls Lama Tenzin, Lama Sue and Lama whatever you know.

233 INTVWR: Right, and so after three years there you were finished and you became Lama to  
234 everyone then, you graduated.

235 LTS: Yeah. Similar I feel like, and that's the way we know how is the practice and all the practice  
236 you know we did, **[inaudible]**.

237 INTVWR: Right, so then so that was 2011 about, you finished the retreat and –

238 LTS: Yeah, 2012 before right, I finished.

239 INTVWR: And then what did you do from 20, because like you came to Canada in 2015, is that  
240 right?

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241 LTS: Yes, after that when back to, to Sonada Monastery, and in Sonada in Salugara is that we  
242 have a monastery, right? [inaudible] Sonada has the 00:19:00 main monastery and second branch  
243 in Siliguri. And because I was living in Siliguri long right, but Siliguri is the main city in Salugara  
244 is different [inaudible] like here is Richmond and Burnaby and some kind of like that. And in  
245 Salugara people didn't know much, Siliguri everybody knows right, and I went back to my  
246 monastery in Salugara, after I went, I stayed there one year, and I did the, me, how to say,  
247 [inaudible] master, what's called a [inaudible] master.

248 LSS: A [inaudible] master for doing Pujas, for the Puja, like the head of the main person who'd  
249 sort of do the Pujas would be the one who'd lead the chanting, 00:20:00 lead everything and was  
250 responsible for doing the visualizations, responsible for the music and the sound and then it was  
251 all done correctly, which is incredibly important.

252 INTVWR: And that's in the Salugara that you were doing that now because you were a Lama, you  
253 were able to lead the visualizations and everything.

254 LTS: That's what I did like that as a master, right –

255 LSS: Was a master, yeah.

256 LTS: And almost like two years something And, after that, went to Sonada and then after that,  
257 Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche sent me to, had to go to Canada. The Kagyu Kunkhyab Chuling centre in,  
258 Burnaby right –

259 LSS: In Burnaby, yeah.

260 LTS: Burnaby, and that's when, how I got here in 2015, January 25th, I got in Vancouver, and  
261 after that 00:21:00 I work, I work here in Burnaby. I stayed to, as a, leading the Puja, the practice,  
262 hold the Puja, and sometimes a retreat. Sometimes a retreat, sometimes a meditation.

263 LSS: And teaching meditation.

264 LTS: And teaching meditation. And also so sometimes we do it in Salt Spring, right?

265 LSS: Hm-mmm.

266 LTS: Once in a while we do retreat in Salt Spring Island. And that's the way we're doing until like  
267 last year, right? We do it eight years, we work in Burnaby.

268 INTVWR: Right, so when you were sent from India to Canada, to come to Burnaby here, and Salt  
269 Spring, so you said the Kalu Rinpoche sent you here, so how did that happen? Did you get a letter  
270 from him, or did he tell you 00:22:00 on the phone, or how does that process work?

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271 LTS: Usually what happened, there was before one Lama here. It's Lama [Penzo] right, [Penzo].  
272 He also, his friend, other Lama [inaudible] was here and two Lamas here somehow Lamas [Penzo]  
273 as he, some accident, he passed away in Salt Spring Island, right. Yeah has something, and then  
274 after 2 years, Lama [inaudible] request to Kalu Rinpoche, to meet some Lamas, Lama and to help  
275 in Vancouver centre, Dharma centre, and that's way. Same time I talked to Lama [inaudible] and  
276 after that, they sent invitation letter from Burnaby centre to Siliguri, they sent invitation letter and  
277 **00:23:00** possibly called and that's where they sent the letter.

278 INTVWR: So, they sent a letter from here to –

279 LTS: Siliguri.

280 INTVWR: Siliguri saying we need a Lama to come here and help us, because we lost our Lama,  
281 unfortunately, essentially.

282 LTS: Yeah, first we have to ask the main teacher, is Kalu Rinpoche. Kalu Rinpoche ask and then  
283 they say, yes, whatever, here is Lama, right? He said yes, and after that they recommend, right to  
284 me. That's why I got here.

285 INTVWR: So, what was the name of the person here who sent the letter? I think he said it, but I  
286 missed it.

287 LTS: This will be Lama [Sotri], isn't it?

288 LSS: Lama [Sotri]. Who is the Lama here. We're together with the Board of Directors. They  
289 would have sent a letter, but asking Kalu Rinpoche first, and then sent a letter about that. Probably  
290 generated from the Board of Directors, but also the Lama, I would say. **00:24:00**

291 INTVWR: So, how did you feel when you heard you were going to come to Canada? Were you  
292 excited, nervous?

293 LTS: Definitely, I was. First, I was excited. Because it's far away and Canada west country, right?  
294 I was excited, same time I thought, oh, if people and friends say it's very hard to get a visa, but  
295 somehow, it's a few months later, I went to New Delhi, and I'm here, I'm, the director, someone  
296 sent the, all the, you know, documents I have to sign, I send them back, and somehow, I went to  
297 New Delhi. And after a few months later I got the visa and I got in 25th in the Vancouver Airport.

298 INTVWR: And did you fly on your own, or did you someone come with you?

299 LTS: On –

300 INTVWR: On your own?

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- 301 LTS: On own, yeah, in New Delhi, and **00:25:00** one way I excited one way or little bit, and what  
302 happened a little bit to worry but, it was good you know, I was happy.
- 303 INTVWR: So, the, you probably didn't know very much English when you were in India right?
- 304 LTS: I didn't know the English I just know the alphabet and just yes and no little bit.
- 305 INTVWR: Yeah, because the people yeah like who did you sort of work with who were you and  
306 serving? I don't know if that's the right word in India.
- 307 LTS: India, they teach a little bit English, but only I know, just alphabet and just **[few word]**. But  
308 when I got here and its totally different culture and everything, and I don't know the place or to go  
309 right. Was a little bit difficult, but someone helped me to get the **00:26:00** community hall, right.  
310 Community hall. I went to just learn English. I went to also there in Burnaby some of the church.
- 311 LSS: Church, yeah.
- 312 INTVWR: Which church?
- 313 LTS: Anyway, there's a Burnaby has one church. I don't know the name.
- 314 LSS: Yeah, I don't know either.
- 315 LTS: Yeah, nearby Metro town.
- 316 INTVWR: Near Metro town, the church so they had English classes there that you attend as the –
- 317 LTS: The free English class and just they teach about 1 hour, and gathered and just you know  
318 communication each other. One thing I also listen radio and the news a little bit, right. FM, and  
319 that's the way I improved a little bit. Improve English and -
- 320 INTVWR: And you were living in Burnaby too when you came, right? You lived somewhere in  
321 Burnaby?
- 322 LTS: I lived –
- 323 LSS: At the centre.
- 324 LTS: Yeah, At the centre, **00:27:00**
- 325 INTVWR: It was at the centre.
- 326 LTS: Yeah, at the city street.

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327 LSS: And there were other people living there, so, then the opportunity to speak English.

328 LTS: There were other people living there. yes.

329 LSS: Who didn't speak Tibetan or Nepali, so then it was –

330 LTS: But I have to speak English, right? That's the way I learn English, and the way to improve.

331 Still, my English is not enough. I have to improve more.

332 INTVWR: It's good enough to do an interview, so that's pretty amazing in a short time. So, the  
333 people, sorry, I just one more question about India. So, the people that you were leading the prayers  
334 for, who were those people? Were they also from Nepal? Were they local Indian people? Were  
335 they Westerners? And who were the people at the Sonada or Salugara Monastery?

336 LTS: Sonada, most of them here, there will be like three or two hundred, fifty, three hundred  
337 monks there, right?

338 INTVWR: So, it was other monks?

339 LTS: Other monks.

340 INTVWR: So, it would be through Tibetan, and you'd be the **00:28:00**.

341 LTS: Yeah, mostly we have three hundred monks in Sonada. Three hundred fifty. We have to do  
342 together prayers like morning, 7 a.m. doing morning practice and evening like three o'clock, three  
343 to like, two hours we do prayers. But same time, outside people comes like the community  
344 Nepalese, mostly Nepalese people. Sometime Indian they come, they can also participate to the  
345 prayers.

346 LSS: And Tibetan people too.

347 LTS: Also, there's a Tibetan community near the –

348 LSS: Georgoian

349 LTS: Near the [inaudible] Monastery, and they also comes, to the practice. And every year we  
350 do Saka Dawa, it's an auspicious month right. At that time, we do a special **00:29:00** Puja. And, a  
351 special puja, and at that time, all the people, Tibetan people, Nepalese, they comes to the prayer.  
352 It was like a few weeks we do, that all people comes to the prayer.

353 INTVWR: Okay, so, you didn't have to use English and it was through Tibetan and Nepali, but  
354 then here, I guess you land in Canada and you're living in Burnaby with other people, so you have  
355 to learn the English.

**Transcription: BV023.16.15**

**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

**Audio Recording: 2023\_0016\_0015\_002.mp3**

**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

356 LTS: Yeah, this way, why I have to learn English. It's very important.

357 INTVWR: So, who are the other people that were living here as well, were they also like you  
358 Lamas or were they in Burnaby?

359 LTS: In Burnaby? No, this is just regular people –

360 LSS: Just regular people.

361 INTVWR: What does that mean, who's regular?

362 LTS: Usually what you say we have the tenants, **00:30:00**, we –

363 LSS: If there were a few tenants there I mean it was legal. So, we did that, rented to make enough  
364 money to be able to afford that centre. We rented out some rooms. Some people were Dharma  
365 students, like, you know, math and there was a number of regular ones. And then there was a few  
366 just lovely, lovely people who weren't Buddhist, but they were just –

367 LTS: Yeah, regular.

368 LSS: Really nice.

369 LTS: Yeah, not Buddhists, students.

370 LSS: A couple of very nice people.

371 LTS: And some yeah, some tenants.

372 LSS: Who lived there for years.

373 LTS: Nice people. And they are sometimes participating –

374 LSS: Participating in the, you know like the events.

375 LTS: And like morning practice and evening practice.

376 LSS: Yeah, yeah.

377 INTVWR: Right, wow. So, what was it like when you were first living here then? I mean you  
378 were learning English, you were meeting these new people, but it was a whole new environment,  
379 was it?

380 LTS: Yeah.

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**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

**Audio Recording: 2023\_0016\_0015\_002.mp3**

**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

381 INTVWR: Was it, was a little bit difficult, you know probably different food, away from your  
382 friends.

383 LTS: Beginning was a little bit difficult, **00:31:00** but one time, I was, Francine –

384 LSS: One French Canadian woman who's very –

385 LTS: She took me to one community hall. And that was, I remember now, it was on Fraser Street.  
386 That's the first time I went to learn English, I took an English class there. But she showed the place  
387 for the first, one time. And the second time I went by bus. Somehow one time I was coming back  
388 to Burnaby. I don't know where to go. Totally, I was going in the wrong direction.

389 LSS: Oh no, right, right.

390 LTS: I had to go back to KK's in Burnaby.

391 LSS: Right.

392 LTS: Because there's a, I don't know which way I have to go, right?

393 LSS: Which way, yes.

394 LTS: And I don't know what to do, and you and I, someone, I ask the bus driver, I want to go and  
395 he stop me. You have to go.

396 LSS: Back.

397 LTS: Not this.

398 LSS: No, you were going the opposite way.

399 LTS: **00:32:00** That's the way.

400 LSS: Passed, probably, yeah.

401 LTS: Do you recall. Yeah. After weeks and months, and then used to it, and I feel more –

402 LSS: Comfortable.

403 LTS: Competent and comfortable. Also, English is running, in beginning, is also difficult, but a  
404 little bit feel like embarrassed feel after we talk and learn and they told us whatever you, you can  
405 just talk and speak nobody care and that's we, right, you know learned English.

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**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

**Audio Recording: 2023\_0016\_0015\_002.mp3**

**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

406 INTVWR: Right, okay, so when did you two meet then, where did you I guess you were already  
407 at the so I should say so we're talking about the monastery, would you call it a monastery in  
408 Burnaby? The Kagyu Kunkhyab Chuling, right.

409 LTS: Buddhist centre.

410 LSS: Buddhist centre, yeah, it's a Tibetan Buddhist centre.

411 INTVWR: So, were you already there when Lama Tenzin **00:33:00** arrived?

412 LSS: I was basically, because I'd been involved since 1974 with the centre, I kind of was there or  
413 not there and I was working full time at the time. I think I worked, because I worked after I did a  
414 three-year retreat, I worked for as a nurse, and then as a social worker. So, I was pretty much  
415 working full time. Not going to the centre much, just occasionally for a few pujas. And then I was  
416 about to retire and really looking forward to retiring from work. And I'd raised a couple of kids  
417 and everything. And then Kalu Rinpoche came, the young Kalu Rinpoche, not the previous the,  
418 I'd studied with the first one before the previous Kalu Rinpoche from when I was young and did a  
419 retreat from there. So, I was about to retire, and then, but I had met Lamas, I had met you before,  
420 going to I think pujas a little bit. But then I was about to **00:34:00** retire, about a month before, I  
421 turned 65, and Kalu Rinpoche, asked if I'd help the centre. And I had a history of helping the centre  
422 from before, but I was at that time not helping, and then he announced that I'd be a Lama at the  
423 centre together with Lama Tenzin. And then I didn't actually get to retire exactly. And then  
424 subsequently, Kalu Rinpoche said, Lama's never retire. So, which is, I didn't know that either.  
425 Yeah, we've gotten, to, so over thick and thin, we've gotten to know each other, and how it is.

426 INTVWR: So, you arrived you were really started working as a Lama similar of time as Tenzin  
427 at –

428 LSS: He, he was before, because when Lama **[inaudible]** passed away, Lama **[inaudible]** wanted  
429 a second Lama and then Lama **[inaudible]** had asked several times apparently for to go and  
430 **00:35:00** he wanted to go back to Nepal and be in Nepal. And so then he didn't come when  
431 Rinpoche came, he was in Nepal and then Rinpoche said okay, you know, because he kept pushing  
432 it back okay next year, you can resign.

433 INTVWR: And so, what year, what time frame is this around 20 –

434 LSS: What year was that 2017, 2018, '17 when did, some where around '17 or '18.

435 LTS: 2017, I think it was around 2017.

436 LSS: So then Lama Tenzin was before, and then because there had been a long history of two  
437 Lamas at the centre, because it was on Salt Spring and in Vancouver and everything, then that's  
438 where.



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**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

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**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

439 INTVWR: So, you joined 2017, 2018.

440 LTS: You joined, right? Two thousand, seventeen -

441 LSS: Yeah. I think it was 2018, so it was two years before.

442 LTS: I think it was 2018. Two years before

443 LSS: 2018, yeah.

444 LSS: '18, so now **00:36:00** it's five years, over five years.

445 LSS: But the same, yeah, Lama Sue was helping before.

446 LSS: I was helping before in a different, a whole different capacity.

447 INTVWR: Yeah, because you mentioned -

448 LTS: But 2018, right?

449 LSS: Yeah, yeah.

450 INTVWR: That's when you were working as a Lama. Yeah.

451 LSS: Yeah, I was working as a Lama.

452 INTVWR: But before that, you said you were working since 1974 with the meditation.

453 LSS: Well, before, yeah, I'd gone and taught a course when Lama [Chukinima] wanted people to  
454 teach a course, and so, I was chosen as one of the people to teach other people, in Burnaby at the  
455 centre there. And also, I'd been the president at the centre and the retreat coordinator, when we  
456 didn't have anyone over on Salt Spring. And then various times, I'd come on to the board to help a  
457 little bit, but then you know left for various things you know, so I've been involved over the years  
458 for a long time.

459 INTVWR: And this was all at the KKC.

460 LSS: The KKC centre in Burnaby.

461 INTVWR: Which you said opened in **00:37:00** 1977.

462 LSS: Yeah, like I used to be the person who coordinated when the High Lamas like **[names of**  
463 **Lama - inaudible]** and Kalu Rinpoche, I was basically there. I helped with a lot of the organizing

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**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

464 of the Lama visits when they came in in 1980. After that, someone in Vancouver, Ping, when she  
465 got involved, she did a lot of the organizing then.

466 INTVWR: Right.

467 LSS: So yeah.

468 INTVWR: Okay. And so, the history, we discussed this a little earlier. So, the history of 1971,  
469 Kalu Rinpoche visited to Vancouver /Burnaby, but there was no meditation centre, right, but he  
470 helped germinate the idea.

471 LSS: He found one, and he was on, in the first constitution he's signing on there as, at that time  
472 he was considered to be the senior spiritual teacher at that time, and the spiritual head would have  
473 been [Karmapa], but then the constitution was redone and the senior spiritual teacher became the  
474 main Lama at the centre **00:38:00** and that happened later in the 70s.

475 INTVWR: The main Lama at the centre in Sonada -

476 LSS: Here, and, no well the senior spiritual teacher became the centre, the Lama at the centre, the  
477 Lama centre in about 19-, when they changed the constitution in '77, '78, or '78, I know that that  
478 changed. And then the spiritual head was Kalu Rinpoche and that. So, it changed a bit.

479 INTVWR: And so, the KKC was founded in Burnaby in 1977.

480 LSS: In Burnaby yeah, KKC it came to the Burnaby house when they moved in 1977.

481 INTVWR: And then that was open until?

482 LSS: And then that stayed until 2022, essentially there.

483 LTS: And end of 2022.

484 LSS: The end of 2022, because few people were still living there, you were still getting the mail,  
485 you were still doing the program, pujas, yeah -

486 LTS: I left from there I think February 2<sup>nd</sup>, yeah we had to leave end up January right? **00:39:00**

487 LSS: Right

488 LTS: But we didn't finish -

489 LSS: You had to clear everything, yeah.

490 LTS: But the owner, yeah just stay.

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**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

491 LSS: Yeah, and get it done. Yeah, so yeah it was a long time in Burnaby. It was a nice centre,  
492 nice community, nice people around, would have been good to me, if they had been better, more  
493 maintenance, taken care of it, and the money to really do it all, then we would have, we'd still be  
494 there.

495 INTVWR: So, what did it look like? I mean, it was basically a house. Right.

496 LSS: It was a house built in 1945, that was two townhouses together. And so, then they when they  
497 bought it in '77, it seemed to have, so the main on the main floor of one side had this had the shrine  
498 room, and a little library in the kitchen and that was it. On the other side, they just had the a dining  
499 hall dining room for and then a large den area, which could be went you know for when the High  
500 Lamas 00:40:00 came, they could you know sort of have that as their meeting area, and things like  
501 that and then three to four bedrooms upstairs, I think generally three.

502 LTS: This is the one.

503 LSS: Oh yeah, we should show you pictures.

504 INTVWR: We're looking at a photo of the house here right.

505 LSS: Yeah.

506 INTVWR: So, it's not a very large space but it.

507 LSS: No.

508 LTS: In the back has a big back area, right.

509 LSS: Yeah.

510 LTS: Nice big.

511 LSS: The backyard was locked in.

512 LTS: This is front one. Yeah. But in the back has a, also two houses together.

513 LSS: Yeah, they were like, they weren't really, you had to go outside to get to the other one, so it  
514 was quite, quite nice on that.

515 LTS: Looking from the front, front, the back has a little bit of a bigger space, because I think  
516 there's two houses together.

517 LSS: Yes.

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518 LTS: 4939.

519 LSS: And 4941.

520 INTVWR: 4939 and 4941, Sidley Street, Burnaby.

521 LSS: Yeah, Sidley Street, Burnaby.

522 INTVWR: That's in the South Slope neighborhood. So, who **00:41:00** would come and visit? So,  
523 you have two Lamas, let's say even 2018 when you're both there, as Lamas there. So, we have two  
524 Lamas. Was our other staff as well.

525 LSS: Not so much staff there. They had staff on Salt Spring. A lot of volunteers, board of directors.  
526 I mean at times, back in the earlier days, it was quite busy with a lot of people now there's many  
527 different Tibet, even Tibetan Buddhist centres, in the lower mainland as far as, I know there's about  
528 13 of them.

529 INTVWR: Yeah, there's quite a few, so was this one of the, was this the first in Vancouver?

530 LSS: Yeah, this was the first , The first one in Vancouver and then **[inaudible]** Rinpoche came  
531 along after and it was the, open the Dharma Dachuan. That was the second. Lama [Zaza] Rinpoche  
532 from the Gelugpa School came and had a centre after that, mostly in his students' house for many  
533 years. And then they bought an apartment where it became **00:42:00** his centre. And so other than,  
534 there was Zen school back then, because I remember going there. And, but really, and I didn't  
535 know if there were any Theravadan groups but subsequently, there were. So, I think it was really  
536 the first you know there may have been the Zen Centre may have preceded the Burnaby one, I  
537 don't know, but those were the two early ones and now there's many, many centres.

538 INTVWR: What's called Zen Centre?

539 LSS: Zen yeah, just Z-E-N, Zen Centre. I think it was called the Vancouver Zen Centre then but  
540 there must be more now. There's also a, there was a Tibetan, there was a, there's a Buddhist centre  
541 down in the downtown east side that's very old. It's like a real original one that's probably the  
542 Japanese Buddhist before when they first came in that.

543 INTVWR: Oh, yeah.

544 LSS: And it's, I've been there, so yeah. It's still going actually on that one. So that must have been  
545 a really, really early one. one. But from **00:43:00** Tibetan Buddhism, Kalu Rinpoche was the first  
546 Kalu Rinpoche who done 12 years in a cave and multiple three-year retreats and taught three-year  
547 retreats was the first one come to Canada, Vancouver and Canada.

548 INTVWR: So, what were some of the activities that happened at the meditation centre in Burnaby  
549 there? Are you the two Lamas there? So, you're leading, I know you're also working. working as

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550 a there's a centre on Salt Spring as well, but just focus on the Burnaby, one what would you do  
551 you know what would a day, a day in the centre look like an average day?

552 LTS: We have for the week we have a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Sunday, we have  
553 morning, it's 7 a.m. We're doing practice, morning session, and after that –

554 INTVWR: What's the morning session?

555 LTS: Morning, we do, like, Green Tara practice. **00:44:00**. Green Tara and sometimes White  
556 Tara. Just do prayers and do meditation one hour. At that time, people can come at whatever time,  
557 in the morning, that's one hour. And Sunday, we do meditation, Sunday, 8:30, 9:30 for one hour,  
558 and in the evening, 7 p.m. 7pm, same do **[inaudible]** Dharma protecting practice. Same time do  
559 chanting in the middle, do meditation and one hour, we chants in [Mahakala], so it's combination  
560 Buddha and Dharma protectors, Dharma protectors are there, it's one hour. You may not stay up  
561 and learning with you, like Tara, **00:45:00** long life in Tibetan.

562 INTVWR: So, who are the people who, who are coming to visit the centre?

563 LTS: The members. Some members and some other people. Whatever they want to, like to practice.

564 INTVWR: So, what does it take to become a member? Who are the members? Are they just  
565 people, can anyone go in from the public and visit?

566 LTS: Mostly, yeah.

567 LSS: People can come, come in –

568 LTS: People can see on our website yeah. Some they phone, can we join, I can come. We say  
569 yeah and then after that they like to join the member, and they can.

570 LSS: Yeah, yeah membership means you know it's there's 180 dollars a year so, 15 dollars a month  
571 for membership, and there's no extra perks necessarily with it, but it helps support the centre and  
572 then they have a say at an annual, because it's a non-profit **00:46:00** annual AGM, as to how things  
573 are like, what they would like and that kind of thing, and we send a newsletter out on a very regular  
574 basis, so that they're informed of what practices are. When Lama Tenzin's doing the Pujas, I was  
575 doing some just introductory teaching. Teaching on Lam Rim or various topics that initially Kalu  
576 Rinpoche would tell me what to teach on. Or we'd discuss, I'd say, I'm thinking about this, and  
577 he'd say, no, do this, and that kind of thing, and then just do, you know, general introductory to  
578 Buddhism courses, or something that would help with meditation or something like that.

579 INTVWR: So, do you have, or do you used to have, maybe both, the direct contact with Kalu  
580 Rinpoche when, you're trying to figure out what you're going to teach and talk about in the centre?

581 LTS: Yeah, yeah.

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582 INTVWR: No. Okay. And then so these I guess these courses and the practice is that you're leading  
583 and teaching Sue, are in English. **00:47:00**

584 LSS: In English, yeah.

585 INTVWR: And mostly like what are the demographics of the people?

586 LSS: The demographics change and plus COVID changed everything.

587 INTVWR: Yeah, of course.

588 LSS: No longer could you teach, you know, I suppose they're possible for introductory things. I  
589 mean, I was even trying to do Shamata, basic meditation online, which is really not, not that easy,  
590 basically. (laughing)

591 INTVWR: I can imagine.

592 LSS: Or enjoyable. But anyway, it's the demographics, they're by and large, I mean, it varies  
593 because more um, more I'm finding they're younger than me, but they're not young, young and  
594 some a few are and it just varies. I mean it's different on Salt Spring Island than in Vancouver too,  
595 but it was many of the, the issue initially was we had our newsletters and the newsletter already  
596 only went out to people who were already Buddhist, and then we um so we weren't really reaching  
597 new, newer people whereas I think if we're in **00:48:00** downtown and at the community centre  
598 we can possibly reach more in different people too, that it's not just because you'd be the same  
599 people, but then if there was something that was interesting, there'd be a good turnout, or if Kalu  
600 Rinpoche came to town, there'd be a really good turnout. And otherwise, it's just fairly low key  
601 on things. It so much depended on the topic and what was said. But when Rinpoche was saying  
602 okay, teach this and teach that, it worked very well. But then the pandemic came along and it  
603 stopped.

604 INTVWR: So, your normal kind of smaller groups were how many people?

605 LSS: The ones before the pandemic it was like somewhere around 15, 15, 16. Initially, for when  
606 I was trying to figure out what to do just on my own it was only a couple at best. And I just knew  
607 and I didn't do any. But then and then then on Zoom, it's depending on the topic. Now I'm finding  
608 it's getting back to like with Tibetan and with the bardo teaching with various things, it's getting  
609 back **00:49:00** to about you know like 10 to 15 which is getting more normalizing.

610 INTVWR: And these folks are like longer-term Canadians, people that have lived here for a long  
611 time are you getting new residents to Canada coming, are they people with a background in India,  
612 Nepal, Tibet, or is it more?

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613 LSS: And in Burnaby, I think there was some people with background from, you know, Dharma,  
614 you know, like the Hindu fellow, a bunch who went to the living there too. That's the thing. But  
615 sometimes most people would have some background, or they'd have an occasional person there'd  
616 be an interest, like I remember Matt telling me somebody came and they were interested, but then  
617 they didn't come at the right time and then they left you know like that kind of thing.

618 INTVWR: Right.

619 LSS: So yeah.

620 INTVWR: And when you're leading the Puja, it's in Tibetan?

621 LTS: It's in Tibetan.

622 INTVWR: Right.

623 LTS: In Tibetan and some visualization, we do English sometimes, we do English version  
624 **00:50:00** first, we do it in Tibetan and second in English.

625 INTVWR: Right. Most things usually do, are probably very difficult to translate to English, right?  
626 Like you're, some of the chants, I mean, so that's probably in Tibetan, but English is more.

627 LTS: Yeah. Most of the things we do in Tibetan, but English is what people, they understand  
628 what's going on, what's happening, that's what we love to do by English.

629 LSS: Yeah. Increasingly, people like back in the '70's and '80's, everybody. was the exotic you  
630 know eastern religion and people were more into that than now. Now they're, they're not that into  
631 that part there but, so they do more want it in English and want it understand, understandable.

632 INTVWR: So, what do you think people are like why are they interested, what are they kind of  
633 getting out of this these experiences?

634 LTS: Most people, people are a little bit, how to say, tired and they want **00:51:00** to look at  
635 peace, right? Peace -

636 LSS: Yeah.

637 LTS: This is their real lives. They talk over and over to chanting to practice. They feel like more  
638 relaxed and peace. That's they told me anyway. They do the beginning with meditation and in the  
639 middle we do mantras like for confession Buddha. Prayer, we just same thing a little bit  
640 meditation. Sometimes we do food offering right for the **[inaudible]** and they yeah, they sing  
641 anyway most things peace and happiness so.

642 INTVWR: So, it's kind of a spiritual and mental –

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643 LTS: Mental, yeah.

644 INTVWR: Practice. And maybe before, you were saying, a little more cultural interest before.

645 LSS: Yeah, it's not so much the cultural. Now it's like, how do I deal with the world today?

646 **00:52:00** Which is really, and how do I have, as they say, some mental peace, some state of my  
647 mind peace to handle it.

648 LTS: It's the same way of doing practice, for so many things going on in the world, right?

649 LSS: Yeah, that's right.

650 LTS: That's why we have to pray for them, right?

651 LSS: That's right, right, yeah.

652 LTS: Many things, and going on, we have to be peaceful all the time, and most of the time we do  
653 pray.

654 LSS: That's right, right.

655 LTS: Even if we're at full deities practice, remove all the obstacles, right?

656 LSS: Right.

657 LTS: That's way practice, yeah.

658 LSS: Yeah. And there's a fellow whose Thomas, who's a month before, and he actually goes to  
659 the Green Tara practice, because you know for world peace, for to ease all the suffering, like he's  
660 really thinking about that. So, he's gone a couple of times to do a retreat up at Salt Spring, where  
661 we were doing it the entire just, just for that to say, you know, try and make a make a difference  
662 **00:53:00** in some way yeah.

663 LTS: And sometimes the people passed away, right.

664 LSS: Yes.

665 LTS: The people of the family and they can, dedicated for that, and of course the **[inaudible]**  
666 practice right.

667 LSS: Right yes.



**Transcription: BV023.16.15**

**Interview with Lama Tenzin Sherpa and Lama Sue Salter**

**Audio Recording: 2023\_0016\_0015\_002.mp3**

**Interviewer: James Binks (INTVWR1)**

**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

668 INTVWR: And I suppose quite a few of these people live in Burnaby as well, I mean some of  
669 them lived right at the centre whether they were a student or not, yeah but you mentioned it was a  
670 little hard to close the centre down in 2022 as people were –

671 LSS: Still living there, going there.

672 INTVWR: So, I guess there were quite a few people living in Burnaby right around that area.

673 LSS: Yes, yeah. I think so.

674 LTS: Long many years –

675 LSS: I know.

676 LTS: Everybody knows –

677 LSS: They didn't want it to go, I know.

678 LTS: No places people –

679 LSS: Downtown.

680 LTS: Makes it a little bit hard to –

681 LSS: Access.

682 LTS: Get down to. And new address, right.

683 LSS: I know yeah .

684 LTS: But slowly, you know it was -

685 INTVWR: So, the one now it's in Yale Town, I think. So, it's an apartment, so there's not people  
686 living there or are there **00:54:00**

687 LTS: There's, the people living, I think.

688 LSS: Well, you live there.

689 LTS: Yeah,

690 INTVWR: Oh Tenzin lives there?

691 LTS: I live there but, I mean the neighbors right –

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**Interviewees: Lama Tenzin Sherpa (LTS); Lama Sue Salter (LSS)**

**Date of Interview: July 31, 2023**

692 LSS: The neighbors yeah.

693 LTS: Yeah.

694 LSS: We yeah, it's not like not like in Burnaby where you could just have a large shrine when  
695 people are coming in, even if it was a house here.

696 LTS: Future, maybe my future element, maybe get a nice centre, like house.

697 INTVWR: Yeah, because now in an apartment, I guess you can't just go knock on the door and  
698 walk in.

699 LSS: Yes, no, no.

700 INTVWR: Well, you have to have dates.

701 LTS: Yeah, it's not easy to –

702 LSS: Yeah, we have to have like a, you know, rent a room at the community centre, which is  
703 nearby and the Sky Train's nearby and do something like that. But in the meantime, it serves  
704 something. It's very challenging because for all their requirements for religious organizations, you  
705 have to have like eight parking **00:55:00** places. You have to have, you know, all kinds of permits  
706 and huge costs, for a small organization that's very tough to have that. So, we have to try and make  
707 make do what we can, and then have the Salt Spring one, be the main, right.

708 LTS: Yeah, Salt Spring Island -

709 INTVWR: Right, yeah, I mean I was just thinking how difficult it must be because it sounds like  
710 you two are kind of running, running the operation, essentially on the ground, and you have a  
711 board of directors it's it sounds like that assist you, that -

712 LSS: A very small board of directors.

713 INTVWR: Yeah, all right, but you two are kind of interacting the most with the

714 LTS: Yes.

715 INTVWR: students or the visitors.

716 LSS: Yes, and yeah wanting summer which is good for good for students to come, but also you  
717 know usable for what is needed and you know our teacher does want to have a you know place  
718 here, too. So, he would have a room where at that meet at the centre of the condo. So, when he  
719 comes there is that access, so hopefully he'll come more, and then that will help and we if when

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720 he comes, we'd still have to rent somewhere, because there's too many people, even where we were  
721 we had to rent something, so yeah. That might work, we'll see.

722 INTVWR: Yeah, it's a tough real estate market right now.

723 LSS: Oh, it's a crazy real estate market. I know, it's very hard for any, everybody.

724 INTVWR: So, it's tough to have a centre like this, that's a non-profit, right?

725 LSS: Yeah, yeah.

726 INTVWR: So, it's difficult for you guys.

727 LSS: I know, it is, yeah.

728 INTVWR: All right, so you've spent a few decades working with KKC there, Sue, and you've  
729 joined on Tenzin in the last eight years.

730 LSS: Yeah.

731 LTS: Eight years, yeah.

732 INTVWR: Eight years ago, so. So, as a final note, thinking back on your time in Burnaby, living  
733 there and working there, what was your sort of sense of community around Burnaby? Like,  
734 **00:57:00** what do you miss now, that you're sort of removed from Burnaby in the last year? What  
735 is it about Burnaby, something that you miss about living there?

736 LTS: I miss the people, right, next door neighbors, and I used to go walk around. I miss that as a  
737 Deer Lake, because really, it's very close when sometimes students comes and we first time some  
738 one student, I didn't know the Deer Lake, right? Say, oh there's a nice lake and

739 LSS: Deer Lake, yeah.

740 LTS: That's why I know the place here.

741 LSS: Yeah, yeah.

742 LTS: After that I used to come here and look around, nearby Lake. Also, Burnaby is very  
743 convenient to buy things around. It's nearby Metrotown. If you go to my grocery and down the hill  
744 there's a Marine Way, everything is nearby and convenient. It is not too crowded.

745 INTVWR: Could you buy things in Metrotown around Burnaby **00:58:00** that you need for the  
746 retreat, like clothing or ritual implements, things like that?

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- 747 LTS: Yeah, I used to go in Metrotown, Superstore, some day Walmart and for buying food and  
748 clothing is nice in Metrotown.
- 749 INTVWR: Right, but for the kind of more ritual objects, would you purchase those, or make them,  
750 or import them?
- 751 LSS: Bring them from Nepal, or like usually.
- 752 LTS: Yeah, order them from Nepal and India.
- 753 LSS: Yeah, order because he's got the contacts.
- 754 INTVWR: Right.
- 755 LTS: Most of most place we miss that place, right?
- 756 LSS: Yeah, I know it's a place a beautiful back yard and nice shrine room.
- 757 LTS: Nice shrine room.
- 758 LSS: Yeah, yeah, nice.
- 759 LTS: We have a big yard, big yard.
- 760 LTS: Big yard.
- 761 LTS: I know never is, [inaudible] very nice us. Some of the tenants.
- 762 LSS: Some and most of the tenants, are pretty, yeah. But again, 00:59:00 it gets very hard having  
763 tenants there.
- 764 LTS: Everybody says feel sad, about it.
- 765 LSS: Yeah.
- 766 INTVWR: Is there anything that you'd like to talk about, that I haven't asked about, or we haven't  
767 had a chance to touch on that you want to mention?
- 768 LSS: I think that's pretty good.
- 769 LTS: I think that's very good, yeah.
- 770 INTVWR: What do you think about the future of KKC and KDOL on Salt Spring? Are you  
771 optimistic, I hope, or how are you kind of feeling?

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772 LSS: I tried it. I like to be optimistic. I think that's the better way to go, and that bit by bit, when  
773 I'd come back to being involved, the centre on Salt Spring was really quite run down, and there  
774 was nobody there who was a practicing Buddhist. There was like a, **01:00:00**, Yeshe was, or Troy,  
775 Yeshe was the administrator, and he was telling me that's not a Buddhist place anymore. There's  
776 a, we've got, we're a helping centre, so helping people with mental health issues, addiction issues  
777 and things like that. So, I kind of went, oh my gosh, because we can't be doing that, there are lots  
778 of places to do that. But there was, only a few people there. And, but there were, you know,  
779 basically it's getting back into you know I think that we didn't there wasn't enough people helping.  
780 It seems to be a big thing, and so it's actually doing quite well now, and, and a lot more people  
781 coming and things are going working on that. I think it just hit a point where the people who  
782 helped so much, were getting older and not there and then the younger there was just a gap, so it  
783 wasn't at that particular moment, but it's not like that now. And it's, you know, it's just sort of a  
784 moment in time. **01:01:00** So it's, it's, it's going all right. But again, it's like, their the numbers,  
785 numbers are not like they once were. And people are more busy now, they have less money, they're  
786 more busy. They don't have the time. They love it when they're there. And that's absolutely  
787 because it is a beautiful place. But again, it's sort of like having the opportunity of people doing  
788 things, both here and there. I mean, I think there is a huge need for some kind of like spiritual  
789 centres. That's why when during the pandemic, even there was one of the people I knew, he taken  
790 his own life, you know, and he, you know, I think the isolation of things is hard. The stress is  
791 hard. So, to try and you know, make it harder for spiritual centres just to survive, is not a good  
792 thing at this time, because I think there's a big need for it.

793 INTVWR: The sense of community that comes with it and purpose.

794 LSS: Yeah, it really is, exactly. **01:02:00** That's actually incredibly important. Yeah.

795 INTVWR: So, is this kind of the last stage in your careers, or is there something beyond Lama  
796 that you might do another retreat, or is there other ambitions there, or do you think you'll, this is  
797 where you'll kind of stay, as long as you can see in the future that is.

798 LTS: The future, right.

799 LSS: Future, yeah.

800 INTVWR: Yeah.

801 LTS: Yeah, we can do more practice for these for teachings, more retreats. Right now, we are  
802 doing some retreats on South Spring Island.

803 INTVWR: Do you think you are going to stay here, working in Lama Tenzin at these places?

804 LSS: He's needed.

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805 LTS: I'm thinking, yeah. I think. I wish yeah, to stay here in Canada. I love to become, how do  
806 you say, uh, Canadian Citizen.

807 LSS: **01:03:00** Canadian Citizen, yeah.

808 LTS: But it's very hard to –

809 LSS: It's hard.

810 LTS: To get citizenship. I wish, maybe one day, maybe but it's also get, to the main thing is  
811 English test we have to do. And now more, I'd love to stay in Canada.

812 INTVWR: Right.

813 LTS: But I see what happens.

814 LSS: And me, I'm definitely of retirement age and I would like to do more retreats. I've got a  
815 daughter with a disability who's in her 30s, and I've got basically in a year, I've got three months  
816 in the spring, and then two that I've started taking to either study more Dharma, and do retreats  
817 myself, and then I've got two months in the fall that I also have to, I could access where I don't  
818 take care of my daughter, where there's other people who do, who will have her. So, then I've got  
819 that. **01:04:00** I just slowly want to do more practice, but at the same time, if I'm here and I can  
820 help at the centre in different things, I'll do that and help with that. I've concluded, retirement's  
821 may be an outdated idea. (laughing)

822 INTVWR: Well on that note, I wish you a happy and healthy rest of your quote-unquote retirement  
823 to both of you. Best of luck, I'm happy that things seem to be looking up a little bit for the centre  
824 there, so and thank you for sorry.

825 LSS: Yeah, no that's okay. I just said I think it is, yeah.

826 INTVWR: So, well thank you for joining me today at the museum, for for this conversation it's  
827 been really illuminating for me, and a great pleasure, so thank you for joining me.

828 LTS: Thank you very much for inviting us here, right to have this interview. I have a little bit of  
829 how do you say, experience, right. I can speak.

830 LSS: Yes, you do have a lot of experience.

831 INTVWR: A lot of experience.

832 LTS: A little bit is not very good English. This is for my practice. **01:05:00**

833 LSS: It is.

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834 LTS: Thank you very much for having this interview with you. Thank you very much.

835 INTVWR: Thank you so much. Thank you. **01:05:09**