

# Biography of Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa

- Name : Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa
- Born : 11<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1961. Namche Bazaar, Nepal
- School : Up to grade 7 at Hillary school at Khumjung and high school three years at Salleri near Phaplu. I was a scholarship boy of Hillary's Himalayan Trust. Class 10 passed in 1980 at Higher first division.
- 1980 Lost hearing in Oct. by meningitis and further study got stalled. Went to New Delhi for medical investigation at the All India Institute of Medical sciences.
- 1982 Visited England for medical investigation at the St. Georges hospital in London, later was transferred to The British center for Deafened people in Eastbourne for rehabilitation. This visit was sponsored by the British army friends of my father.
- 1983- 85. Was running rented lodge called International Foot Rest Lodge in Namche for two years. Started *Sherpa Mail Service* with friend RK Sherpa for the people to ease the mail delivery from Kathmandu to remote Khumbu. Founded the Namche Youth Club and started the first clean up the village doing public awareness practically for several years working as the secretary. The same year I became a photographer with a small Rollei camera (gifted by Jon Fleming). Started the research work for Sherpa Culture conservation and Sherpa contribution in the Himalayan climbing records, practiced for black and white photo work with friend Basanta Shrestha.

- 1984: Organized the First Sherpa Youth Yeti Exp. Crossing through Renjo la, Chugyuma la (Chola Pass) and Khongma la with two other friends from Namche Youth Club, Sonam Chottar Sherpa and Lama Serki Sherpa
- 1985 Visited Switzerland for three months for medical purposes.
- 1986 Switzerland for 7 months living with Swiss family Ruedi and Vreni and Prof. Dr. Georges and Serena Hartmann. Coachler was implanted at University hospital in Zurich, at the same time learned rock climbing in France and skiing in Switzerland. Organized several slideshow lectures. Visited Italy, Holland and back to England to visit Rosemary McCall. Five months study at the Central Bibliothek in Zurich. Founded the "*Verien fur die Sherpa culture von Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa*" with all our dear Swiss friends.
- 1986 Went as a member of International Ama Dablam west face exp. Which made the first ascent of the unclimbed west face route and climbed Lobuche peak in 8 hours from Lobuche with two other Swiss friends and a Czech.
- 1988 Second personnel Yeti research exp. near Nangpa la, with the assistant of Lhakpa Sherpa (Debre).  
Between 1981 and 1988 I worked to help organize expedition for father Sonam Girmi. And American Medical Research Everest 1981, German American Everest 1983, Indian Army Everest 1985, Australian bicentennial Everest 1988 and so on.
- 1988 Went to Pharchamo peak near Trashilabtsa and got hit by avalanched almost 200 meter verticle drop with two Swiss and a Sherpa, survived ourselves without rescue.

- 1989 Went with Kusumkhang exp. with the Swiss exp. Bought the land for the museum and hotel with the help from Swiss foundation for Lhakpa Sonam.
- 1990 Joined the international disabled Denali exp. in Alaska and climbed high above the Denali pass. Visited Washington and California. Went to climb Mt. Rainer.
- 1990 In Aug. I began to build the Hotel and Museum with the help of Swiss foundation. The Sherwi Khangba Center consist of traditional Sherpa house as a Museum, Sherpa Culture Photo Gallery, showing the sherpa way of life and their festivals throughout the year. The Mt. Everest Documentation Center, documenting the Sherpa climbing history and related information. The research work is still continues.
- 1994 Visited Sweden and Norway for fund raising for the museum.
- 1995 Visited Switzerland, Germany, Holland and Belgium with wife Ang Kanch Sherpa and older son Sonam Phinzo Sherpa. Organized slideshow lecture for fund raising for the museum.
- 1998 Went to Switzerland again for three months for photo work.
- 1999-2000 Worked for "The Mountain Calling" Austrian expo. 2000 in Salzburg city on Sherpa contribution in Himalayan climbing and was open since July 2000 for 18 months.
- 2000 Founded the Namche Youth Group and worked as it's Secretary. Felicitated by the VDC for Sherpa Culture conservation.
- 2001 Visit Switzerland, Norway and Austria. In Austria I visited "The Mountain calling" "Der berg ruft" expo. On the official invitation from the Salzburg Board of Tourism, for two months. Participated and won the Grant from Banff Center for Mountain Art and Culture Canada.

- 2002 Visited Switzerland for a month. Established a Public Library in Sherwi Khangba complex Namche Bazar.
- 2003 Visited Norway and Sweden for two months organizing slideshow lecture for fund raising for the museum. Became fellow member of Royal Geographical Society of London.
- 2004 Visited USA with wife Ang Kanchi for three months. Worked at constructions and painting houses.
- 2005 Visited Norway with wife Ang Kanchi for two months. For seasonal work and Hotel Museum promotion.
- 2006 Visited Norway with wife Ang Kanchi for two months. For seasonal work and Hotel Museum promotion. Wrote the book of *Sherwi Lungso - The vanishing folklores*. A folkloric collections of Sherpa culture as a part of Sherpa culture conservation.
- 2007 Visited Norway with wife Ang Kanchi for two months for seasonal work and Hotel Museum promotion.
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Member advisory board, Namche Youth group.
- 2010 Visited Norway with wife Ang Kanchi for two months for seasonal work and Hotel Museum promotion.
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- 2012 Google team together with Apa Sherpa from California came to interview and placed the museum in Google live street view. The link is given below:

<https://www.google.com.au/maps/about/behind-the-scenes/streetview/treks/khumbu/#town/namche-bazaar>

- 2013 Visited Norway with wife Ang Kanchi for two months for seasonal work and Hotel Museum promotion.
- 2014 Unexpectedly met Reinhold Messner near my home/museum, he visited my museum with his TV group and at once he offered to help for the future upgrading of the museum.
- 2015 Visited Spain, Andorra and Italy for museum project. In Spain to visit many museums and meetings with all the professionals who are working to help for the museum and in Italy to have a meeting with Reinhold Messner for my museum.
- 2015 Visited Japan for photo exhibition in Tokyo and Uenomura organized by the Earth Work Society
- 2017 Pilgrimage tour to Sri Lanka for 15 days with village family and friends. Visited Philippines.
- 2017 Pilgrimage to Lhasa Tibet for 15 days with village family and friends.
- 2019 Began the construction of new building for upgrading the long awaited Everest Documentation Center with an addition of Messner's Mountain Heritage "The Sherpa Himal Art gallery".

I now live with my wife Ang Kanchi, two son Sonam Phinjo Sherpa and Tseten Dorjee Sherpa in Namche Bazaar, Solukhumbu running the Museum, Photo galleries and the hotel.

The research work for the conservation of natural and cultural heritages of the Sherpa people in the Khumbu region continues. However, my Sherwi Khangba is not associated with any organizations or University and is solely a personal effort for conservation for the future of Khumbu valley and the Sherpa people.

## **Testimonials**

*In the whole it is a fine and unique achievement.*

Pro. Dr. Georges Hartmann, Switzerland. (For Sherwi Khangba Center)

*Yours was a cultural Initiative. You had a nice idea.*

Pro. Sandro Lovari ( For Sherwi Khangba Center)

Italy. Nov.2003

*You believe me, we all know that you are a nice person and I really think that your deafness is a blessing in disguises. You have developed yourself in such a way that the world respect you and of course we do too.*

Dr. Binab Karmacharya (For Sherwi Khangba Center)

Nepal. Nov. 2004

*His one organ is not working but the others has no comparison !!!*

Dr. Som Bahadur Ale 2004

तपाइको जुनसुकै काम पनि अति प्रशंसानिय हुन्छ । म मान्छु ।

तेन्जीङ टासी शेर्पा, खुम्जुङ (For Sherwi Lungso Book)

April 2006

*Anyway keep up the good work! Your sewa sarthak bhayecha!!*

Kunga Doma Sherpa (For Sherwi Lungso Book)

KTM and USA Oct. 2007

पहिलो शेर्पा र प्रयास ज्यादै सहनिय, प्रशंसनिय, सबैतिरबाट गर्दैछ । धन्यवाद ।

ल्हाक्पा थुन्डु शेर्पा, (For Sherwi Lungso Book)

Khumjung. Oct 2007

### *First Sherpa Tourist.....*

Samden Wongmu (Above the clouds lodge Lobuche ) 4<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2010

*Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa, a man who is always down to earth. He is among those amazing people I have met till now, free of pretension and doesn't put on airs but who is instead simple and straight-forward. A single conversation across the table with this wise man for me is more powerful than ten years mere study of books. Thanks for being with us throughout the trek dai. I know you don't like this kind of discernment but I have to do this for me.*

— with Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa, Dawa Finjok Sherpa

Namche 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2011

तपाइले जे गर्नु भयो धेरै राम्रो गर्नु भयो । compare गर्न मिल्दैन ।

*I don't understand how you be so wonderfully talented!!!*

-Nilima Shrestha. 2012

*My heart is filled with happiness to see you and all the works you are doing!!*

Ani Choing Dolma Oct. 2021

