



WORLD MONUMENTS FUND ANNOUNCES START OF WORK AT SHWE NAN-DAW MONASTERY, MANDALAY, MYANMAR

For Immediate Release—New York, NY, February 14, 2014... A ceremony today at Mandalay's Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery will mark the beginning of a two-year conservation project at the site involving Myanmar's Ministry of Culture, World Monuments Fund (WMF), and the U.S. Embassy in Yangon, with the support of the U.S. Department of State's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation.

WMF President Bonnie Burnham stated: "The monasteries of Mandalay are fine examples of an Asian tradition of elaborately carved wooden buildings, which has disappeared in many other countries. By working with the authorities in Myanmar and the local religious community, we hope to create a new generation of stewards for these wonderful structures."

Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery was built out of teak in the nineteenth century and is the only building of the former royal palace of King Mindon (r. 1853–78) that survived the bombing of Mandalay during the Second World War. The building was moved to its current location and turned into a monastery by Mindon's son, King Thibaw (r. 1878–85). It features extensive woodcarvings and a unique gilded interior. It is one of the most highly visited monasteries in the country.

Work will be implemented in partnership with local heritage authorities and the consent of the monastic community. Protective measures against water damage and fire will be implemented, and the project will also include training and workshops on site management and conservation practice. The training program will help develop a cadre of skilled local conservationists who can to use their traditional carpentry skills at the many other endangered teakwood monastic buildings in Myanmar.

World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. For nearly 50 years, working in 100 countries, its highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF inspires an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide. wmf.org, twitter.com/worldmonuments, and facebook.com/worldmonuments.

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