

The History of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda



Wat Phra Thatpanom

Amphur Thatpanom, Nakornpanom, Thailand

By

Phra Thepratanamolee

The Abbot of Wat

Phra Thatpanom Woramahawiharn

Foreward

The Lord Buddha taught us not to do all the evil things, but to do all the good things and to purify your mind, as the Buddhist Proverb it says in Pali,

Sappa Papassa Agoranang - not to do all the evil things

Goosalassasoo Pasampata - to do all the good things,

Sajittapariyo Tapanang - to purify your mind.

A-Tang Buddhanasasanang - these are the teaching of all the Lord Buddhas.

The most important of all is to make your mind clean, clear and be purified,. Besides you have to develop your mind in accordance to the principle of meditation for which the Lord Buddha had practiced on both concentration development and insight development.

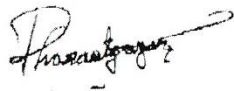
Mind development will make you happy and peaceful inside yourself. The mind without defilements, Ragagi (fire of lust), Dosa (hatred), Moha (delusion), Lobha (Greed) and Anger, is like a fullmoon without any clouds, will shine brightly and can be seen with your bare eyes.

Phra Thatpanom Pagoda, locating at Wat Phra Thatpanom contains the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha, is a holy place for Thai and several foreign Buddhist, The Temple is a Royal Center of Meditation Training for both Concentration Development and Insight Development to both Thai and foreigner alike.

However, there are some obstacles on communication, especially on foreign languages, should these be translated in to English language, it would help those who use English language to understand more about Buddhism.

In the year 2547 B.E., Mr.Prechar Tungpibool intended to translate the Brief History Book of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda into English and donates the fund of 20,000 Baht to support the book printing to educate the public. The Temple has designated The Venerable, Maha Wannachai Chaiyawanno, the Acting Director of Nakornpanom Sangha College to coordinate with Mr.Prechar to speed up the book printing.

The Temple would like to appreciate Mr.Prechar Tungpibool for his kind intention in expanding Buddhism to the world, may all the things he is doing, all the things he is thinking and what he has said be successful



Phra Rachtheerajarn

The Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor Of Nakornpanom,
The Acting Abbot Of Wat Phra Thatpanom Woramahawiharn
29th August, 2548 B.E.

PREFACE

Phra Rachtheerajarn (Samlee Panyawaro), the acting abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom Woramahawiharn, also the Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor of Nakornpanom, has mentioned to me once in 2547 B.E., that he would like to see the brief history book of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda be translated into English, for which the temple has never done before. Once I used to be his student whilst I was a monk at Wat Marookhanakorn in 2537 B.E.; also I am the native of Thatpanom. I think this is the great opportunity for me to serve my teacher and my hometown.

Educating the history of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda, for which Buddhism had been formed in the land of Isaan region (North East of Thailand), and how the holy Chest Relics of Lord Buddha were kept at Phra Thatpanom Pagoda, is a merit making as a Buddhist.

I therefore gladly accepted the challenge of translation and publishing this book. However, it took time to study the history of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda, as I have to be careful in using some appropriate words of Buddhist religion.

The brief history of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda book which you have in hand, is copied from the old one, which was written by the former abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom, also the Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor of Nakornpanom, Phra Thepmolee, and published on 1st January, 2509. Phra Maha Som Soomano had revised the 9th Edition on 20 September, 2527 B.E.

However, some sections of the book, such as the construction in the temple right after the fallen pagoda and the additional section, will be

skipped, because there are too many details to mention. The main purpose of this book is to inform the reader to know how Phra Thatpanom Pagoda was built.

Should this book be helpful to human being, may all the credit and dedication go to those great monks who had restored and served Phra Thatpanom Pagoda from the past to present.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Andrew Williams for his kindness on final editing of this book.

May the Holy Phra Thatpanom Pagoda and the Great Lord Buddha, please bless every body who practices Dhamma routinely to be healthy and prosperity.

Should this book has some errors in grammar or in translation, please let me know, I will be gladly accept for future improvement.

Prechar Tungpibool

Mr. Prechar Tungpibool
The Translator and Editor.

The History of PhraThatpanom Pagoda

Introduction to visitors of PhraThatpanom Pagoda

Phra Thatpanom Pagoda is the holy place for all Buddhist; the chest bone or relics of Lord Buddha are kept inside the Pagoda. The Lord Buddha himself was an Arahant (the worthy one), he was the greatest teacher for all Buddhist around the world. He was a special person; he had no greed in his mind. He was not only the teacher of celestial, human being but also the teacher for Brahma. He is highly respected by all Buddhist, all races, and all nationalities; as well as respected by The Thai Isaan (Northeastern of Thailand). Thai Isaan is descended from the Thai Larn chang ancestors. Thatpanom Pagoda is respected and beloved by the people of the Mekhong River region. They love and care this Pagoda as much as their lives, especially the people who live in the Thatpanom area, they regarded themselves as the servant of the Pagoda for along long time. We, therefore, would like to suggest some proper manners to all visitors who come to see the Pagoda, so that these appropriate manners can bring good things for you as well as to respect the host.

These manners are:

- 1) The inner wall area, close to the Pagoda is designated for the priest and novice only to pay the worship to the Pagoda. Commoners and ladies are forbidden to enter this area.
- 2) When entering the inner wall of Area 1 and Area 2, shoes and hats should be taken off. This is to respect and honor the local custom as well as to respect our Buddhist religion too.

3) In the outer wall area, visitor should not take possession of any materials from around the temple; otherwise one who does so may encounter with strange troubles.

4) For all materials which were given to the Pagoda, please do not take possession as if it were yours. If you do so, you may encounter with some troubles; it can cause you illness, or going mad, because the Pagoda is a holy place and guarded by unknown secret and may cause you bad events.

5) When you pay respect to the Pagoda, please do it with respectful heart. Should you want any things that are good and fair, please make a wish and ask for a permission; you will be successful with your wishes in an appropriate time.

6) As for the candle tear drops that are on the candle rail, or on the floor, or the dirt around the Pagoda, please do not look down at these things. Should you want for your possession, please make a wish and ask permission that you want to keep it with you all the time; and if it may be gone from you, please give an excuse or ask to be forgiven; and promise when you are thru with it, you will bring it back. You must bring it back as you have promised, otherwise you may face with strange events. When you take these things with you, please keep them with great care and respect.

7) Thatpanom Pagoda is our precious treasure, maintained and supported by our sacrificed ancestors to these days with prosperity. Therefore, as a Buddhist, when we visit the Pagoda, any donation given to the temple will be appreciated. Donation should be put into an appropriated box.

8) Before you sit down to pay homage to the Pagoda, you should light up the incense and candles, concentrate your mind, and walk clockwise, starting from main entrance for 3 rounds around the pagoda, then sit down at any side and keep praying.

At the East direction in Pali language "Poo ri maya Tisa ya". Kapanakirisming Pappatae -Mahagassapaena Thapitang Buddha Urunka Thatung Sirasa Namami".

At the South direction, Takinaya Tisaya.

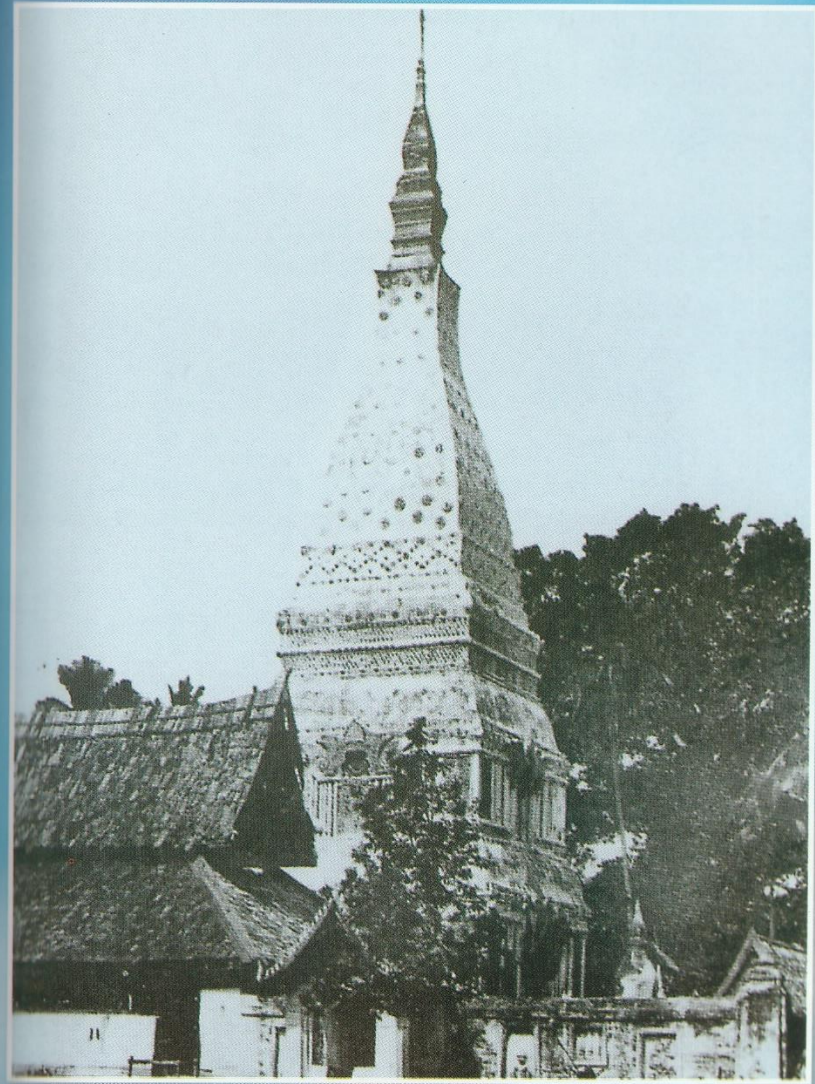
At the West direction, Pajehimaya Tisaya-Kapanakirisming Pappatae-Mahagassapaena Thapitang Buddha Urunka thatung Sirasa Namami.

At the North direction, Uttraya Tisaya, and Follow by Pali "Kapanakirisming Pappatae-Mahagassapaena Thapitang Buddha-Urunka thatung-Sirasa Namami." You may make a circle around by moving to your left hand (Clockwise). However it is our Buddhist custom before paying the homage to the Pagoda that you should pay the homage to the triple gems first (The Buddha, The Dhamma, the Sangha).

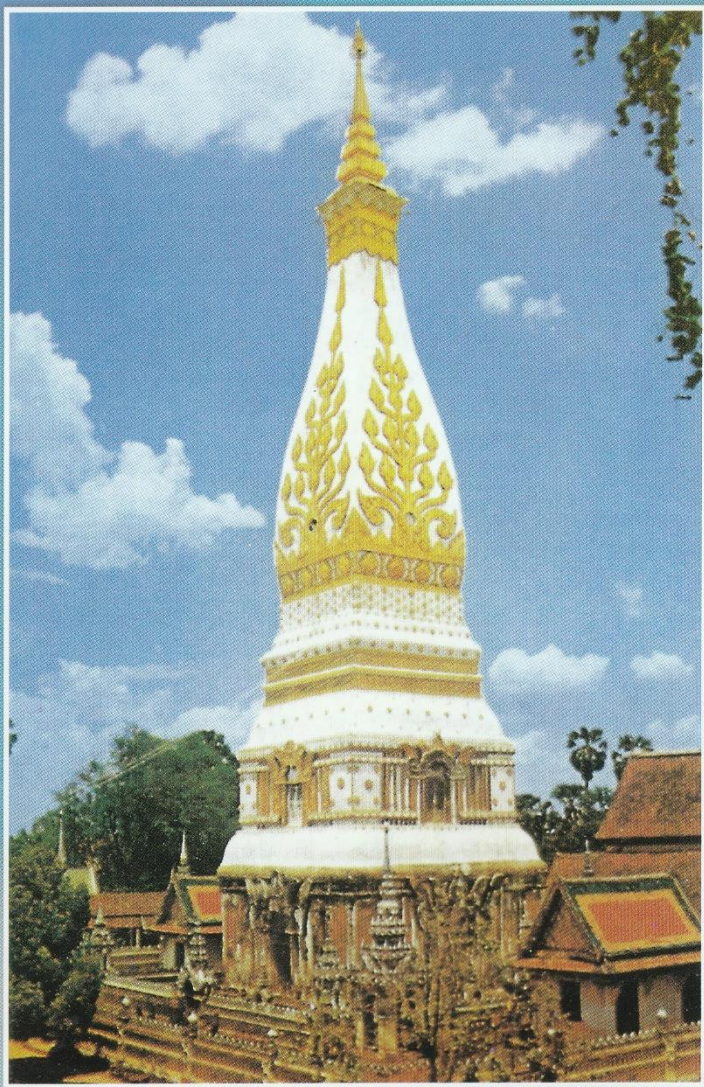
9) Please be kind to all animals around the temple area. The area around the temple is regarded as a freedom area, for both animals and human being as well. Whoever is lacking of merit when being in the area, is looked down on as a sinner and may encounter with unpleasant events.

10) Whoever has made a mistake in this holy place and is aware of his/her sins, should bring some incenses and candles to pay respect and ask apology to the Phrathatpanom Pagoda. As a good Buddhist, your life will be happier.

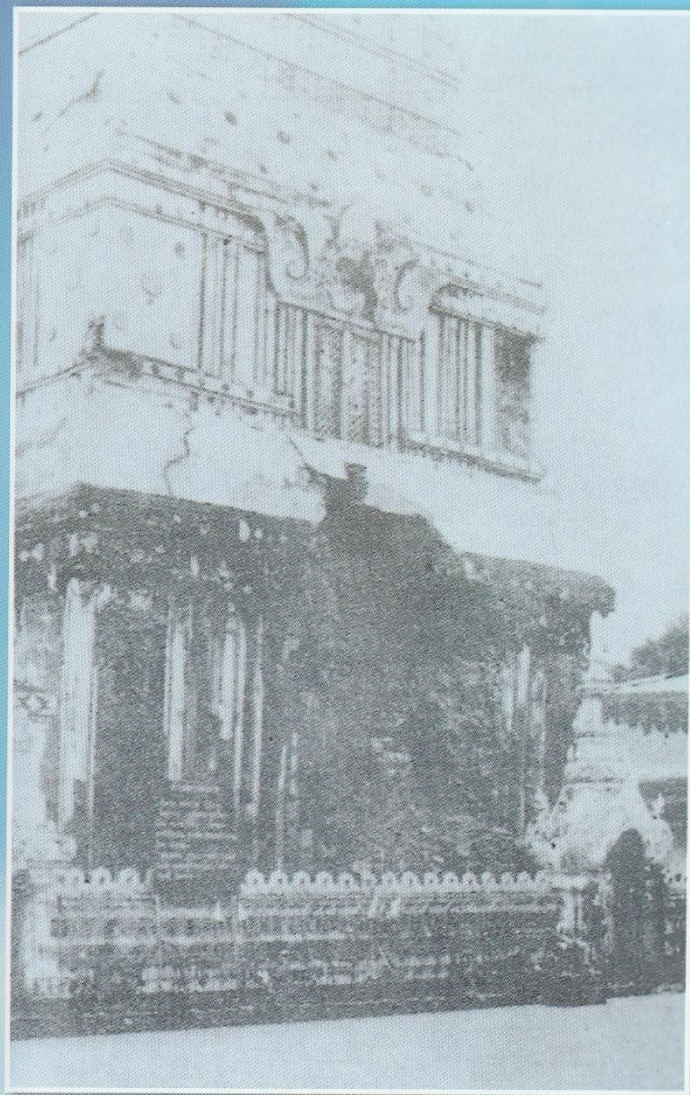
11) Once your wishes have come true, please do not forget the promises that you have made to the holy Thatnom Pagoda. Do what you have promised, otherwise if any things happen, it is hard to correct. There are many ways to pay the homage to the Pagoda as you have promised, so that you will feel happier later in your life.



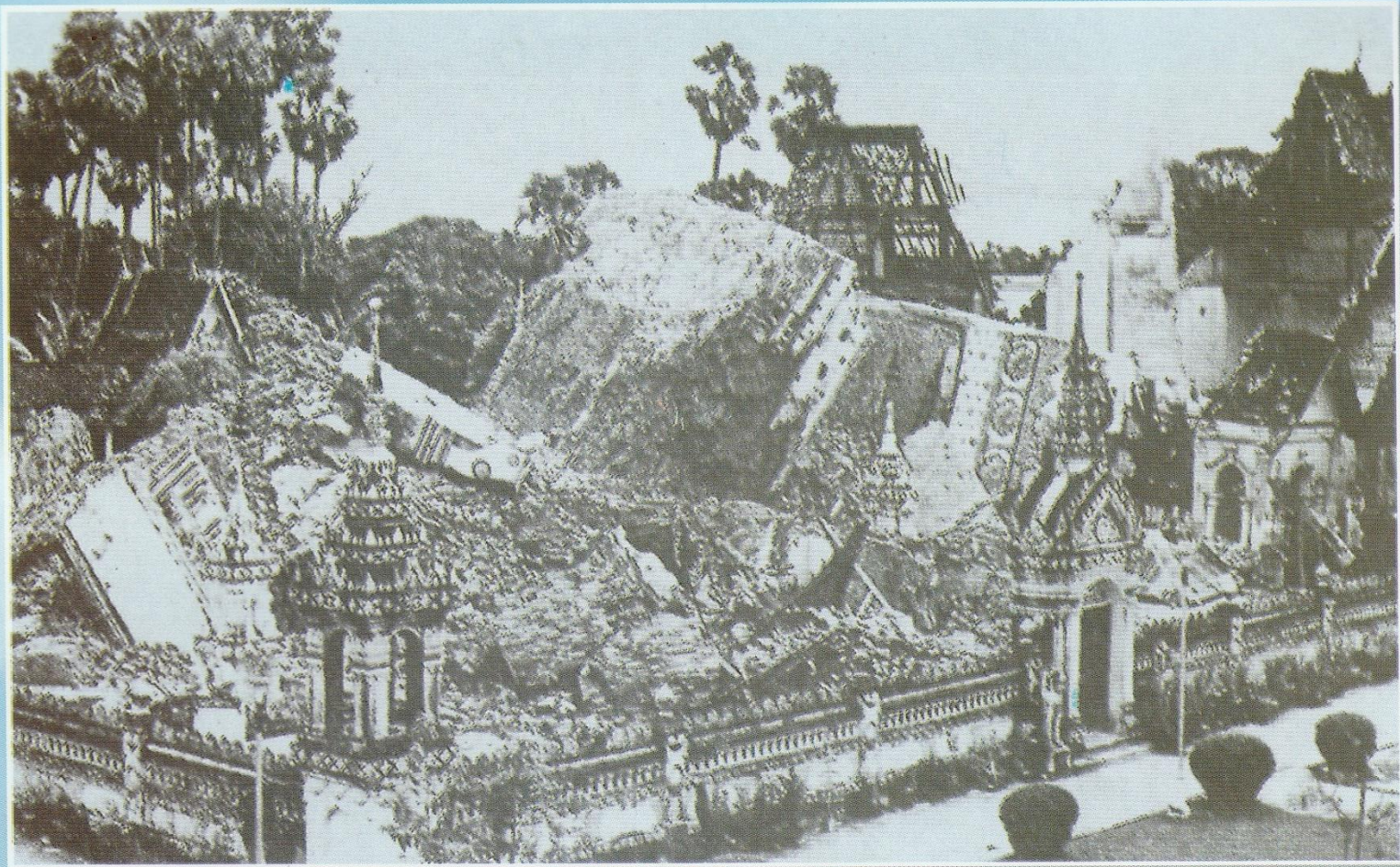
The old Phrathatpanom Pagoda, before the government restored
was 43 meters high.



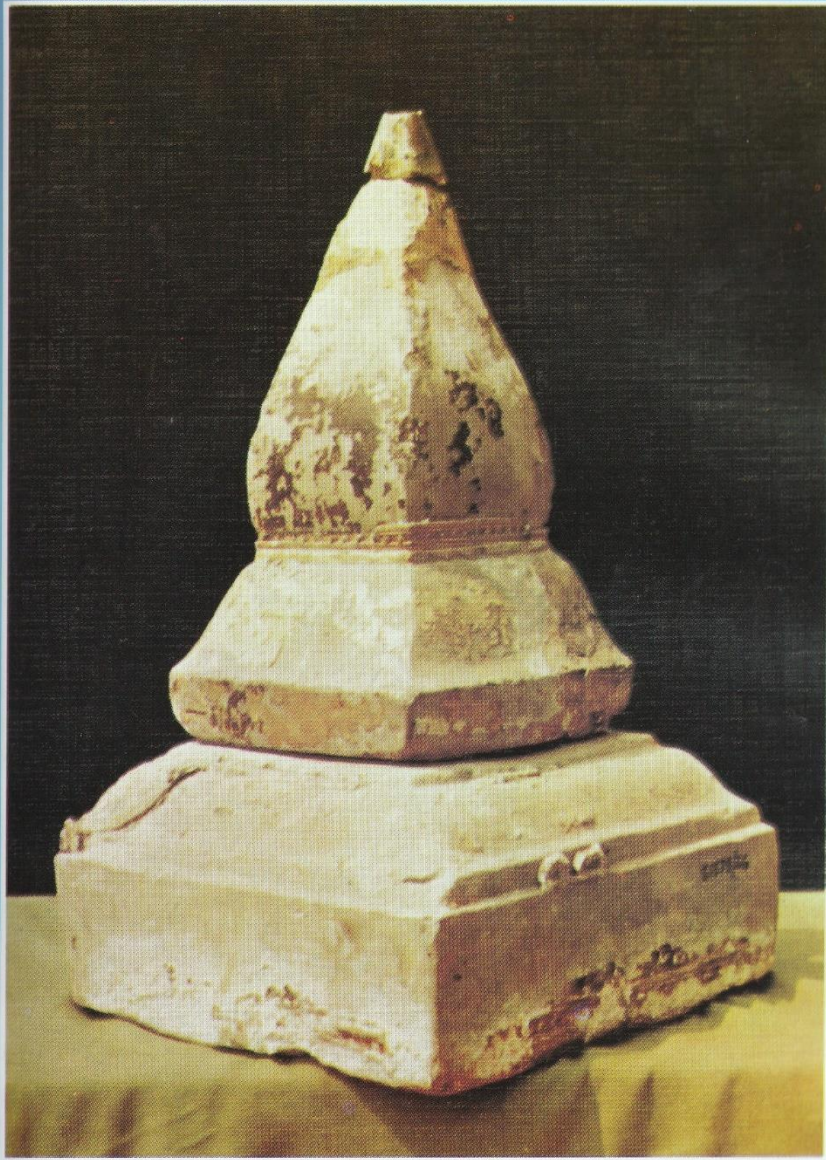
Phrathatpanom Pagoda, before the falling on 22 August, 2518 B.E. was 53 meters high, plus the height of the Royal Canopy of 4 meters, making the total height 57 meters.



The East lower gate started to fall down on 11 August, 2518 B.E. at 5.09 P.M.



Phrathatpanom Pagoda fell down on 11 August, 2518 B.E. 5.38 p.m. or on the lunar calendar Monday, the 4th waxing moon, the 9th month, the year of a Rabbit.



The Stone Pagoda which contained the golden throne and the caskets which kept the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha inside. It was 85 centimeters high, its base was 32 centimeters wide, Amorn ascetic and Yothig ascetic brought from PhuPhek, Sakon Nakorn-around 500 B.E.



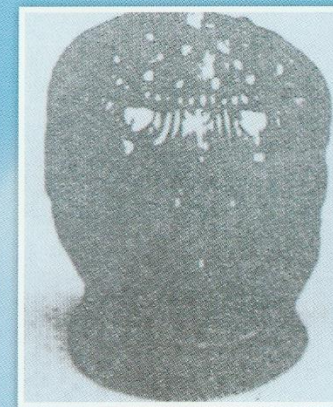
The golden throne, which contained the Casket of The Chest Relics of Lord Buddha inside, found under the Stone Pagoda, it stood on the back of the elephant and the horse made from precious stones.

- Its base was 6.9 centimeters wide and 14.8 centimeters high.

It was damaged and assumed that they were made in the year 2236-2245 B.E. by Jao Racha Kru Luang of Vientian, Laos.



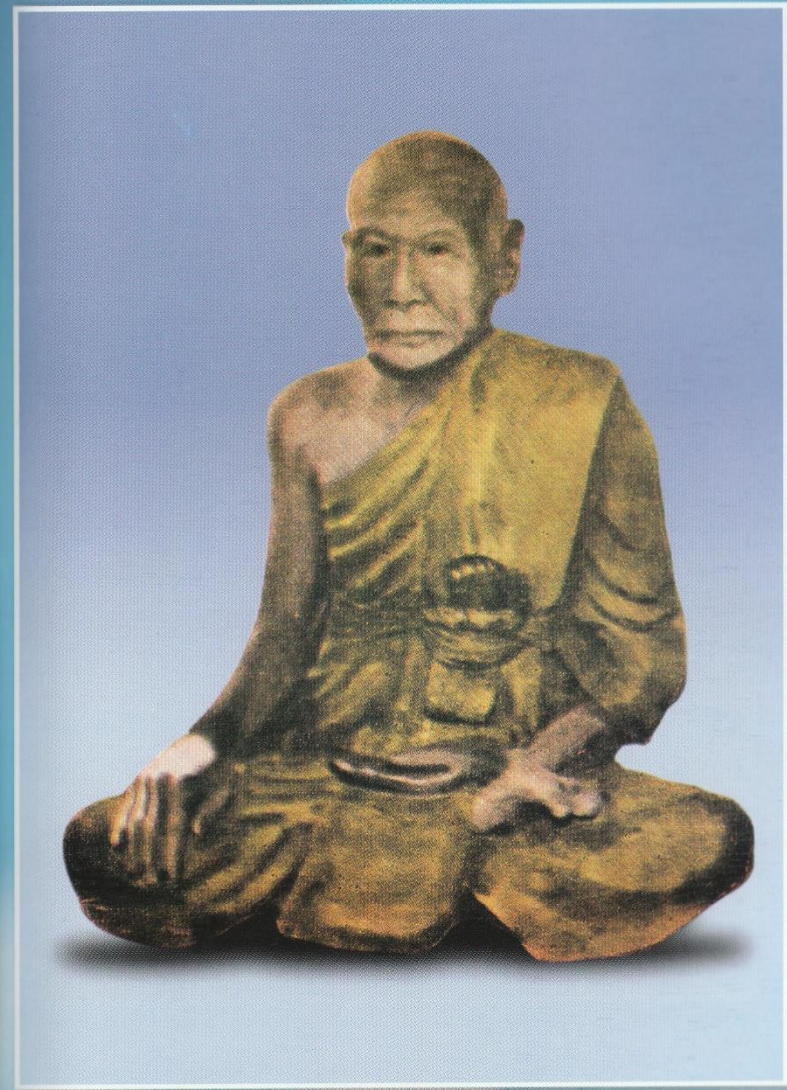
The Octagonal golden casket, kept inside the Stone Pagoda, contained the 215 pieces of relisce, assumed that it was put in at the later period.



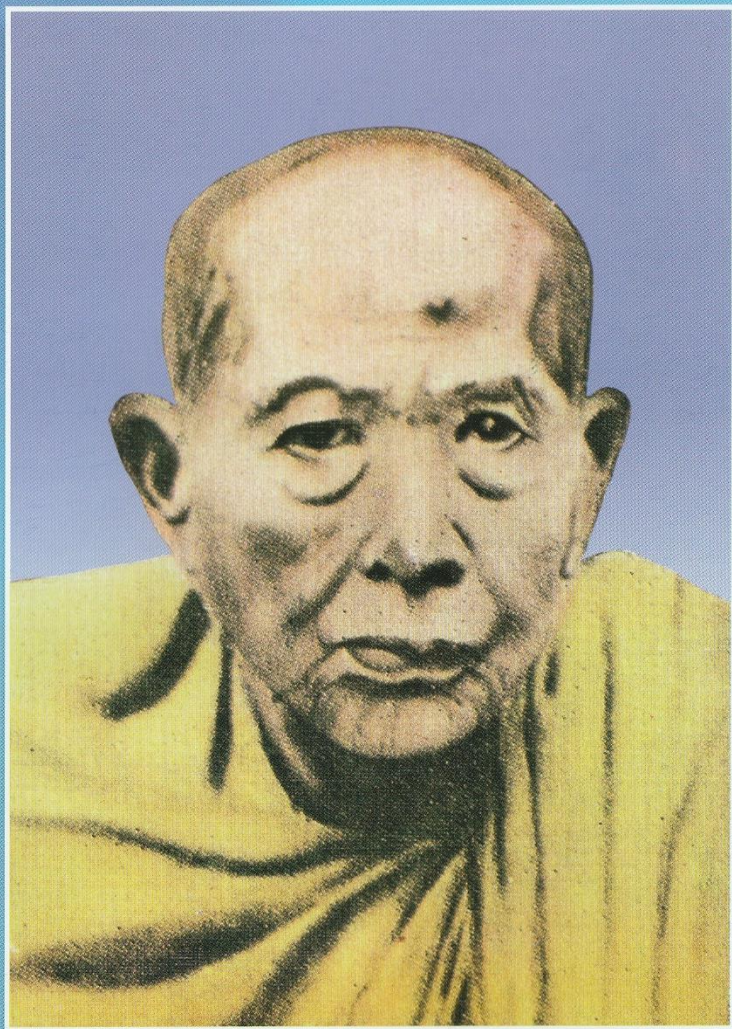
The golden casket contained 30 pieces of relics kept inside the Stone Pagoda, assumed, that it was put in at the later period.



The New Phrathatpanom Pagoda, is 53.60 meters high
its base is 12.33 meters each side.

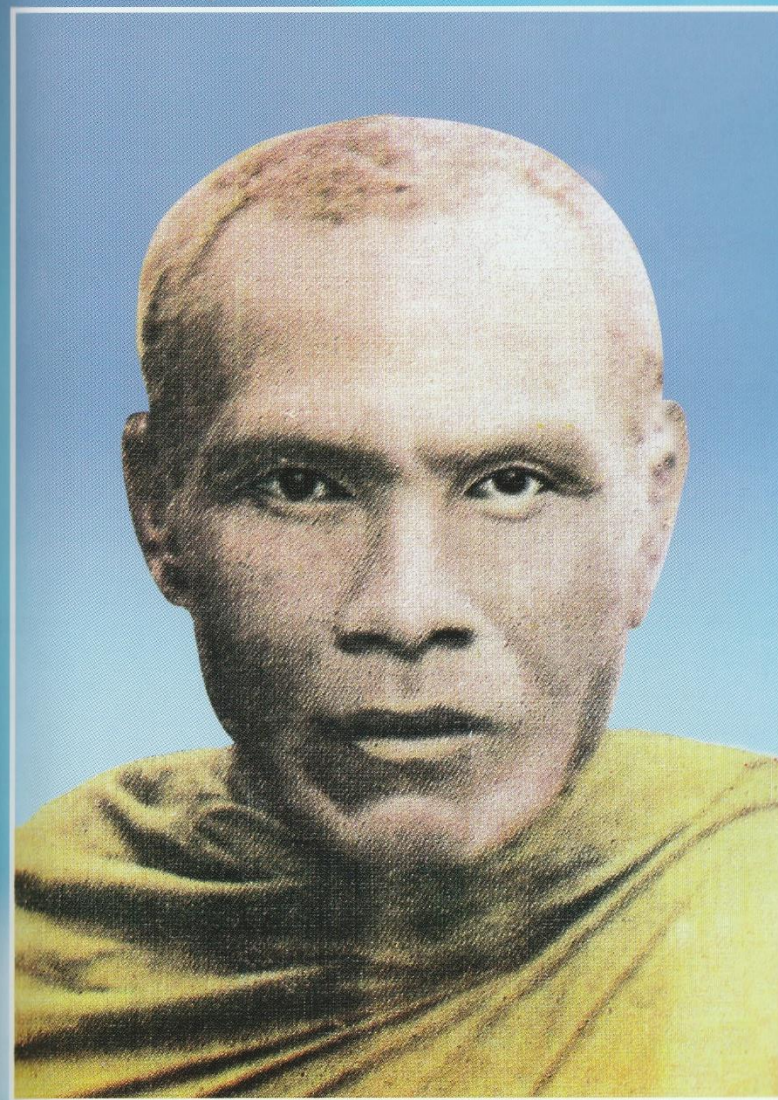


Jao Rachakruluang Ponesmek of Vientian, Restored Thatpanom
Pagoda, 2236-2245 B.E.



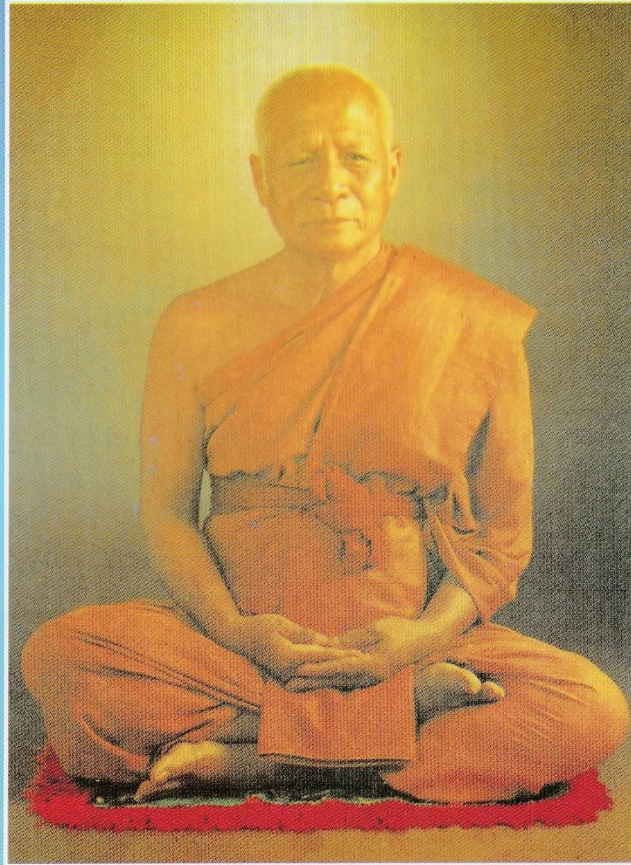
Phra Kru Wiroj Ratanobol

- The former abbot of Wat Toong Sri Muang, the Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor of Ubon Rachathani
Restored Phra Thatpnom Pagoda in 2444 B.E.
Please see details on section 27. (the 6th Restoration)



Phra Kru Silapirat (mee) (2459-2479 B.E)

The 1st Abbot of Phra Thatpanom Temple.
also the 1st Ecclesiastical Distric officer of Thatpanom.

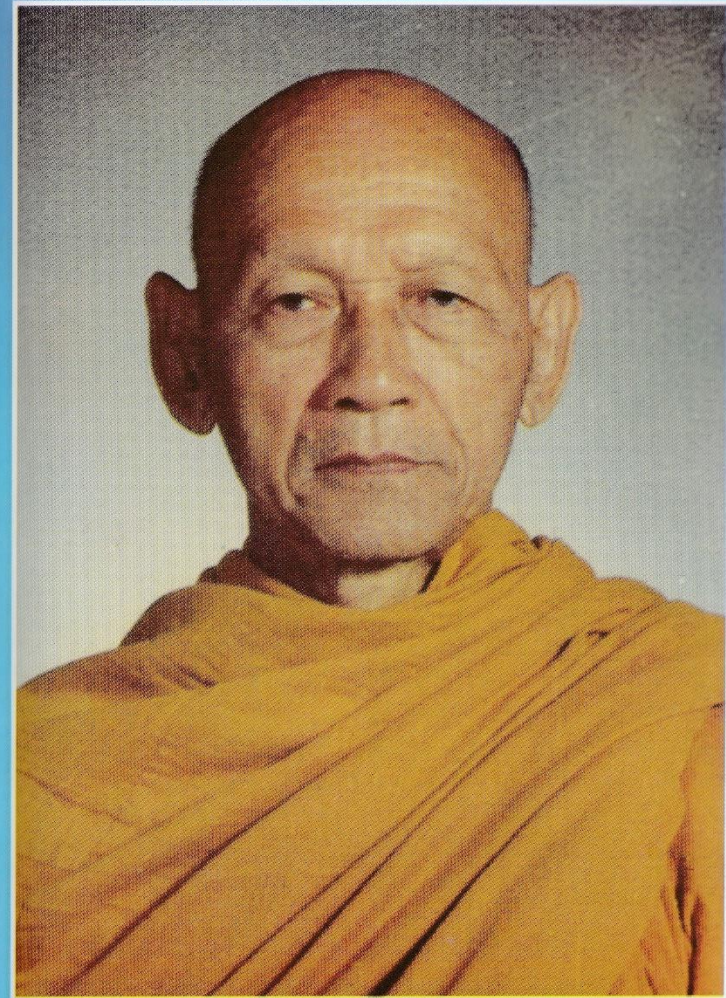


Phra Dham Rachanoowat
(Kaew Utoomala 2480-2532 B.E.)

Born on 2450 B.E., the native of Thatpanom at Baan Nong Hoy.

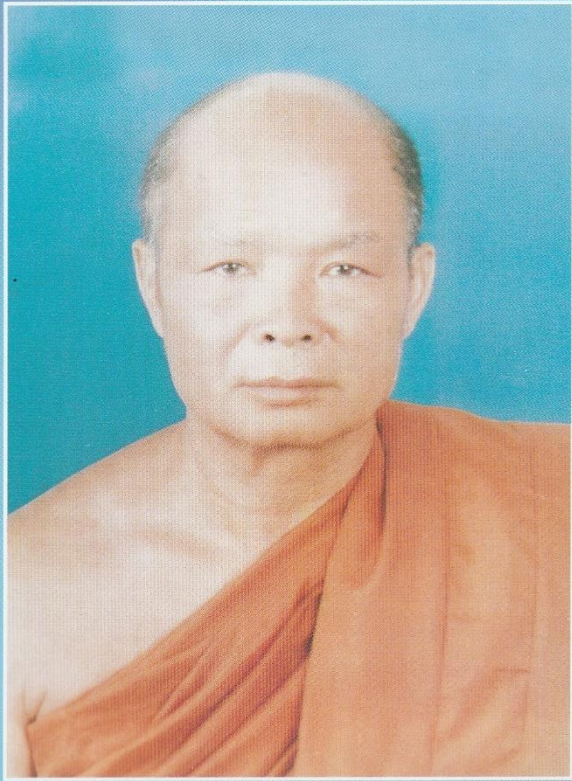
- 2471 B.E. - Became a Buddhist monk
- 2480 B.E., The Abbot of Phrathatpanom Temple through 2532 B.E.
- 2498 B.E. - Phra Panom Jetiyanoorak
- 2509 B.E. - Phra Thep Ratanamolee
- 2530 B.E. - Ph.D. Buddhism, Chulalongkorn Sangha University
- 2530 B.E. - Phra Dham Rachanoowat

Died : 15 March, 2532 B.E.



Phra Dham Pariyatimoonnee (Nuan Khemajaree) (2533-2544)

Born 2460 B.E. : At Baan Koaksawang, Don Nang Hongs
Thatpanom. Nakompanom. The Abbot of Wat Po Chai and
the Ecclesiastical provincial Governor of Nong khai. (2494-2532)
The Abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom (2535-2544)



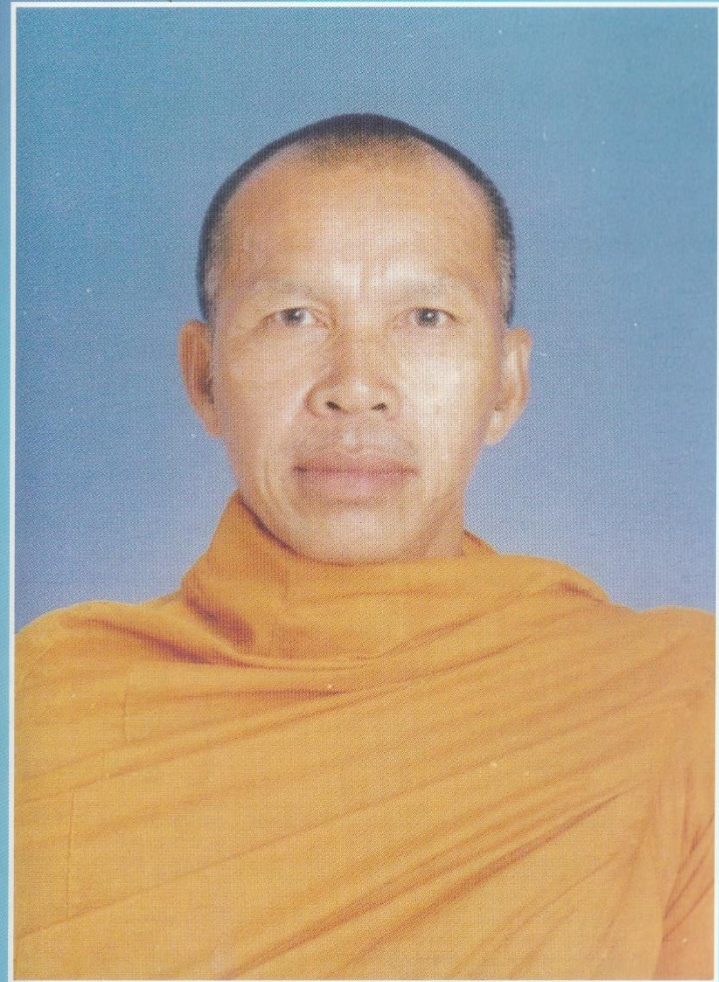
Phra Sophon Jetiyapibarl (Som Soomano) - 2547 B.E.

Education : The 4th Grade Certificate of Pali Dhamma
 Ph.D. in Buddhism
 Special Certificate of Education Master Degree of Arts.

Born : 2477 B.E., at Baan Donglang, Thatpanom Nakornpanom.
 Became a monk in 2497 B.E., by the preceptor,
 Phra Panomjetiyanoorak.

Ranking : Phrakru Panomdhammakosit 2529 B.E.
 Phra Sophon Jetiyapibarl 2546 B.E.
 The Abbot of Wat Phrathatpanom, 2547 B.E.
 The Director of Sangha College - Nakornpanom

Die : 11th April, 2547 B.E.



Phra Rachtheerajarn (Samlee Panyawaro) 2547
 Acting - The Abbot of Wat PhraThatpanom Woramahawtharn.
 The Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor of Nakornpanom,
 Phra Kru - Sri Jetiyapirak.
 Phra Rachtheerajarn

Paying the homage to the Pagoda which contains the chest relics of Lord Buddha for the 6 Directions

1) The East (All words are in Pali Language)

Purimaya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Tapitung Buddha Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought these holy relics to be kept here at the East side of Phu Kampra, with my respectful heart.

2) The South:

Takinaya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae.

Mahakasapaena Tapitang Buddha Urunkatatung. Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought these holy relics to be kept here at the South side of Phu Kampra with my respectful heart.

3) The West:

Pachimaya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Tapitang Buddha Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought these holy relics to be kept here at the West side of Phu Kampra, with my respectful heart.

4) The North:

Uttraya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Tapitang Buddha Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the

chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought these holy relics to be kept here at the North side of Phu Kampra, with my respectful heart.

5) The upper direction:

Uparimaya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Tapitang Buddha Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought the holy relics to be kept here on the upper direction of Phu Kampra, with my respectful heart.

6) The lower direction:

Hettimaya Tisaya Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Tapitang Buddha- Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami (Meaning) I am worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Phra Mahakassapa had brought the holy relics to be kept here on the lower direction of Phu Kampra, with my respectful heart.



Paying the homage to the Royal Canopy.

Setta chattang Soowanna Ratchatang Rattanang Paneetang Buddha Uranka Jae-Tiyang Ahang Wantami Sappata.

Kapanakirisaming Papatae Mahakasapaena Thapitang Buddha Urunkatatung Sirasa Namami.

I am paying the homage to the chest relics of Lord Buddha, for which Pra Maha Kasapa, the Arahant, had brought your relics to stay at this hill, Phu Kampra (The orphan hill), with my respectful heart.

May I mention the brief history of Phra Thatpanom Pagoda which contains the chest relics of Lord Buddha.

May all the danger stay away from me, may all Buddhist be merit, and may my mind be purified with full Dhamma.

1. The Character of Phra That (Pagoda).

The word "Thatu", pronounce as "Taata", is the language of Northern & Southern Thai, meaning "Pagoda". Phra Thatpanom Pagoda is a square pagoda, total distance around the square is 44.20 meters. Its former height from the footage to the top was 43.00 meters; the Department of Fine Arts added 10 meters to the top in BE 2483 (1940). The building height is 53.05 meters plus the royal canopy of 4.00 meters, making the total height 57.00 meters. Phra Thatpanom Pagoda is classified into 4 sections vertically. The 1st and 2nd section (starting from the base of the Pagoda) are the base walls, with ancient brick decorated in all four direction of the wall.

The decoration on each wall depicts the marching of the 5 ancient kings, who came to build up this pagoda. The 2 vertical sections are the old ones, without any renovation. Especially the red bricks are the real old ones, and the part which is patched by cement is the repaired one.

On top of this vertical section (section2) is the pattern of an upside down lotus and bell shape lotus, or bottle shape. The 3rd section (upward) is the bell shape or bottle shape, getting smaller upwards until the 4th section which is the top and the royal canopy.

2. The Location of Phra Thatpanom.

Phra Thatpanom pagoda is presently locating at Wat Phrathatpanom Woramahawiharn, Tambon Thatpanom, Amphur Thatpanom, Nakornpanom District, Thailand. It is on the west side of the Mekhong River. The River is the divider for the border of Thailand and Laos. In the old days, where Phra Thatpanom is situated here was called "Phu Kampra" or "The Orphan Hill". In Pali language called "Kapana Banpot" or "Kapanakiri", locating at the bank of "Chol Nathi River". It was also under the ruling of the ancient city of "Srikoataboon". According to the legend, Srikoataboon city was located at the south side of the "Sae Bang Fi" River. The River is formed by the Vietnamese mountains meeting the Mekhong Rive at the opposite side of Thatpanom. It is assumed that the city is the empty city located away from the mouth of "Sae Bang Fi" River, 5-6 kilometers. The local villagers call it "Muang Kham Tae".

3. Names of various Cities at the time Prathatpanom was built.
(Please see the map on the separate sheet).

Srikoataboon - sited at the bank of the "Sae Bang Fi" River, where it meets Mekhong River (on the left side of the River) in Laos.

Julaneepromathat - located at the east side of the Mekhong River and on the north side of Srikoataboon. It is assumed that it is Luang Phra Bang & Sibsong Joo Thai at present.

Nong Harn Luang - located at the west side of Srikoataboon, assumed that it was on the bank of the Lake of Sakolnakorn presently

Nong Harn Noi - located at the west side of Udon Thani, or at the Lake of Amphur Nong Harn in present day Udon Thani province.

Inthapat Nakorn - located at the south side of Phra Thatpanom or in present day Cambodia, but exactly where was it sited is unknown. The Governor or the King of these 5 cities came to Thatpanom and built the Phra Thatpanom Pagoda together; and there were others who could not join the build up. They were

Sa Gate Nakorn or **Roi Et Pra Too** (101 Gate city) located at present day Roi Et, this region spread out through the Mool River and She River toward the west.

Kooloonta Nakorn or Thawarawadee, are presumed to have been in the central region, so called Ayuthaya Kingdom, in present day Thailand.

MAPS OF THE 5 KINGDOMS

1) Srikoataboon

- Ruled by King Nanthasen, located near Thatpanom Pagoda.

2) Julaneepromathat

- the region covering the Northern area above the Mekhong River, or Laan Chang Kingdom.

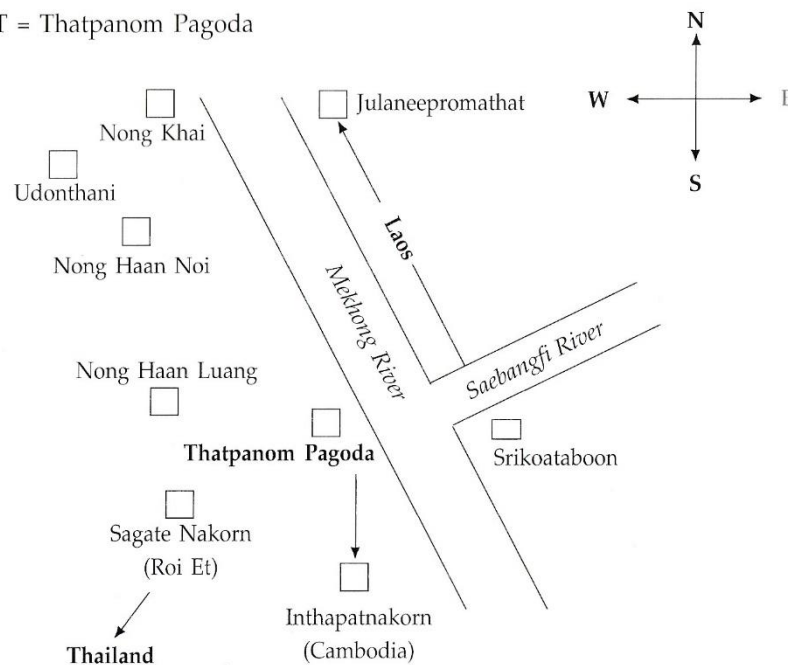
3) **Nong Haan Luang** - located at the west side of Thatpanom Pagoda, present day

Sakolnakorn, ruled by King Soowanapingkaan.

4) **Nong Haan Noi** - located at the west side of Nong Haan Luang, ruled by King KamDaeng, the younger brother of King Soowanapingkaan.

5) **Inthapatnakorn** - located at the south side of Thatpanom Pagoda, in present day Cambodia, ruled by King Inthapat.

T = Thatpanom Pagoda



Remarks: The map in this book was made by the translator's imagination to help the reader to understand where those cities located at.

4. The History of Buddhism in the Isaan Region

In the Urunkatatu of PhraThatpanom legend there was mentioned several rivers in the north east of Thailand (Isaan); the Mekhong River was one of them. It was mentioned that near the end of the period of Lord Buddha, the Lord himself with his closest followers, Phra Anont, had come to the East by way of flying thru the Air and landed at Don Gon Noa first, then to Nong Kantair Sua Nam (Vientian). There Lord Buddha predicted that there would be a big city to support the Buddhism. Then he traveled along the Mekhong River southward and engraved his foot print at "Pone Chum" and met Sookhatthee Nak, which is probably Amphur Pone Pi Sai in present day Nong Khai province. Then Lord Buddha made a foot print at Wern Pla, north of Nakornpanom nowadays, predicted the location of Marookhanakorn, and stayed over night at Phu Kampra. Here a celestial named "Wissoogam" came to serve them at the time. In the following morning the Lord Buddha and Phra Anont crossed Mekhong River to go out for obtaining food in the Srikoataboon city, and then rested under the Rung Tree (Phra That In Hung of Soowanakate, Laos). Then he came back to Phu Kampra for obtaining the food in the morning.

5. The Importance of Phu Kampra (The Orphan Hill).

At that time, the celestial, named Intra, came to see the Lord Buddha and asked why he has come here. Lord Buddha said that it was the custom of the 3 previous Buddha, namely Kakoosantha, Konakamana and Kasapa, after they had completed Nirvana, that they would bring their relics to be kept here at this Phu Kampra. So after I had completed

Nirvana, Kassapa, my follower will bring my relics to be kept here too. He also mentioned about Srikoataboon and Marookha Nakorn, that they traveled to Nong Haam Luang, ruled by King Soowanapingkaan and Queen Dhevi, where he engraved his foot print. Then he returned to Chetawan and completed Nirvana at Koosinara, India.

6. Phra Mahakassapa Obtained the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha.

After Lord Buddha had completed Nirvana, all the kings of the Kusinara region got together to cremate the Lord Buddha's body; but they could not get the body burned up until Phra Maha Kassapa arrived and lead all the monks to have the body reburning. He made a wish, that any relics of the Lord that he wished to be kept at Phu Kampra, may those relics come up in my right hand palm; and the relics came up into his right hand palm magically while the fire burnt up the Lord's Buddha body completely. Then Phra Maha Kassapa kept the relics into a special handkerchief (made from several kinds of furs) with great care and respect.

After the burning ceremony and relics distributions were over, Phra Mahakassapa and 500 other Arahants traveled by air to bring the chest relics to "Doy Tan" (Phu Phek of Pun na Nikom, Sakolnakorn). They went out for obtaining food in the morning and to make the King Soowanapingkaan aware of their arrivals.

7. The People of Nong Haan Luang Become aware of the Lord Buddha's Nirvana.

The people of Nong Haan Luang, King Soowanapingkaan and his Queen become aware that the Lord Buddha had completed Nirvana

together with the arrival of the chest relics. They hoped and expected to receive some relics, so they built 2 pagodas to keep those relics inside. Men built a pagoda at Phu Phek and women, lead by a woman called Narai Jeng Weng, built a pagoda at a park about 6 kilometers from Sakol Nakorn. They had promised that whoever completed the Pagoda first would be the winner, and the winner would get the relics to be kept inside one's pagoda. In the end, the women completed the Pagoda first, because those men had helped the women in building the pagoda and they fooled around with the women. When Phra Maha Kassapa came to obtain the food and met with King Soowanapingkaan, the king asked to get the relics to be kept at Narai Jeng Weng Pagoda. Phra Maha Kassapa responded that this was not Phu Kampra, as the Lord Buddha's wish. If he allowed the relics to be kept here, he was afraid that it would not do any good for the King nor the city. However, Phra Maha Kassapa asked an Arahant to go back to India and bring back the ash of Lord Buddha instead, in order to save the King Soowanapingkaan's good intention.

8. Bringing the Chest Relics to Phu Kampra.

Once the news of the Arahants bringing the Chest Relics to be kept at Phu Kampra spread out through the region, all the Kings of the region were very pleased and came and waited at Phu Kampra. King Nantasen of Srikoataboon came to build up some camps along Mekhong River to entertain the other Kings. King Julaneepromathat and King Inthapatnakorn arrived and asked their men to cut several kinds of stones for building up the Pagoda. King Kam Daeng of Nong Haan Noi, the younger brother of king Soowanapingkaan, moved his troops to join with his elder brother,

King Soowannapingkaan incoming to Phu Kampra. King Soowannapingkaan had his 8 Brahman dressed up in white. They brought the chest relics and marched, together with their troops and the 500 Arahants with the lead of Phra Maha Kassapa, towarded Phu Kampra.

9. Digging of the Basement of the Pagoda.

After all the five Kings had arrived and settled down, they had a meeting and consulted each other to what should they do next. King Soowannapingkaan mentioned that there were some left over stones in his town for the unfinished pagoda built by those men. Those stones should be brought here, then it would be faster and a short cut to building the pagoda; but Phra Maha Kassapa suggested that since those stones were left over and uncompleted work, it would not be a good thing. Let us start with clay and have the clay burned when we build up the Pagoda; it would be better. All had agreed with the suggestion. The measurement for both the width and length would use Phra Maha Kassapa's palm as the standardization.

Once the clay mixing had completed, all the kings dug the ground, for the width of 2 wahs and 2 hands depth for all four corners of the Pagoda. King Soowannapingkaan started first at the East direction and followed by other kings to the left hand onward until the four corners of the basement of the Pagoda were completed.

10. Assignment for building of the Pagoda.

At that time all the 500 Arahants had set the water jars at the four directions at the foot base of the pagoda. Whoever was assigned for the direction, they should take the water from the jar at the assigned

direction. They prayed with the chanting of "Ra Hu" Parit "Buddha Sung Mangkalang Lo Gae" for the blessing of the world.

The assignment of Building up the wall of pagoda were as below:

- 1) King Julaneepprommathat, took care of the East.
- 2) King Inthapat Nakorn, took care of the South.
- 3) King Kam Daeng of Nong Haan Noi, took care of the West.
- 4) King Nanthasen of Srikoataboon, took care of the North.

After the four kings had completed the wall of the pagoda and measured up the height of Phra Maha Kassapa 1 wah, then King Soowannapingkaan built the upper part of bell shape for another 1 wah tall. Therefore it was 2 wah tall and 2 wah width for each width of each side. Then he made up 4 gates and fired up with these woods: Juang, Janta, Krisana, KraLumpak, Kantaros, Chompoo, Nikroat and Rang for 3 days and 3 nights. After they had burnt in good condition, they had covered the square with special red dirt.

11. Worshipping the Pagoda with Treasures.

After the Pagoda had been completed, the 5 Kings donated all kind of treasure to worship the Lord Buddha and had them kept inside the Pagoda as listed below.

1) King Julaneepprommathat donated silver for 5,550 Naen, each Naen-weighted for 4 Hoi (or 40 Baht); gold 450 bars, each bar weighted for 3 Hoi (or 30 Baht); 9 Gongs (9 fists wide); 7 Gongs (17 fists wide) laid inside the East wall.

2) King Inthapat Nakorn donated Silver for 9,999,900 Naen, 33,330 Golden rings, had them melted in boat shape, and laid them all at the South wall.

3) King Kam Daeng donated one Golden pot, weighted 6 muen, and put silver rings inside the golden pot, weighted 300,000 Naen; a pair of emerald crowns, a pair of golden hair pins, 7,000 pieces of golden footed trays. All of these treasures were kept inside a special pearl stone box, inside the West wall.

4) King Nanthasen donated a Golden bowl weighted 7,000 (7 Chang), and full with rings; a silver bowl, weighted 9,000 (9 Chang) and the silver bowl full with golden hair pins; 2 silver bowls, weighted 19,000 (Nueng Muen Gao Chang) and were full with wrist laces 50 pairs each pair weighted 2 Hoi; silver 90,000 bars, contained in 7 gongs, 17 Fists wide, 5 Gongs of 15 Fists wide, 3 Gongs of 13 Fists wide. All were laid inside the North wall.

5) King Soowannapingkaan donated a pair of golden crowns, each crown weighted 3 Muen; a pair of golden necklaces, each lace weighted 3 Muen; a golden spittoon, weighted 9 Muen, inside the spittoon was full of golden rings, 9 golden bowls, each bowl weighted 2 Chang; 9 silver bowls, each bowl weighted 5 Chang; 7 bronz bowls, each bowl weighted 5 Chang. All of these treasures were laid in the middle of the pagoda.

12. The Chest relics were Buried with a Miracle.

After the 5 Kings had finished worshipping the chest relics of Lord Buddha, Pha Maha Kassapa, as the Chairman of the party, invited the chest relics to be kept inside the Pagoda and closed all the 4 gates. Suddenly the chest relics, which had been wrapped up by special fur clothes, unfolded the clothes and came up on the right palm of Phra Maha Kassapa with a miracle. All people around the area praised the

miracle with great pleasure. Phra Maha Kassapa had recalled the Lord Buddha's order to bring his relics to Phu Kampra, but did not say to be kept here. May be because of the Buddhism's envisioning that in the future there would be some Arahant to keep this place prosperously. Therefore, Phra Mahakassapa said that we would keep the relics here as per the wishes of Lord Buddha. After that the chest relics returned to the inside of the Pagoda and wrapped itself up inside the special clothes with the great wonder of King Soowannapingkaan.

13. Building of Gates and Installing the Stone pillar.

The 5 Kings had built wooden gates and closed with wooden bars around the 4 sides of the Pagoda. They brought a stone pillar from Kusinara city, India, and installed it at the North East side of the Pagoda, and engraved the stone with a picture of Asamookhee (a horse) at the base of the stone to show that it come from Chom Poo Thaweep; also another stone pillar from Bharanasee and installed it at the South East side of the Pagoda and engraved the stone with a picture of Asamookhee; one stone pillar from Srilanka, installed at the South West side and one stone pillar from Tak Ka Sila city, installed at the North West side of the Pagoda. King Soowannapingkaan built a stone Horse, called "Ma Acha Nai" (a speedy horse) and set its head to the North direction to show that the Chest relics had come out from the Pagoda on the North Side; and it was symbolic of Buddhism that the religion would prosper from the North to the South. Also Phra Maha Kassapa built a stone Horse, called "Ma Pala Hok" (a mighty strong horse) and set its head to the North direction and posted a questionable possibility that King Srikoataboon

would patronize Buddhism as long as 5,000 years, Being born in the South and would spread out to the North. These 2 stone horses were built for those genius to realize about the questionable hidden behind them. The couple of stone horses are now located at the footstep of the new Hor Phrakaew on the North side. The stone pillars are still there; one at the North East and one at the South East, but the ones at the North West and the South West are covered with the Bell House.

14. The 5 Kings and all Arahants returned home.

After the 5 Kings had donated all their treasures to worship the Lord Buddha and made their wishes to be an Arahant in the future, the 500 Arahants congratulated and blessed them all and joined the worship by walking around the pagoda towards the clockwise with the chanting for 3 rounds. Then the 500 Arahants departed to Ratchakru City by way of air flying travel.

The 5 Kings mentioned about the missing of another 2 Kings in joining this great occasion of patronizing the Buddhism; because in the previous births, they never join any merit making. They were King Sagate Nakorn of Roi Et and King Gooloontanakorn of the Southern Region. However, all the 5 Kings were so grateful that they had found Buddhism which was more excelent than anything else in their lives. They finally departed each other with good friendship and returned to their hometowns, and turned the patronization to King Nanthasen of Srikoataboon to look after the Phrathatpanom Pagoda.

15. Engraving the Pagoda and Celebrations.

The old legend mentioned several miracles, such as the entire god in

the universe, namely, Phra Intra, announced to come down from the heaven to worship the chest relics of Lord Buddha, which were kept here in this Phra Thatpanom Pagoda; and celebrated this auspicious occasion with all kinds of music and plays. Engraving the wall of the pagoda was the work of the Wissanoogam celestial, who engraved the 5 Kings riding on elephants and horses patterned with flowers along the side wall of the pagoda. The inside of the side wall of the pagoda for all 4 directions was engraved with celestials, Lord Buddha coming to Phu Kampra and with the Phra Intra paying respect to the Lord Buddha.

Before the celebration was over, Phra Intra appointed some famous celestials to guard and protect all the treasure donated by those 5 Kings, around the 4 corners of the Pagoda, and including above and underneath the pagoda. The total number of celestial was 4,006, included 3 chief guards, especially to protect the pagoda where the chest relics were kept inside.

While all the god and celestials around the universe had been worshipping the Pagoda, the chest relics of Lord Buddha had shown a miracle by shooting up in the air, above the pagoda and had come closer to the top of the Pagoda. The size of the miracle was about the size of a coconut and they came down to the East side and went in to the pagoda at the East gate. All the celestials congratulated the marvelous events.

16. Situations of the Regions.

The chest relic legend mentioned that King Nanthasen had ruled Srikoataboon for 13 years, then Lord Buddha completed his nirvana, and King Nanthasen joined the building of the Pagoda. After King Nanthasen

passed away, the city encountered with some epidemic. The senior councilors conferred with each other about whether they should go to find a new city; so they did move across Mekhong River at the North of Pukampra, for which nowadays is called Laksila Village. Because it was built among the bamboo forest, it was called Marookhanakorn. King Marookhanakorn was the first king to rule the city. He was the son of the younger brother of King Nanthasen; and his mother was named Dhevaboopa. After the reign of King Marookhanakorn, his son, King Soomitramawongsa, was the successor; and King Nirootarach the 4th was the last King of this empire. Then disaster destroyed the city.

In the mean time the city of Nong Harn Luang and Nong Harn Noi were ruled by King Soowanapingkaan and King Kam Daeng, who both had passed away. Their cities had a big flooding, so much that the two lakes can run to each other together. With other disasters, their people had fled away to find a proper place to live. The son of King Soowanapingkaan, named Thao Kam Bang, lead his people to settle down at Ban Huay Gao Leo Gao Kod at the north of Nong Kantae Sua Nam (Vientian). At the time Thao Kam Bang had a son in law, named Jantaboori Uayluay, the chief of the villager; and named Nang Inthasawang Long Hod to be the Queen with the upgrading of the village of Nong Kan tae Sua Nam to be the city of Jantaboori. As for Sagate city, or the City of 101 gates; after the end of King Sooriyawongsa, several cities under its ruling had set themselves free to be independent. There were several wars and Sagate city was colonized by the other. However, the royal servants took the crown prince, named King Sungkhawichagumara and fled to

Muang La Nong Kai, which was under the ruling of King Jantaboori. King Soomitramawongsa, later on, moved to Sagate City and had ruled the city until his death.

For Inthapatnakorn, later on the younger brother of the King ruled the city, succeeding his brother, King Intapat.

For King Julanee Promatat who had joined building the Pagoda, after his death, his son had succeeded the throne. For other regions they did not mention any situations.

17. Situations of Buddhism.

After returning from the building of the Pagoda, Phramahakassapa selected 3 novices, named Bhudharak Khit, Dhammarakkhit and Sangharakkhit. He considered that these 3 novices had the characteristics to be great monks, Therefore he tried to teach them the calm intuition until they had been the Arahant and became monks. These 3 Arahants came down to Srikoataboon region and raised the 5 princes, namely: Prince Sangha Vichagumara, regarded as King Nanthasen being reborn; Prince Maharatanagumara and Prince Jularatanagumara, who were brothers and were regarded as King Soowannapingkaan and King Kamdaeng being reborn at the Inthapatnakorn region; Prince Maha Soowan Pasaat and Prince Julasoowan Pasaat, who were brothers and were regarded as King Inthapatnakorn and King Julanee Prommathat being reborn at the Julanee Prommathat region.

After the 3 Arahants had arrived the soowanaphoom region, they raised these 5 princes at Jantaboori with the patronage of King Jantaboori and their people, until the 5 princes had become an Arahants themselves.

So the 3 Senior Arahants returned to Raj Krue (India) and brought back some relics of Lord Buddha to King Jantaboori, and kept them in several pagodas, such as PhaThat Bang Puan of Phukhao Luang, Prathatnongkai and Phrathat Viengkoog.

Once the 5 Arahants recalled their previous births and wanted to patronize the Pagoda at Phukampra and to follow the foot steps of the previous 500 Arahants, they got together and went to see King Soomitramawongsa of Marookhapakorn and asked him for help. The King had faith in Buddhism and gladly accepted to help them as much as he could. He ordered his people to build dwelling places around the pagoda at Phukampra. Two houses were built to the west, about 200 wah from the Pagoda; Phra Ratanadhera and Phra Jularatanadhera were to live there (presently at the hill of Arahant where the tree of Srimahaphoti is now standing). Two Vihara (dwelling places) were built to the south side; Phra Soowanapasaat and Phra Julasoowanpasaat were to live there (presently at the outer south side canal) On the North side a house was built for Phra Vichadhera (The Reclining Buddha House).

After they had finished building the 5 houses for the 5 Arahants, they cleaned up the Phukampra area to be a respectable area; and they built a royal palace for the King of Marookhanakorn at Pak Sae, 2 royal palaces for King Julanee Promathat and King Inthapatnakorn at estuary of Kaam River, and informed King Soomitramawongsa of the situations. Then the King ordered his royal boats and their people, as well as their troops, on elephants and horse backs to march down and to pay worship to the Pagoda at Phukampra. All were dressed up in white to show purity in honoring to the Lord Buddha.

18. The Miracle of the Relics.

King Soomitramawongsa arrived the royal pavilion with his troops and worshipped the chest relics which were kept inside the pagoda at Phukampra, while music and entertainment went on around the Pagoda. At midnight the relics showed a miracle; all the 4 gates of the pagoda had opened by themselves suddenly and the relics flew up in to the air and came down and went inside the pagoda. These events stunned King Soomitramawongsa, his wife and of course his people. They were so pleased and suddenly all the celestials who guarded the pagoda and the surrounded area saluted and admired the miracle, with the music playing around the hill area, as if all the gods and celestials around the universe were worshipping the Lord Buddha.

19. King Soomitramawongsa donated his people to be the servant of the Pagoda.

King Soomitramawongsa announced that if anyone had a strong belief in Buddhism and wanted to be the servant to the Pagoda, he would set them free from the government services and would give them some tools for doing rice farming. At that time there were 7 kinds of volunteers totaling 3,000 men. Lamlong was chosen to be the chief in charge. The King gave all kinds of tools to the chief to be distributed to those 3,000 men; including some money, knives, hoes, spades, axes, chisel, and drills; together with a pair of buffalo, one wagon, and one boat for each man. Also they could bring their wives, children, and relatives, to live in the Phukampra area, which was divided into 7 villages. Then the King returned to his city, Marookhanakorn.

20. The First Restoration.

At that time, the people of King Soomitrathamwongsa had repaired the Pagoda up to the second wall only, and the news of the repairing had been heard by King Julainthapatnakorn (in the South) and King Puttajulance Phromatas (in the North). Both Kings came to Phukampra with their wives. Amorn ascetic and Yothig ascetic came to the Phukampra too. The chief councilor of Phukampra informed King Soomitrathamawongsa of the guest arrivals. King Soomitrathamawongsa came down to Phukampra to greet the other 2 Kings and the 2 ascetics. All had requested the chest relics to come out, and they kept them in the golden footed tray outside the Pagoda.

King Julainthapatnakorn, King Puttajulance Phromatat and the 2 ascetics brought out a little stone pagoda which they had brought from Phupek Hill and set it there. Then King Soomitrathamawongsa invited the chest relics to stay on top of the little stone Pagoda. His chief councillor had brought a golden water pot for the King to pour on the chest relics as the great worshipping. All the soldiers brought out their silver buddha and the relics of Arahants, which they owned before, and put them around the pagoda. After the King had reached the top of the Pagoda, all people around the area played music to worship the Pagoda; also the celestial who guarded the Pagoda blew the musical pipes with great amusement. There was a sudden rain fall at the moment; if anyone wished to get wet they would get wet. The deaf and the leprosy people, who had joined this occasion, recovered to be normal people. The celestials threw the divine rice grains and flowers all over the area to worship the Pagoda. It was a great miracle.

21. King Soomitrathamawongsa Donates Treasure as a Worshipping to the Lord Buddha.

King Soomitrathamawongsa and his wife donated all kinds of treasure to worship the chest relics of Lord Buddha, such as golden treasure, jewelry, and rings. These were carried by his councilor inside the pagoda, and were placed among those the previous 5 Kings had donated to the pagoda. The King made a wish to be a King in the ChompoothawEEP (India, Pakistan & Tibet), and to have a chance to be a Buddhist on every birth for as long as for 5,000 years. During that time he wanted to be a Buddhist, an Arahant and to become a Buddha in the future.

King Soomitrathamawongsa, his wife, his people and the other 2 Kings worshipped the Pagoda by walking around the Pagoda clockwise 3 rounds. The King ordered his people to build up the square wall around the pagoda; and also gave 3,000 men to Lamlong to settle down in the area to serve and maintain the pagoda as long as for 5,000 years. At the same time, a pouring water dedication was made to those previous 5 Arahants. The 3 Kings said good bye to each other with a great feeling for this great occasion.

Later on King Soomitrathamawongsa visited a place where Lord Buddha used to visit, and stayed under the tree called "Rung" for which the Lord Buddha had once gone out for alms in the city of Srikoataboon. There the King built up a pagoda; the shape of the pagoda was very much similar to the pagoda at Phukampra. At this pagoda, the back bone relics of the Lord Buddha were kept by the 5 arahants; therefore, it was called "Phra That In Hung" (Hung = Rung), until these days.

22. The Ruined Marookhanakorn.

Having ruled the city Marookhanakorn for a while, King Soomitrathamawongsa asked his councilor to check if the city of Roi Et Gates still prospered. Before it used to be a big and prosperous city, but now the city was weaker and had been colonized by other. The population of the city was a little bit more than 100,000 people, 5,000 ascetics (sages), 5,000 monks, and 700 novices. Then King Soomitrathamawongsa departed Marookhanakorn and headed to live there and ruled Roi Et (101) Gates city ever since.

Later on at Marookhanakorn, King Toothakamini and Nirutharaja succeeded the throne respectively. King Nirutharaja was the last King of Marookhanakorn. The King himself did not believe in Buddhism, and had bad behaviors. He had no justice and stopped the custom of patronizing the pagoda; he took over the land of the Pagoda as well. Hence, some bad events happened to him and his city. Once a man brought the King a white ray fish, and the King ate it. There was an earthquake, and the city became a lake and several swamps (presumably, Boong Glong Noi, and Boong Khee Lek nowadays). The people of Marookhankorn had to move to other cities. The Kingdom of Marookhanakorn came to an end, and became ruined in jungle swamps there after. It is assumed that this was around 500 B.E.

The ruins of Marookhanakorn as presently located at Phra Klang Toong Village, covering those 3 swamps of Boong Glong, Boong Noi, Boong Khee Lek. Spreaded out at Baan Laksila; That Noi; Nathaam, and Boong He. These areas are in the North direction from Thatpanom Pagoda, with the evidence of several ruins.

The legend of Thatpanom Pagoda was mentioned in the golden leaflet by the 5 arahants and kept at Roi Et gate city. Then later on that golden leaflet was taken and kept in Srilanka for a long time. When Phra Buddha Kosajaan went to Sri Lanka, he copied it into a model of a golden leaflet and kept at Inthapathnakorn (Cambodia) for a long time. The Thatpanom Pagoda had been ruined and neglected without patronage for quite a long time.

23. The 2nd Restoration by Thai Laan Chang.

Thai Laan Chang had ruled the area along the Mekhong River for a long time and they had dispersed the previous dwellers, namely Kha & Khom, who moved southward. At one time, there was a royal man of Laanchang who came to set up a city on the south side of presentday Tha Khaek city. The city was named "Marookhanakorn", to suit the old ruined city; and the city was under the ruling of Laanchang empire. Later on, the city changed the name to be "Sri Koataboon Luang" and moved to the right bank of the Mekhong River, and been named Muang Nakorn, by adding Phrathatpanom to the name, it become Nakorn Panom at the moment.

From the year 2073-2103 B.E. was the reign of King Photisal, the son of King Wichularaja, who ruled the city of Luang Phra Bang. King Photisal married the daughter of King Inthapatnakorn. The Queen's grandfather gave King Photisal a legend of Phrathatpanom pagoda, that it kept the chest relics of Lord Buddha. After the King had read the story thoroughly, he had a strong believe in Buddhism and came down to repair the pagoda and made the pagoda look great. He built a uposatha hall, with

a lead roof, and searched for the previous servants of the pagoda; but he could not get up to 3,000 men. However he gave the additional to reach 3,000 men to serve the patronage of the Pagoda. He appointed the sons of 2 Kha to look after the pagoda; they were “Kha Cha Eng”, the older brother, and “Pun Huan Hin”, the younger brother. These 2 brothers had been his royal pages for long time. The King appointed these 2 Kha brothers to be the governor of these 3,000 men, who were supposed to serve the pagoda. After the King had appointed the 2 brothers, the King poured the water of dedication as a worshipping to the Pagoda. Also the King built a temple called “Wat Somsanook”, located at the north side of PhuKampra, together with some men who took care of the temple. These areas cover the area of Pla Suam Brook in addition to Thatpanom Pagoda. He ordered Pun Huan Hin” to bring the worshipping materials to the Pagoda at every occasion of end of lent for each year as a royal custom throughout his reign.

From year 2102-2114 B.E. King Chai Chetha, The son of King Phothisal, ruled the Kingdom of Laan Chang. In 2103 B.E., the King moved the capital to “Vientian” and named the city as “Vieng Chantaboori Srisatanak”. King Chai Chetha restored Buddhism, and built several Buddhist worship places, more than any other kings. He built a pagoda to cover an old pagoda, previously built by the previous king (King Chanthaboori Uay Luay), called “That Luang Vieng Chantana” (restored at 2111 B.E.). The Pagoda was built in the shape of downward bowl and the top was added to be higher. Also he built 3 Buddha figures. The 3 Buddha figures were named “Phra Ong Tuo”, 2 were in Vientian, and one was at Nam Mong

Temple, Amphur Tha Bor, Nong Khai. He also built and restored several temples.

Once he traveled to Marookhankorn and built a pagoda at the south side of Tha Khaek city, near the bank of the Mekhong River. The pagoda was called That Srikoat. The pagoda is locating at the the Mekhong River and presently is almost falling down to the River. Later on, he came down to worship the Pagoda of the chest relics of Lord Buddha at Thatpanom. He restored the temple, as well as the house for the monk to live. He also restored the system of patronizing the pagoda which his father had set up before, so that this worshipping place could be handed down to the next generation.

Then he went to the city of Ram & Laks, and on the way back home he restored the Pagoda of the Foot Print at Nong Khai (nowadays it is under the water of the Mekhong River).

24. The 3rd Restoration by Jao Phraya Nakorn.

From the year 2134-2165 B.E, was the reign of King Dhamikaraja, ruling Vientian, as the 6th King of the Vientian Kingdom. He was succeeded at the throne by Jao Phraya Nakorn, who and conquered Srikoataboon Luang (at the south of presentday Tha Khaek) or Marookha Nakorn. He came down to Thatpanom to restore, not only the Pagoda, but also the temple as below.

He restored the Thatpanom Pagoda, built up the glass wall, restored all around the 4 corners and 2nd inner wall, together with a gate in the middle of each direction. He built up an eating place for the monks at the 4 corners around the pagoda, and also built the dwelling place around the

area of 54 wah length and 52 wah width. You can still now see the remains of 2 eating places for the monks. However, the 2nd inner wall had been damaged a lot and was restored in 2492 B.E., together with the gates at the North and the East. The eating place at the East was too much damaged and had been repaired, but at the west side it was too difficult to repair and the temple had copied the model to have it installed somewhere else. Now it is restored at the north since 2500 B.E.

Up to the reign of King Phothisal Rajabootra, who had succeeded the throne, he had raised up the status of Thatpanom Temple to be the Royal patronized temple, by setting up the rule as, the King had to come to worship the Pagoda by himself for the annual robe presentation ceremony, except when it was allowed to be somebody else. This was set up as the custom and handed down to the next generation for the King. However, this custom was changed afterwards.

25. The 4th Restoration by Jao Rachakru Luang.

From 2187-2254 B.E., there was the King Sooriyawongsa, the son of King Tonkam. At that time Vientian was in a bad situation. His elder brother had to hide himself in the various places. At the outskirts of Vientian, there was a famous monk, named "Than Rajakru Ponesmek", who was an abbot of a temple. He was famous in meditation and had influence over the city people as well as the royal family. He was well respected not only by commoners but also by the royal family. At the time of the crisis of changing the King, the King's older brother's wife, (The older brother name "Jao Chompoo") gave birth to a boy named "Jao Ong Lor" who later on was named "Jao Nor Kasatrariya" They came to

hide themselves with "Jao Rajakru". Jao Rajakru raised him up and sent him away to live in Vietnam. The wife of the older brother of the King of Vientian had hidden herself at Phu Cha Ngor Kam Hill, the suburb of Vientian.

Later on "Jao Rajakru" was not trusted by the King, because somebody told the King that the monk could be dangerous for the throne. The monk himself was aware that if he lived on in Vientian, he would not be happy; therefore he asked the King for permission to move down south to restore the Thatpanom Pagoda with his supporters. There were 3,000 families who came down with him. Besides, he had invited the young prince "Jao Nor Kasat" and his mother to come to Thatpanom with him too.

In the year 2233 B.E., Jao Raja Kru had started to restore the Pagoda from the 2nd story upward. The inside top of the pagoda was covered by a mythical metal. With a now tiered umbrella, the work was completed in 2235 B.E. If you had seen the old pagoda covered by the new one, you would say that the old one restored by "Jao Rajakru" was much more beautiful than the new one.

After "Jao Raja Kru" had finished the restoration, he divided the people who came with him from Vientian into two groups, one group to stay at Thatpanom to look after the Pagoda and the other group to move southward along the Mekhong River with the monk to Banthai Petch, the capital of Cambodia. Having lived in Banthai Petch for a while, his followers had been taxed by the Cambodian government with a high rate. They could no longer bear it; therefore, they had to return to Laan Chang

Kingdom again. Once they moved up to the border of Lao and Cambodia at Chiang Taeng city, they built a Buddha figure called “Phra Ong Saen” as for a memory (It was brought down to Bangkok in the reign of King Rama 4th, nowadays at Wat Hong, Dhonburi). Later on he had moved up to “Don Khong”. Because he was a kind monk and full of goodness, wherever he went there would be a lot of people who respected him and became his followers. Not only the Laotian people, but also Cambodians, Kha, Guay, and jungle men as well, became his followers everywhere.

Jampasak City at that time was ruled by two ladies as the governors, named Pao and Paeng. They were sisters, descended from the Laan Chang Family, who moved down from the reign of King Soothasanaracha since 1,000 B.E.

Having seen the monk “Jao Rajakru” stay at Don Khong, with a lot of people who respected the monk and became his followers a lot, the 2 ladies started to respect the monk and they invited the monk to stay in Jampasak and appointed the monk to rule the city for them. However, the monk appointed his senior followers to look after the city instead. If there would be any punishment, they would use the method of teacher and student, which was not against the Buddhism discipline. Later on there were some people who did not obey their law, some were gangsters, some were thieves. He considered that if he would punish them with a harsh suppression, that would destroy his good reputation as a good & kind senior monk. He then asked his senior follower to go to invite Jao Nor Kasat, who at that time hid himself at the village called “Baan Pun Lum Somsanuk” (It is now at Bung Gaan, Nong Khai). He was 20 years

old then. After Jao Nor Kasat had arrived Jampasak city, he was appointed as “Jao Sroi Srisamoot Putanggoon”. The governor of Jampasak was no longer under the ruling of Vientian anymore. Jao Rajakru himself was promoted to the monastery title “Jao Rajakru Luang Ponesmek”. He was the King of the Buddhism monastery, as well as the royal teacher of the Jampasak royal family. He died when he was 90 with natural old age, on Wednesday, the 5th of waxing moon, the 7th month of 2263 B.E. Most people would always name him “Jao Rajakru Khee Hom” (or the fragrant shit monk). Jao Sroisrisamoot and his followers built a pagoda at Thatpanom area and his bones and ashes were buried there; and the Pagoda was named “Pagoda of Fragrant shit” (That Than Khee Hom) or “That Phra Arahant Phai Soi” (Located at the 2nd outer walls at the corner of north-west).

26. The 5th Restoration.

The years 2273-2279 B.E., Thatpanom was in the war. The servants of Thatpanom Pagoda left the town, 2/3 of the servants fled to Jampasak, and 1/3 of the servants stayed on in town. Vientian was ruled by “Jao Ong Lor” (or Phra Chai Ong Viet”, (At that time it was not mentioned of the war who fought against whom).

In the year 2301 B.E., the ruler of Jampasak was “Jao Chai Kumara”. He argued with his younger brother, named “Jao Dhamadhevo Ooparaja”; both were the sons of Jao Sroi Srisamoot. The Thatpanom servants returned home, but some stayed at Cha Nod village and others stayed at Tha Sa No. In the year 2321 B.E. there was a war between Vientian and Dhonburi due to Pra War and Pra Ta of Baan Doo and Baan Kair,

Jampasak, King Siriboonsaan or King Dhamma Dhewong. The war was lost to the Southerners, lead by Jao Phraya Jakri and Jao Phraya Soorasih (King Rama the 1st and his younger brother). The Thatpanom Pagoda servants were so frighten and escaped to other places and only 20-30 families returned to Thatpanom.

In the year 2349 B.E., King Anoorooth or King Anoowongs, the last ruler of the Vientian Kingdom, the son of King Siriboonsaan; together with the Nakorn Panom Governor (Phra Borom Raja Soota), and the Mookdahaan governor (PhraYaJanta Sooriyawongsa Ging); all agreed that Thatpanom Pagoda had been faded, ruined, and not been dignified for a long time.

Thatpanom Pagoda had been a great worshipping place for Buddhism of Laan Chang for a long time, and the former King had patronized, without stop for generations. Now it was time to restore the Pagoda. Vientian appointed "ThaoKhattiyawongsa" as the Chief to lead the restoration. The governor of Mookdahaan (Phraya Jantasooriyawongsa (Ging)) restored a church as a personal donation, which had engraved his name as evidence. Later on it was restored in the year 2464 B.E.

A road was made from the temple to the bank of the Mekhong River for 600 meters long. The road was made of bricks, and was 3 meters wide through the swamp; it is only 500 meters long nowadays. There were 2 figures of guardian Angeles sitting on their knees, and their hands were holding incense burners made from bricks. Nowadays they are moved to the outer gate close to the town market.

The road was started in the year 2350 by the King of Vientian, the governor of Nakornpanom and the governor of Mookdahaan around Wednesday, the 7th waning moon of the 5th month; and finished at the end of the year. They celebrated the restoration of the broken tiered umbrella that year too.

In the year 2355 B.E., King Anoorootharaja of Vientian, Phraborom (Soota), the governor of Nakornpanom, and Phraya Jantasooriyawongsa, the governor of Mookdahaan came to Thatpanom and celebrated the restored chanting hall.

Also in the year 2356, King Anoorootharaja of Vientian came down to Thatpanom to celebrate the new tiered umbrella, according to the telling of the older people.

From the year 2369-2371 B.E. there was a war between Vientian and Bangkok. When Bangkok had conquered, they swept a lot of people to Bangkok. Most of them were frighten and had to hide themselves in the jungle; there by Buddhism was neglected and nobody patronized the Pagoda.

Thirty years later there was a war between Thailand and Vietnam; people moved from the left to the right side of the Mekhong River.

In the year 2430, the chanting hall fell down and there were only the ruins of bricks and cement left. The chanting hall was built by the previous King of Luang Phra Baang, King Photisaan. It was so sad for all Buddhist.

27. The 6th Restoration.

There were 3 famous monks who were good at mediation practices from Ubon Rachathani. They came to stay around the Thatpanom Pagoda in the year 2444 B.E. They stayed near a pond called "Sra Pang" or "Ta Pang" located at the South West of the Pagoda. The 3 monks were, Ajarn Tha, Ajarn Sao and Ajarn Mun. After they had worshipped the Pagoda, they had a strong belief that Thatpanom Pagoda was a real place that kept the chest relics of Lord Buddha but they were so sad that the Pagoda was full of damage, with a lot of bricks & cement scattered around, and nobody taking good care of it.

If there were any leader to come and restore the pagoda, it would be great to inherit the Buddhism. Then they asked the senior citizens of Thatpanom to go to Ubon Rachathani and invite a monk name "Phra Kru Wiroj Ratanobol" or "Rod Nantra" of Wat Thoongsrimuang. At that time, he was only ranked as "Phra Kru Udornpitak Kanadetch".

Phra Kru Wiroj was a monk who was famed for handicraft, artistic and construction work both in wood carving and masonry. Besides, he was a good administrator and a psychologist as well. He was well respected, not only by commoners, but also by monks. He had a lot of followers and was beloved by everyone.

Phra Kru Wiroj accepted the invitation and came to Thatpanom in a short time. However, when he arrived at the temple, he conferred with both the monks and the villagers. The villagers would allow him to repair the ground around the pagoda and the pavement to the pagoda only, but not allow him to repair the Pagoda, because they were afraid of the

celestials guarding the pagoda, as they had seen several events in the pass. The monk did not agree with the villagers and said that if he could not repair the pagoda, from the bottom to the top, he would not do the restoration. The villagers did not agree with the monk and gave up the meeting. On that day after the meeting was over, there was a celestial possessed into a man and threaten that there would be a disaster to anyone who was against the restoration. The villagers were so frighten that they had to ask the monk, Phra Kru Wiroj, to start the restoration.

He started restoration from the 14 day of Waxing moon of the 1st month and people came to join the celebration of restoration on the full moon of the 3rd month. There were thousands of people from all directions who came to join the celebration. At that time there was a chaotic crisis caused by a mad man in Ubon Rachathani who had announced that stones would become silver and silver would become stones, pigs would become a giant, and the green pumpkin would become a pig. Hence people brought silver to donate to the temple and the monk gained a lot of funds for the restoration.

The restoration started from cleaning up the pagoda; such as cutting down some trees which had grown on the wall of the pagoda; removing some dirt along the wall of the pagoda, and putting some clay to repair with new painting; decorating with some colored glass, and adding some gold guild on the top. They used 300,000 gold leaflets; used silver and gold to make the canopy. They used silver weighing 300 Baht, Gold weighing over 50 Baht, and used 200 stones and used decorating stones on 12 boxes. Also they made a copper bell, weighing 240 Kilograms for worshipping the pagoda.

In the year 2449 B.E., Phra Kru Wiroj built up a gate in front the Temple. At the end of the year, Prince Damrong Rachanooparp, who was the minister of interior Department then, visited Thatpanom Pagoda while he was on duty tour to Udon Thani, Nong Khai, Nakorn Panom & Sakol Nakorn. He traveled through Renunakorn and stayed overnight in Thatpanom, at the south side of Thatpanom Pagoda, at the 2 houses of the monks, where nearby there were two Bhodhi trees. Then the Prince returned to Bangkok.

After Prince Damrong had returned to Bangkok he ordered the office of Amphur District from Renunakorn to be moved to Thatpanom in B.E. (R.S.126), and also sent two bells as a worshipping to Thatpanom Pagoda. These 2 bells are still there at the temple to these days.

28. Restoration of the Buddha Image Hall and the Outer Wall.

In the year 2454 B.E. the spiritual teacher, Phra Tha, the abbot and Khun Panompanarak (House Pimpanont) and Phra Anoorak Jedi, Muen Silpasmathan, the district chiefs, had a meeting and agreed that the Buddha Image hall was fallen down into broken bricks and looked like a waste. Restoration was really needed. They gave the restoration work to a Vietnamese Artist by using the leftover funds from Phra Kru Wiroj, plus the funds from the public help.

When the job was done, the Buddha Image Hall looked like a mixed breed of Vietnamese and Thai style Arts. It has low roofing, and the pattern drawing was mostly Vietnamese; the gables were in dragons tangled with precious stones; the gable finial was rather coarse; and the ceiling was only 4.00 meters high. However, the ceiling was raised up for the ceiling and the new roof was repaired.

In the year 2456-2459 B.E., Phra Palad Janthee, the monk of Kantaravichai, Mahasakram, the leader of pilgrims, had come to Thatpanom Pagoda, and had a strong belief in restoration. They had persuaded several monks, novices and the villagers to restore the outer wall. Previously they were made of red stones and were a bit higher than 1.00 meter. They built the outer wall with bricks and clay for 6 hands high all around the corner directions, East, South, West & North. They also made 4 gates, one gate at the center of each direction; it took 4 years to finish.

In 2458 B.E., the abbot, and spiritual teacher, Phra Tha, was very old; therefore, all the monks invited Phra Kru Mee to come and live at Thatpanom temple. He joined Phra Palad Junthee to restore the outer wall. In 2463 Phra Kru Mee was promoted as a spiritual teacher; his title was "Phra Kru Silapiwat", the Chief District of Amphur Thatpanom monastery. The monk's houses were made in his reign at the South West and North-West of the pagoda. The spiritual teacher, Phra Tha, died in that year, but the restoration was kept going.

In 2465-2466 B.E., the Dhamma hall was raked down and the new one was built on the same site; but a brick wall was added to the East side for the width of 14 meters and 19.5meter long, costing 5,000 Baht. The hall was made by the labor of monks & novices as well as the villagers, with the funding from the traders and Buddhist of several provinces. In 2466 B.E., there was a big flood higher than the road level, in front of the temple.

In the year 2467 B.E., they widened the road by adding 1 meter width to each side from the Temple to the market place; and they built a

Tower Gate at the East side end of the road. The road was made of bricks for 340 meters long. The road, the Tower Gate and the house for passerby was completed in 2476 B.E. and cost 8,000 Baht. The labor was free of charges. At that year, Khun Aram Rasdakorn, a retired civilian, donated the funds for 2,200 Baht to start off for fund raising; therefore, the road was named after him "Koosolrasdakorn Road". Besides, that year there was a big flood; the water level was higher than the previous year a little bit. It caused a lot of damages to the rice farming.

In the year 2469 B.E., Phra Kru Silapiwat, Luang Pitak (Seegatoom Jantharasakha), the sheriff, the district chief and the villagers agreed to rake the former Buddha Image Hall. (It was restored by Phraya Janthasooriya, the governor of Mookdahaan). Since it had been much damaged, the hall was restored with new bricks and with single deck roofing; but with the old pattern from the old wall.

In the year 2471 B.E., the water level of the flooding was higher than any other years; it flooded over the road level by of 80 centimeter high; and also the nearby area and only the hill of Thatpanom pagoda was not flooded. Other areas such as the inner lawn and the outer wall, as well as the lawn in front the Buddha Image Hall, was flooded too, through the drainage tube. At the end of the year, Phra Kru Wiroj of Ubon Rachathani came to worship the pagoda. He had repaired the inner lawn with little stones mixed with cement to pave the floor and it took 6 months to finish.

From 2472-2475 B.E., they built the house for the abbot at the outside wall of the pagoda to the south of the pagoda; the lower floor used brick post and the upper floor used wooden post (the name of the

wood was Teng Rang). The wall was made of bamboo and paved with clay, the floor used real wood. It had 6 rooms. At the center of the house there was a high roof, labored by monks and novices, and it cost 1,000 Baht.

In the year 2476-2477 B.E., there was a restoration of the outer lawn (outside the 2nd wall), and it was paved with cement. The 2 Buddha Image Halls were restored too.

In the year 2478-2479 B.E., the Reclining Buddha Hall was rebuilt at the same location, located at the north side of the pagoda; and the monk's house was built at the North West corner of the Reclining Buddha Hall. The abbot Phra Kru Silapirat (Mee), who had been ill for a long time, passed away on 31st May, 2479 B.E. There was no new abbot yet, but the temple was ruled by the monk committee and they had cut down the coconut trees around the temple. Phra Kru Silapirat had been the abbot since 2458 B.E., and lasted for 21 years when he passed away; his cremation was made at the end of the year.

29. Thatpanom Pagoda at the Present.

The former abbot, Phra Kru Silapirat, passed away in 2480 B.E.; and he was honored by the King, who gave him a royal cremation ceremony. Thereafter the monk committee, together with the villagers, appointed Phra Panom Jetiyanoorak (Kaew Utoomala) to be the next abbot. His latest title was Phra Tepratana Molee. He was the close student of the former abbot. He had been a monk in 2471 B.E. and had studied the Dhamma with the abbot for 2 years. He went to study in Bangkok and had received a certificate of Pali Dhamma, the 4th Grade. He had been

sent to teach Pali Dhamma at Prae Provice and received the 5th Grade certificate of Pali Dhamma. After the death of the abbot, Phra Kru Silapirat, the monks, and the villagers asked him back to Thatpanom Temple. Later on he received the 6th Grade Certificate of Pali Dhamma.

30. The General Restoration for the Present.

Phra Panom Jetiyanoorak, had been the abbot of Thatpanom temple since 2480 B.E., He was a native of Thatpanom village. In the first year of his administration, there was some legal suit case between the temple and other villagers on the ownership of some lands. The temple was the plaintiff, some villagers were defendants, however, the temple won the law suit, which lasted for 3 years and ended in 2482 B.E. The temple gained possession of the land right back as before. Nai Lek Saenyear was the representative of the temple and Khoon Anoosorn Goranee (Tha Nanakornpanom) was the attorney.

The cloister construction had been started in 2481 B.E. around the pagoda on the outer area, and finished on Friday the 15th July, 2491 B.E.; lasting for 11 years. There were 107 rooms all around the Pagoda, and 3 gates. At the front center entrance, there were 3 gates, one in the middle, and 2 side gates as a reserve; it cost 500,000 Baht. The cloister was built along the old walls all around the pagoda. Funds were from donations of all Buddhist and from the annual celebration of Thatpanom Pagoda.

In the year 2492 B.E., restoration was made on the 2nd inner wall, because it had been there for 335 years and looked very much damaged. The height of the wall was about the same as the height of the old one. The wall itself was solid, there was a gate at the center of each direction,

with the open gate as an extra one at the east direction. In addition at each corner (4 corners) were added the bell towers; and on top of each wall, was added a boundary marking slab. The total length of the 2nd inner wall was 146 meters long, and it cost 115,000 Baht. The wall restorations were made by Thai labor and a Thai Architect, as well as the restoration of the front center gate, which was completed in 2494 B.E.

In 2493 B.E., the temple built a stairway on the south side, outside the cloister, together with a big tank to keep the rainwater, and they cost 15,000 Baht. They also made 4 bells to keep at the Bell Towers around the 2nd inner wall; the 4 bells cost 2,500 Baht from the donations from villagers for the brass.

In 2494 B.E., there were some constructions as follows:

- 1) Enlarged the half circle in front of the temple to have a diameter of 50 meters, starting from the center front gate, and costing 48,800 Baht.
- 2) Enlarged the road from the temple to the market place, each side for 5.00 meters wide, total width 15 meters, and 304 meters long, costing 94,440.00 Baht.
- 3) Asphalted the road for 5.00 meters wide and 354 meters long, costing 28,590.74 Baht
- 4) Built up a stairway, in the north direction of the cloister, costing 12,000 Baht.
- 5) Repaired a former well called "Phra Intra well" by redigging, and its wall were made of bricks, with 300 meters deep, costing 9,000 Baht. The funds for these constructions cost 1,000 Baht. The funds came from

the government budget of 200,000 Baht, proposed by Nai Poo Noawarongsi, Nakornpanom representative, in addition to the Temple fund for the asphalted road of 17,430 Baht. Total of the 5 items cost 712,430.75 Baht.

In 2495 B.E., they made a road inside the cloister at the north direction, and laid up the floor of the 2nd inner wall with cement tiles.

In 2495 B.E., there were constructions as follows:

1) Built up a monk's house along the Nong Trapung pond as a 2 storey house, 30 meters long, 6 meters wide., each storey 10 rooms, total 20 rooms and the roof made of Aluminum, costing 73,089.00 Baht.

2) Built up a guest house, 2 storey, 5 meters wide, 9.00 meters long., with a balcony. Inside the house there was a kitchen and a bath room too. The house cost 30,850 Baht.

3) Made a pavement at the west of the cloister.

4) Made a basement embracing the Bodhi Tree. The lower level was made in 3 rooms together with a soil dam. The government had given the funds for 300,000 Baht to the temple; 50,000 Baht for restoration of the Buddha Image Hall, 150,000 Baht for the canopy umbrella, and the rest was for the restoration of the 2nd Buddha Image Hall restoration, the gable finial, the pattern decoration under the gable finial and the basement of the Buddha Image. The cost was 50,000 Baht. There was canopy umbrella celebration in 2497 B.E.

In addition, in the year 2496 B.E., there was restoration of the Buddha Image Hall, by taking off the old roof and adding a wall 2.00 meters high. The total height was 6.00 meters. They made the roof into 3 levels,

with painted ceiling, and costing 70,000 baht. The funds came from the government budget, backed up by Nai Poo Naawarongsi, the representative of Nakornpanom. Besides they made a house called "Sala Panom 2" at the north side of the Bodhi Tree, 12.60 x 19.00 meters, by mixing the old with the new materials; The cost was 10,000 Baht. It was made of zinc plates. An addition to the abbot's house, 2 storey at the rear, on the west side of the pagoda, cost 50,000 Baht. Of most importance for Phra Thatpanom temple in that year, the temple had been raised up in status from the first grade temple to be the royal monastery temple, patronized by His Majesty the King of Thailand. This was proposed by Nai Liang Chaiyakarn, the famous representative of the Isaan region at the time.

In 2497 B.E., there was a royal canopy celebration, supported by the Thai Government. The old canopy was taken down and replaced by the new one, which was made of pure gold. All the chief monks of Division 3 and Division 4, totalling of 15 chiefs, were invited to come to join the celebration of the new golden royal canopy. Not only the chief monks of Dhammayutika sect, but also the chief monks of the Mahanikaya sect, and the chief monks from Laos (Luang Phra Baang and from Park Sae), were all invited to come and join the celebration for the new golden royal canopy. It was the greatest Sangha celebration in the history of the Isaan region.

There was Buddhism from both sides of the Mekhong River; from the left bank of the River was Laotian Buddhism, from the right bank of the River was Thai Buddhism. All came to join the celebration as a rare

occasion to worship the Thatpanom Pagoda, where the Chest relics of Lord Buddha were kept, which our ancestors had handed down for generations. The government had ordered various departments to open up a booth, representing their responsibilities and demonstrating to the audiences.

It was the first time that the people knew that the King of Thailand would come to celebrate the ceremony of raising up the golden royal canopy to the top of Thatpanom Pagoda. They were so glad and excited for this rare occasion. King Poomipol Adoolyadej, the present 9th King of Bangkok Dynasty, is the royal patronage to the Buddhist religion. Back in the old days, the King of Laan Chang Kingdom, who regarded this worshipping to Thatpanom pagoda as a very important custom came to worship the pagoda by himself. However, all people were disappointed, because the King could not come to join the ceremony, because of the unpeaceful situation of the country; the government sent the Marshall, Luang Sorayooth, the minister of culture, as a representative to be the chairman of the ceremony instead.

The Chairman of Sangha, Phra Pimoldhamma joined the ceremony, set on the 14th waxing moon of the 3rd month, the year of the Horse. The time was set for 10.45 am. to be the auspicious time for fireworks salutation. Bell ringing was heard all over the region of the Isaan. In the 3rd & the 4th region, Buddhist chanting, "Chaiya Mongkol Katha" had been prayed. The golden royal canopy was raised up to the top of the pagoda slowly; among the Buddhist was admiration and they were delighted with tears.

The golden royal canopy weighed 7.00 kilograms, and when added with golden like metal, weighed 20 kilograms. The total weight was 110 kilograms, the height was 4.50 meters, and the lowest ring diameter was 1.00 meter. There was gold left over for 1 kilogram. It costed 160,000 baht for the labor of the handicraft man from the Fine Arts Department, which was administered by the Treasury Department. Before the celebration of the new golden royal canopy, they had repaired the floor of the Buddha Image Hall. The abbot had found a golden Buddha by accident inside the hall. The golden Buddha image was decorated with diamond and emerald stones around the robe, as well as on the basement and on the topknot. Inside the topknot there were 2 pieces of relics, called "King Soowanaworawisoothi Uttamawiroj Chotiratanalangarn", made on Thursday, about noon time of the 4th waning moon, the 12th month, the year of Ma Seng, the smaller snake, the Chulasakaraja 1043 or the year of 2222 B.E. It was in the reign of King Sooriyawongsa of Vientian Kingdom or the reign of King Narai Maharaj of Ayuthaya Kingdom. The total weight of the Buddha Image was around 6 kilograms, and the weight of the gold must be 4.00 kilograms at least. At present, it is kept at the Nakornpanom Financial department. Thousands of people came to worship the new discovered Buddha Image, lasting for a month. After that, the Golden Buddha was kept at Nakornpanom Financial Department.

On the very last night of the golden royal canopy celebration, a miracle happened around 11.00pm., the 1st waning moon. Whilst people were enjoying the entertainment there was a lighted object traveled in the

air from the north to the front of the temple, not too high from the ground. The beam of the light was about 1 meter long. The light was changing from yellow, green, and white, and dropping like fireworks. People were so delighted and excited, and most people grasped their hands and saluted to the miracle of Thatpanom Pagoda.

Before they took down the bamboo scaffold, they painted the pagoda in white. There was little construction for that year because of small income. They built a house near the Bodhi tree area, and repaired the monk's house including a road from the monk's house at the south to the "Nong Trapang" pond.

In 2498 B.E. there were constructions as below:

1) Making the north wall, at the east direction along the road in front of the temple, from the corner of the cloister to the road that lead to "Don Klang Village" to be 130 meters long.

2) Digging up a pond, at the south side of the cloister, which was the present day palm woods, and built up a soil dam at the west.

3) Redigging the pond "Nong Trapang" at the East direction. The funds were donated by the vocational department of Government for 10,000 Baht, and the temple paid 30,000 Baht in addition for the work around the pond.

4) The temple prepared the construction material, such as the wood and tools, to build a school building. The school proposed to teach Buddhism and had 2 storeies.



The Last Notation.

Phrathatpanom Pagoda is the great ancient Pagoda, a holy place for a long longtime; a place where the Chest relics of Lord Buddha have been kept. It had been an important pagoda for the Laan Chang Kingdom since the olden days; it gives you the historical knowledge of the arts and custom of the old days. The people and the King of Laan Chang Kingdom had a great respect and had patronized the Pagoda, and it meant a lot for Buddhist spirit. It is a rare treasure in Thailand. We, as Buddhist, should support and maintain this national treasure for our children and the future of Buddhism.

Phra Thatpanom Pagoda is the evidence of our ancestry and prosperity for both material and soul. Therefore it should be accepted as the great treasure of the World too. Besides, Thatpanom Pagoda is a great place that can bring people's mind to merit making, and to respect the Buddhist Dhamma. It is the center of merit making for people who live in the Mekhong River region. Each annual celebration, these people come to worship the pagoda together, and they exchange their good culture for both material and spiritwise. We Buddhism should not forget this.

Wat Phrarhatpanom Woramahawihan is a place where Phra Thatpanom Pagoda is located, It had been a first grade temple, patronized by His Majesty the King since 2493 B.E. In the reign of King Rama the 6th, as for the Phra Intra well of this temple, the water from this well has been sent to join the swearing in of the King ever since, up to the present King. Every year, His Majesty the King sends some flowers, incense, candle,

golden flowers and fragrance to worship the Pagoda; besides, Wat Phrathatpanom has received the Royal candles for the entering lent period since 2496 B.E.

Wat Phra Thatpanom has been a temple since the old days; its space is about 59 Rai for the moment. There are monks and novices staying here from 90 to 100 always. There are boy servants looking after the monks as many as 30 to 40 plus some white robed female lay followers. The temple also teaches Dhamma and Pali language; on the temple grounds, there are two schools. The one on south side is a school for the grades 1-7; the one on the north side is a school for the grades 8 to 12. There is a class teaching meditation which is widely open for both monks and commoners; however, the class room, the living quarters, and the utility are still small. Should anyone like to donate funds to the temple, then it would be greatly appreciated; and you are deserving to be a good Buddhist who has pratonized your religion for the good future of our nation.

Finally, may the Buddhism shine the Dhamma to the world forever. May the King of Thailand, who supports Buddhism strongly, have a long life and stay in his throne for good. May all people's minds be full of Dhamma, May all be happy and may the rain fall into our land in time properly.

The Important Events.

1) On 13th November 2498 B.E., King Poomipol Adulyadet and Queen Sirikit and their civilian officers came to worship Phra Thatpanom pagoda. They fed the senior monks, 10 of the monks had been witness for

the worship. The King and Queen poured the water to the Pagoda as well as worshipping the Pagoda with candles, lighting them up and walking around the Pagoda clockwise for 3 rounds. He stayed at the East corner of the Pagoda and laid a pink cloth around the pagoda. He greeted his people around the pagoda area, then walked through the north gate, the west, then on to the south gate. He went back to the Buddha Image Hall to say goodbye to those senior monks, and donated the funds of 10,000 Baht. He had lunch at the Thatpanom Civil Service office and returned to Nakorn Panom

2) The 1st November 2503 B.E., the Supreme Patriarch, Somdet Pra Ariyawongsakotayan (Kitti Sopon), came to Wat Phrathatpanom to give the annual robe presentation ceremony (Kathin). He arrived Wat Phrathatpanom at 10.00 a.m. (coming from Nakorn Panom). He had lunch at 11.00 a.m. at a monk's cell called Phrathat Rasamee, and gave the robe presentation ceremony at 1.00 p.m. inside the Dhamma Hall. There were 300 people who came from Bangkok, with 7 buses. M.L. Pooy Seniwong, one of his followers, donated a Buddha Image measured at the base for 90 centimeter wide. They stayed overnight in Phra Thatpanom and returned to Bangkok by airplane via Ubon Ratchathani on the 2nd November, 2503 B.E.

3) King Poomipol Adulyadet and Queen Sirikit visited Wat Phrathatpanom on the 6th May, 2506 B.E. on the occasion of Visakhapuja. Their Majesties, the King and Queen, traveled by the Royal Airplane to Nakorn Panom Airport, and changed to helicopter to come down to Thatpanom, and stayed at the Thatpanom civil service office. The King

and Queen gave the lunch to the entire group of monks of the temple. For that occasion, the abbot of Thatpanom temple invited the other senior monks to join the ceremony. They were the Ecclesiastical Provincial Governors of Sakol Nakorn and Nakorn Panom. The Abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom, Phra Thepratanamolee, gave the King a Dhamma lesson. The King and Queen stayed in a temporary tent on the East side of the pagoda and poured some fragrant water over the Pagoda, then walked around the pagoda for 3 rounds (clockwise).

Besides, the King and Queen planted a Raja Pluek tree (Koon tree) at the North lawn. They walked around the cloister to the West, then South and came to the East side of the Buddha Image Hall. He greeted his people around the area and left the temple to go to board the helicopter at Thatpanom School to head back to Nakorn Panom.

4) The King's mother, Somdet Phra Rajchonnanee Srisungwan, on her visiting tour to the border line police, came to worship the Pagoda on the 27th October, 2507 B.E. She arrived by helicopter; the abbot waited at the center gate to greet her. On her arrival, all the monks, chanted with a blessing. After having seated for a moment, she walked to the pagoda and greeted some people on the way. She worshipped the pagoda with 2 sets of tables which contained a little golden Buddha image and a standing up Buddha Image, with the blessing style of Sookhothai and with the engraving symbolic of the King "P.P.R.". She planted 2 Koon trees, one at the North lawn and the other at the West lawn. She donated some clothes to the elderly people and departed to Bangkok.

The Fallen Pagoda.

1. Phrathatpanom Pagoda had fallen down on Monday, the 11th August, 2518 B.E., or on the lunar calendar Monday, the 4th waxing moon, the 9th month, the year of a Rabbit. The Pagoda had fallen toward the East direction for the entire pagoda; and it had damaged the nearby places such as the 1st and 2nd inner walls, and the Buddha Image Hall at the North and South corners. Also damage were the rice worshipping tower, the Dhamma lecture Hall and also the central Buddha Image Hall (Hor Phra Kaew). The golden Royal canopy had fallen down to the floor of the East side cloister.

It caused a little damage to the central Buddha Image Hall (Hor Phra Kaew), though the causes of the falling of the Pagoda were from the very old age of the pagoda. The basement of the 1st vertical section was only 8 meters high and was much ruined. It was unable to bear the top weight of the pagoda in addition to the heavy rain which had continued for several days together with the strong wind, until it fell at the end.

2. On the 8th September, 2518 B.E., the fine arts Department Officers cleared the ruins and moved the fallen objects of the Pagoda. They used 50 laborers for restoration and it lasted 170 days to complete the restoration. During the digging up and moving of the ruined objects, they found several treasures, counting as much as to 14,700 pieces. Some of these treasures were put back into the new Pagoda; some have been kept in the museum of Wat Phrathatpanom.

3. On the 25th September, 2518 B.E., there was a worshipping ceremony to pay homage to the spirit of the previous ancestors who patronized the pagoda, as well as to the celestials who guarded the Pagoda. They invited the Chest relics of Lord Buddha to temporarily stay at Phrathatpanom Model, which was put at the North direction of the pagoda. This would be convenient for the construction of the new Pagoda. Until the new one was finished, then the relics would be relocated. For this occasion, M.L. Kirkrit Pramot, the Prime Minister, was the chairman from the government and Pra Pimoldham (Arsbha Mahathera) was the chairman of the monastery.

4. On the 17th-18th October, 2518 B.E., the Chest relics were discovered at the middle section of the fallen pagoda, the Chest relics layed on the fallen ruins and above the ground level only 3 meters high. The Chest relics were very complicatedly kept in sequence as follows:

The Chest relics, of 8 pieces, were kept inside a clear glass casket.

(No. 1)

- 1) The clear glass casket was kept inside a golden casket. (No. 2)
- 2) The golden casket was kept inside a silver casket. (No. 3)
- 3) The silver casket was kept inside a golden throne. (No. 4)
- 4) The golden throne was kept inside a stone pagoda. (No. 5)
- 5) The stone pagoda was kept inside a small bronze house. (No. 6)
- 6) The small bronze house was kept at the 2nd vertical section of the Pagoda, which was about 14.20 meters high from the ground level.

No 2-6 were made at the time of Jao Racha Kru Luang Ponesmek of Vientian, 2236-3345 B.E.

5. There was a great celebration for the discovery of the chest relics of Lord Buddha on the 26th December, 2518 B.E. through the 1st January, 2519 B.E. (lasting 7 days). King Poomipol Adulyadet and the crown Prince joined the ceremony, as well as the Supreme Patriarch, who joined the praying and the blessing.

The Construction of the New Pagoda.

6. The new Pagoda was built and covered the old pagoda, which fell down in ruined brick and was only 6.00 meters high. The structure was made with reinforced concrete. The pagoda shape and appearance was made in a square shape like the old one. The height is 53.60 meters. The width of its base is 13.00 meters on each side, and the width, above the height of 64 centimeters on each side is 12.33 meters.

The constructions is divided into 2 sections:

- 1) The Structure.
- 2) The Decorations.

1. The Structure was made with reinforced concrete by the Italian Thai Co. Ltd, for the value of 4,450,000 Baht. The company started to build the foundation pile on the 12th May 2519 B.E. However, the ceremony of the foundation pile was on 28-29 May 2519 B.E.- with Phra Thepratana Molee, the abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom as the Chairman and joined by the Governor of Nakornpanom, Nai Pisarl Moolasastrsatorn and the Amphur Thatpanom committee together with the local people.

2. The Decoration around the Pagoda was made a year later, after the Pagoda structure had been completed. The restoration committee

had assigned the decoration job to the Fine Arts Department, and they made the decoration strictly to the old patterns.

The Fine Arts Department divided the decoration into 4 sections as below:

1) The 1st section, or the basement section, decoration started from the footage section up to the top level of the gate which was about 7.70 meters high. Nai Mali Koagsantia, the chief of history study in the Department of Fine Arts, was in charge for the job. They had started the job on 7th June, 2521 B.E. and completed the job on February 2522 B.E.; the decoration cost 1,255,000 Baht.

2) The 2nd section, starting from the top gate of the 1st section of the pagoda to the top gate of the 2nd section, was 6.20 meters high. Ajarn Swasdi Suntisook of the Fine Arts School was in charge. The decorations were involved with patterns and gilding. The work was started on 20th June, 2521 B.E. and completed at the end of February, 2522 B.E.; it costed 1,526,000 Baht.

3) The 3rd section, starting from the top gate of the 2nd section to the top of the 3rd section, was the highest section, which was 39.70 meters high. Ajarn Praves Limparangsi, from the Handicraft Division of the Fine Arts Department, was in charge. He assigned the job to a contractor, P.W. Ligchit Construction Co., for 2,580,000 Baht. The company started the job on 15th December, 2520 B.E., and completed the job on November, 2521 B.E. The decorations were made and reinforced; the shape, appearance and patterns were made as the old one for every detail of the restoration of the 2483-2484 B.E.

4) As for the construction around the pagoda, the 1st inner wall around the Pagoda, and the 2nd inner wall of the East side and a center gate were built up. The lawn was paved around the pagoda with marble and the verandah of the Buddha Image Hall was repaired. For these jobs, Nai Soowit Laksamipooti, from the Architecture Division of the Fine Arts Department, was in charge. P.W.C. Ligchit construction Co. was in charge for the job, and it cost 2,040,000 Baht.

The total construction cost for the new Pagoda from 16th September, 2518 B.E. to 31st January, 2522 B.E. was 14,472,957.49 Baht. The funds from government budget were 5,000,000 Baht.

Constructions in Thatpanom Temple.

Right after the new Pagoda had been completed, there were several constructions and restorations being made. Details of these will be exempted from mention, as it is ongoing for upkeeping the temple.

The Grand Royal Storing of the Chest Relics Ceremony.

The Thai government arranged the grand royal storing of the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha ceremony on 21st March to 23rd March, 2522 B.E. The schedules were set as below:

On 21st March, the Chest Relics were carried around town on a car through the roads of Thatpanom, and the Chest Relics were kept in a temporary shelter, located at the North West of the pagoda, so that all Buddhist could worship the Chest Relics. In the evening, there were candles lit up and walking around the Pagoda, as well as several kinds of entertainment.

On 22nd March, Somdej Phra Ariyawongsakotayan, the Supreme Patriarch, came to join the ceremony of raising up the royal canopy to the top of the Pagoda.

On 23rd March, His Majesty the King Poomipol Adulyadet, and Her Majesty, the Queen Siriket, came to put the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha to be kept inside the Thatpanom Pagoda for good.

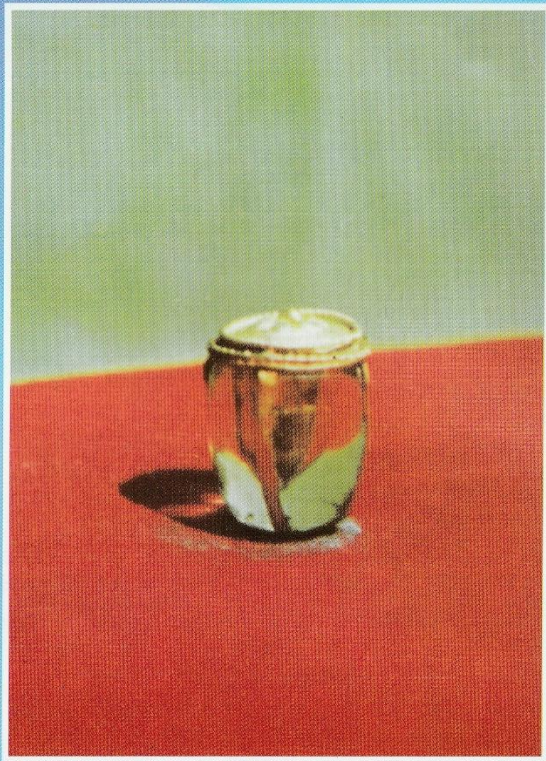


The Chest relics were very complicatedly kept in sequence as follows:

The Chest relics, of 8 pieces, were kept inside a clear glass casket. (No. 1)

1. The clear glass casket was kept inside a golden casket. (No. 2)
2. The golden casket was kept inside a silver casket. (No. 3)
3. The silver casket was kept inside a golden throne. (No. 4)
4. The golden throne was kept inside a stone pagoda. (No. 5)
5. The stone pagoda was kept inside a small bronze house. (No. 6)
6. The small bronze house was kept at the 2nd vertical section of the Pagoda, which was about 14.20 meters high from the ground level.

No 2-6 were made at the time of Jao Rachakruluang Ponesmek of Vientian, 2236-2245 B.E.



As for the clear glass casket, the 8 pieces of the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha were kept inside this casket. The casket was 2.1 centimeters high. Its diameter was 1.8 centimeters, and it was made from a glittering clear stone. On the very first day that the chest relics were discovered, there was a fragrant smell of Jantana oil to come out from the casket. This casket is a holy object and is the original one, brought by Phra MahaKassapa, the Arahant and joined by the 5 Kings on the 8th B.E.

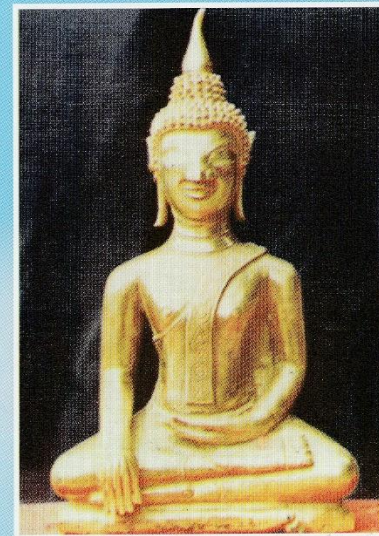


The Emerald Buddha.

Height = 17.7 centimeters.

Width = 9.9 centimeters, at the base of the sitting position.

Built = Under the Vientian reign, and was discovered under the inner wall of the pagoda when it fell down in 2518 B.E.



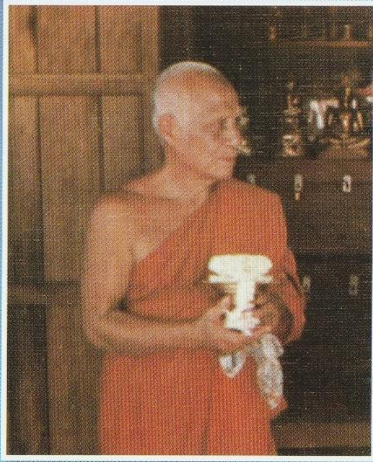
The Golden Buddha.

Height = 20 centimeters.

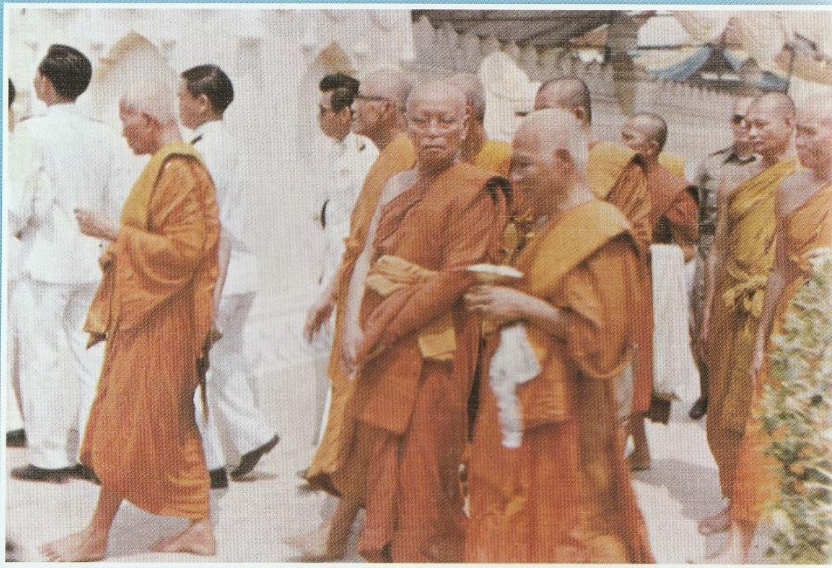
Width = 11 centimeters, at the base of the sitting position.

Weight = 4.7 kilograms of pure gold.

Built = Under the Vientian/Laan Chang Reign, and was discovered under the inner wall of the pagoda when it fell down.

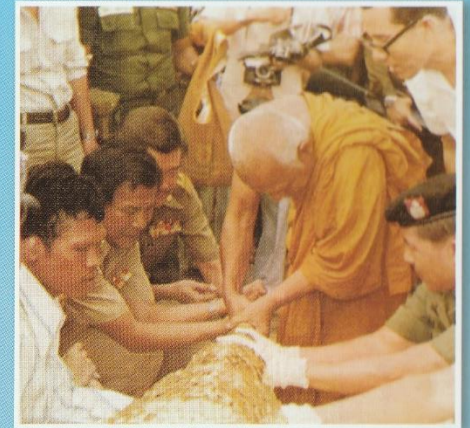


On 21st March, 2522 B.E., at 13:00, the abbot of Wat Phra-Thatpanom, Phra Thepratana-molee, together with Nai Somporn Klinpongsa, the Governor of Nakornpanom, invited the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha to have a procession around town of Thatpanom.

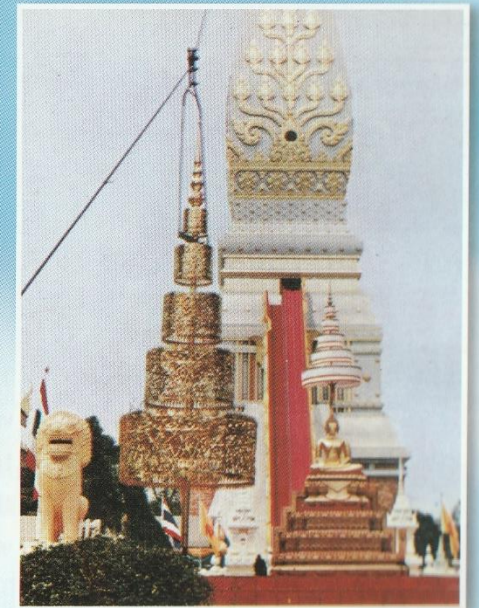


The senior monks of Thailand and the senior civilians were processing the parade of the chest relics of Lord Buddha around the pagoda for 1 round. Thereafter the Chest Relics were invited to be on the Royal vehicle, in front of the temple.

Phra Thepratana-molee, the Abbot of Wat Phra Thatpanom, and Nai Decho Sawananont, the Director of the Fine Arts Dept, and Nai Somporn Klinpongsa, the Governor of Nakorn Panom and other people were involved with the assembly of the Royal canopy, made by the Mint Division, Ministry of Finance.



In the morning of 22nd March, 2522 B.E., the Royal canopy was set at the Buddha Image Hall, waiting for the appropriated time to be moved up to the top the Pagoda.





Phra Ariyawongsakotayarn, the Supreme Patriarch, touched the special raising robe to move the Royal canopy to the top of Thatpanom Pagoda on 22nd March, 2522 B.E. at 14 : 19.



The Golden Royal canopy was raised up slowly to the top of the Pagoda, among the admiration of Buddhist who came from all around Thailand; some were so delighted with tears of joy.



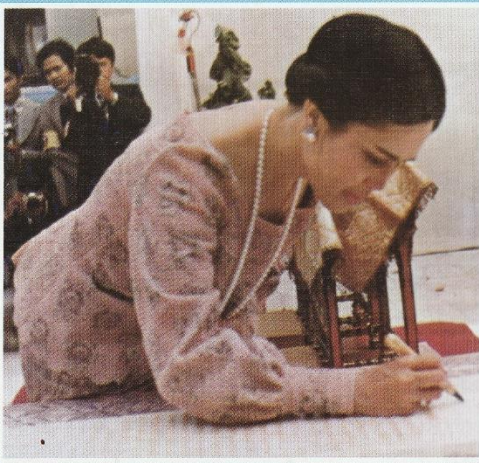
At 14 : 15 of 23rd March, 2522 B.E., as the auspicious occasion, the King and the Queen of Thailand and their 2 princes joined touching the special raising robe to move the Chest Relics of Lord Buddha to be kept inside on the East side of Thatpanom Pagoda.

The Chest Relics of Lord Buddha, which were kept inside the small movable throne with beautiful decoration, were moved slowly upward on the way to be kept inside the Pagoda, among the admiration and salutation of all Buddhist who witnessed the special ceremony on 23rd March, 2522 B.E.





His Majesty the King of Thailand signed his signature on the marble foundation.



Her Majesty the Queen of Thailand signed her signature on the marble foundation.

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