

THE BHUTAN SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

Number 25

President: Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, KT, GCMG

November 2002

The 10th Anniversary of the Bhutan Society 1992-2002

Letter of Congratulation from HE Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Royal Government of Bhutan
Thimphu

9 September, 2002



Dear Friends,

It is indeed a pleasure for me to extend, on behalf of the Royal Government and on my own behalf, our warmest felicitations and Tashi Delek on the happy and auspicious occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Society for the vital role it has played in promoting a better understanding of Bhutan in the UK during the past decade. It has been a key link in promoting goodwill and friendship between the peoples of the UK and Bhutan and has served to strengthen ties between our two countries. We in Bhutan greatly appreciate the valuable support and cooperation extended by the esteemed members of the Society to Bhutanese travellers and students in the UK, making their stay in the country a memorable one. The Royal Government has also greatly appreciated the courtesy and attention extended to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince during his stay in Oxford.

The Bhutan Society was one of the first Bhutan Friendship Associations to be established in Europe. Since then, it has inspired many friends of Bhutan in other countries to emulate the valuable work it has been doing. It is therefore most befitting that all the Bhutan Societies in Europe are participating in the Tenth Anniversary celebrations.



*His Excellency Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley,
Minister for Foreign Affairs*

I should like to take this opportunity to commend the remarkable work being done by the Society for Bhutan. I am confident that the Society, under the wise and able leadership of Lord Wilson, will continue to contribute to further strengthening relations between the peoples of our two countries. I would also like to commend Mr. Michael Rutland, Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary of the Society, for his deep commitment and for the exemplary manner in which he has conducted the activities of the Society, thereby making it a highly effective one.

I would like to conclude by wishing the Bhutan Society Happy Anniversary celebrations and every success in its future endeavours.

Tashi Delek!

Yours sincerely,

Jigmi Y. Thinley
Minister for Foreign Affairs



News & Updates from

The Convention of European Bhutan Societies

The Convention of European Bhutan Societies took place on Saturday 19th October at St. Paul's Walden Bury, the home of our Chairman, Simon Bowes Lyon.

The Convention was opened by HRH The Crown Prince of Bhutan, and we were delighted that both he and Ambassador HE DASHO BAP KESANG were able to attend. Our Chairman, Lord Wilson, presided. The 20 delegates represented nine European Bhutan Friendship Societies: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Delegates discussed the similarities and differences between our Societies and our approaches to promoting knowledge and understanding of Bhutan in Europe. Ideas for further developing our links in the future were also explored. DASHO BAP KESANG briefed delegates on recent developments in Bhutan, followed by a discussion.

The next Convention will take place in 2004 at the kind invitation of the Austria-Bhutan Society Druk Yul.



HRH The Crown Prince of Bhutan, Lord Wilson of Tillyorn and Simon Bowes Lyon accompanied by delegates from nine European Bhutan Friendship Societies

PhD awarded in Bhutanese Law

Congratulations to Bhutan Society Member Richard Whitecross who has been awarded his PhD in Bhutanese Law by the University of Edinburgh (School of Social Science and Political Studies, Department of Social Anthropology).

Richard's thesis, entitled *The Zhabdrung's Legacy: state transformation, law and social values in contemporary Bhutan*, will eventually be published in book form.

Richard is currently working on a paper on *driglam namzha* (Code of Conduct) with funding from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. He is also preparing a translation of the Supreme Laws of Bhutan.

See his article on page 4: *Tha damtshi: the foundation of Bhutanese moral values*.

The 10th Annual Dinner



HRH The Crown Prince of Bhutan presents a model of the Thimphu Memorial Chorten to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Bhutan Society. The gift was accepted by Lord Wilson on behalf of the Bhutan Society

The 10th Annual Dinner of the Bhutan Society took place on Friday 18th October in the Great Hall of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London.

This celebration of the Society's 10th Anniversary was a splendid occasion, attended by over 200 Members and their friends. Our President, Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, presided, and the Society was honoured by the presence of HRH The Crown Prince of Bhutan. We were also delighted to welcome as our special guests Ambassador HE DASHO BAP KESANG and his wife, and delegates from eight fellow European Bhutan Friendship Societies.

The Bhutan Society would particularly like to thank those members who generously sponsored a ticket for a Bhutanese student to attend the Dinner. This enabled 11 Bhutanese students currently studying in the UK to attend and was much appreciated.

A fine watercolour painting of *Taksang Lhakhang* by Michael Blooman A.R.C.A. was auctioned during the evening, raising the excellent sum of £801. The money will be donated to the Bhutan Health Trust Fund, together with other sums raised by the Society (see *The Sponsored Walk for Health*, page 4).

Many thanks to Michael Blooman for generously donating the painting. Further watercolours of Bhutan by Michael are available for sale at his studio in Wickham Bishops, Essex. Tel.: (01621) 892166.

the Bhutan Society



The Bhutan Society Tour

The official Bhutan Society Tour to Bhutan concluded on 16th November when the party of twenty members returned to London, having spent 14 days in Bhutan as delegates of the Society on its Tenth Anniversary.

On the evening of the party's arrival in Kathmandu en route to Bhutan, a Reception was hosted in their honour by Mr. Kesang Wangdi, Head of Bhutan's SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu. The party arrived in Paro on 30th October, and on 1st November they travelled to Thimphu, where they were formally welcomed by HE Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

On the evening of 2nd November the Bhutan Society hosted a Tenth Anniversary Reception for members of the Government and other officials, and students who had studied in the UK. Among those attending were Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Minister for Trade and Industry, Lyonpo Jigmi Y. Thinley, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, Chief Justice of Bhutan. Michael Rutland welcomed the guests on behalf of Lord Wilson, President of the Bhutan Society. In his reply on behalf of the Government of Bhutan, The Minister for Foreign Affairs congratulated the Bhutan Society on its Tenth Anniversary and emphasised the important role that Bhutan Friendship Societies play in spreading knowledge and understanding of Bhutan in their respective countries.

The party travelled together via Wangduephodrang and Trongsa to the Bumthang Valley, and then split into two groups. The first group spent a night at Ugyen Choling, in the Tang Valley, and on their return via Trongsa visited Kuenga Rabten, the Winter Palace of the second King of Bhutan. The second group trekked from the Phobjika Valley to Wanguephodrang, on the Gangtey Trek. Both groups were fortunate to see around one hundred black-necked cranes in the Phobjika Valley. On their return to Thimphu members of the party were Official Guests at the Parade and Celebrations of the Birthday of His Majesty the King at Changlimithang.

The Bhutan Society party visited Bhutan on guest visas, and the Society would like to express its gratitude to the Royal Government and to the Foreign Ministry for this courtesy, extended to mark the Tenth Anniversary of the Society. Many thanks too to Himalayan Kingdoms, who organised the London-Kathmandu-London flights, and to Dorji Tours who organised the programme in Bhutan.

We hope to feature some individual accounts from tour members in the next newsletter, together with photos.

Michael Rutland will be in Bhutan until May 2003.

Address: PO Box 1044, Thimphu, Bhutan

Tel/Fax: +975-2-361185

E-mail: mrutland@aol.com

Michael would be delighted to meet members of the Bhutan Society visiting Bhutan during this period. Please telephone him when you are in Thimphu.

Subscription Fees 2003

After 10 years of the Society's annual subscription fee being held at £10, the time has now come to raise it to £15. A new 'household rate' of £20 for couples / families living at the same address (who are happy to receive a single copy of the Newsletter) is also being introduced.

Membership fees for 2003 are due in January 2003.

To ease administration the Society is keen for Members to pay subscriptions by Standing Order. A form is enclosed. Please do consider paying your 2003 subscription this way!

Subscriptions may, of course, still be paid by cheque (drawn on a UK bank only, please). Cheques should be made payable to *The Bhutan Society of the UK* and sent to:

Lucy Hornberger
Membership Secretary
Unit 23, 78 Marylebone High Street
London W1U 5AP

Queries? Telephone Lucy on (020) 7580 2617

NB: Due to the increase in the subscription fee, would Members who currently pay by Standing Order please fill in and submit a new Standing Order form. The new instruction will replace any previous one. Thank you.

Bhutan-inspired Silk Scarf benefits Health Trust Fund

A silk scarf inspired by the painted architecture of Bhutan is one of five designs in a new range of 'Art Scarves' designed by Lucy Hornberger, our Newsletter Editor.

The 'Himalaya' scarf features a *norbu* (jewel of enlightenment) surrounded by lotus flowers and foliage and framed by a trefoil-like design evocative of the distinctive windows of Bhutanese houses. The scarf is available in two authentic colourways (see the enclosed leaflet for details).

Lucy, who has a post graduate diploma in the Arts of Asia from SOAS, designs distinctive and unusual scarves in 100% silk through her company TASARAM. Her current range features designs inspired by the traditional arts and colours of Bhutan, India, China, Korea and Japan.

Bhutan Society Members are invited to purchase from this range. 10% of the purchase price of orders placed between now and January 31st using the enclosed order form will be donated to the Bhutan Health Trust Fund (see page 4).

A great way to combine Christmas shopping with supporting Bhutan's Health Services!

Further information and ordering facilities are also available online: www.tasaram.com



News from the Kingdom of Bhutan



***Tha damtshi*: the foundation of Bhutanese moral values**

by Dr. Richard Whitecross

In this short article, I draw attention to a sadly overlooked, yet deeply important Bhutanese concept. When I first came across the term *tha damtshi* during a conversation with a Bhutanese friend, I was puzzled. Over time, however, I came to realise how central the notion of *tha damtshi* is to Bhutanese society. The term literally means the “highest or ultimate vow” and is based on the word for religious vows (*damtshig*) taken by Buddhists. In the recent publications on *driglam namzha* (Code of Conduct), notably the work of Dasho Khadro and the Royal Chamberlain, *tha damtshi* is discussed in some detail. However, few friends of Bhutan may have heard the term or understood its significance.

Although the term can be glossed as simply meaning “respect”, it can perhaps best be thought of as meaning “returning kindness”. Bhutanese phrases describe the relationship between parents and children as one based on *tha damtshi*, with the children respecting and honouring their parents and grandparents. Yet it would be too easy to simply assume this term is about hierarchy and submission. Rather, *tha damtshi* implies not simply respect to those senior to oneself or socially higher, but a reciprocal obligation from those so honoured. Nor indeed does it only apply upwards or downwards – husbands and wives each owe the other respect.

These values can be found in popular tales, notably for example the engaging tale of the Four Friends (*Pun zhi*), a popular image one sees all over Bhutan. In this tale derived from the Tittira Jataka, four friends, a bird, a rabbit, a monkey and an elephant, live below a banyan tree. There had been a decline in their respect for each other, and in order to decide which amongst them is the most senior, they begin to discuss the age of the tree. The elephant recalls that, when he was a baby, the tree was as small as a bush. The monkey recalls it was a mere shrub when he was young. The rabbit describes the tree as having been a leafless sapling. Finally, the bird comments that he had swallowed the seed, and that the tree had grown from his droppings. Thereby, the bird was honoured as the eldest, senior in rank to the rabbit, the monkey and the elephant. This restored harmony to the animal kingdom.

It is said that the Buddha used this story to decree that age would confer priority in the *sangha* (religious community). The image of the Four Friends can be found painted on buildings, in small wood carvings and on calendars. Occasionally, the image shows the Four Friends standing on each other’s backs, in order to pick the fruit of the banyan tree. Here the image refers to the equally important moral of mutual co-operation.

Respect is the basis for social harmony, and it reflects the value placed by the Bhutanese on creating and maintaining social order based on Buddhist ideas which

have been distilled for everyday use. Recent criticisms of *driglam namzha* are essentially flawed by a failure to understand the moral values that the Code of Conduct seeks to embody. *Driglam namzha* is the external manifestation of *tha damtshi*, it implements the underlying moral values of Bhutanese society. Thus without an understanding of *tha damtshi*, the moral foundation, *driglam namzha* would be meaningless. This is why the transmission of the moral values of Bhutanese society remains important.

The Sponsored Walk for Health

Bhutan’s Minister for Health and Education, Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup, and his team have successfully completed their 560 kilometre, 15-day sponsored walk. The walk was undertaken to highlight the importance of sustainable free primary health care and immunization, and to raise funds for the Bhutan Health Trust Fund.

Nu 66 million (£877,000) has been collected in sponsorship, and the Health Trust Fund now has two thirds of its target capital of US\$ 24 million (£15 million). Members of the Bhutan Society pledged a total of £1,201.50 in sponsorship, the auction of a painting by Michael Blooman raised £801 (see page 2), and the Bhutan Society Trust Fund has contributed £1,000 (not £500 as originally stated), giving a total of £3,002.50.



A warm welcome for the Health Walk team along the way. Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup lauded the interest, support and commitments made by the people across the country



Thousands of people welcomed the team as they arrived in Thimphu at the end of the 15-day walk



The Bhutan Society of the UK



Standing Order Mandate

(to be returned to the Bhutan Society – please see below)

Membership fees 2003:

£15 (individual)

£20 (household)

Name and address of your Bank or Building Society:

Bank name: _____

Bank address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Please pay:

Girobank Plc, Bootle, Account No. 53338570, Sort Code 72-00-00

Account name: The Bhutan Society of the UK

For Official Use: Reference _____

the sum of £ _____ (_____ pounds) **on receipt of this instruction**
and thereafter on **1st January of every year, starting 1st January 2004**, until this
instruction is cancelled by me in writing. Please debit my/our account accordingly.

Account holder(s): _____

Account number: _____

Sort code: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

This replaces any previous instructions for payments to be made to **The Bhutan Society of the UK** from this account.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

After completion, please forward this form to:

Lucy Hornberger

Membership Secretary

Unit 23

78 Marylebone High Street

London, W1U 5AP

The Himalaya Scarf

Magenta

Ochre

£49

10% of the purchase price will be
donated to the Bhutan Health Trust Fund

100% silk
Hand-rolled, four-colour shoestring edges
Size: 34 x 34 inches (85 x 85 cm)

Inspired by the bands of auspicious emblems that decorate Bhutanese houses, the **Himalaya Scarf** features a flaming *norbu* - the sacred wish-fulfilling jewel - amid lotus flowers and foliage. The border is evocative of the trefoil windows of traditional Bhutanese architecture. The four natural paint pigments traditionally used in Bhutan are white, red-brown, orange-red and a very dark blue-black. Mixed, they produce a wide range of shades, reflected in our two colourways - *Magenta* and *Ochre*.

See www.tasaram.com for more information, including a how-to-wear guide.

Questions or queries? Call us on (020) 7631 0420 or e-mail: info@tasaram.com



TASARAM Scarves come in an attractive gift box with a leaflet explaining the inspiration for the design.

Unsure whether the **Himalaya Scarf** will match your wardrobe? For free fabric swatches call: (020) 7631 0420



Order Form

1. Order details:

Description (name and colour)	Price (£)	Qty	Total (£)
Goods Total (£)			
Postage & Packing (£)			
Order Total (£)			

Postage & Packing per order: UK £2.50, Europe: £3.95, Outside Europe: £4.95

2. Payment details:

Card payment (we accept Visa, Visa Delta, Mastercard, Switch, Solo and JCB):

Card Number:	
Expiry Date (mm/yy):	Issue No. (Switch/Solo only):
Signature:	

Cheque payment: Please make cheques payable to **TASARAM**. Please note that we can only accept Pound Sterling (GBP) cheques drawn on a UK bank.

3. Your details (please write in BLOCK capitals):

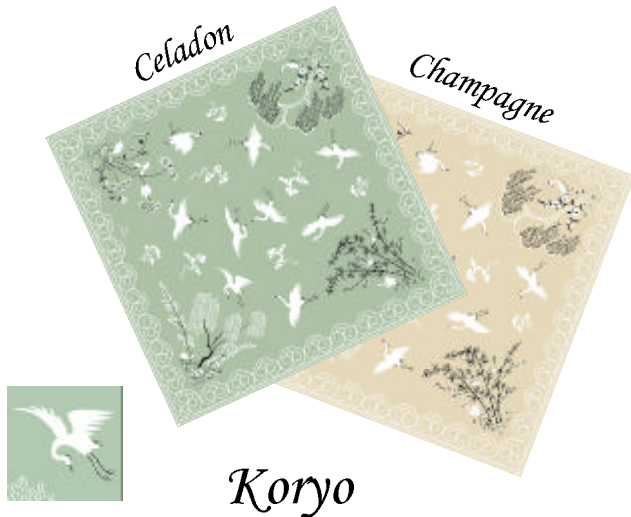
Title:	Mr / Mrs / Ms Other:
Name:	
Address:	
Tel.:	
E-mail:	
Comments:	

4. Send us your order:

By fax: from within the UK: (020) 7580 2648
from outside the UK: +44 20 7580 2648
By mail: TASARAM, Unit 23, 78 Marylebone High Street
London, W1U 5AP (United Kingdom)

100% silk scarves inspired by the traditional designs and colours of India and the Far East

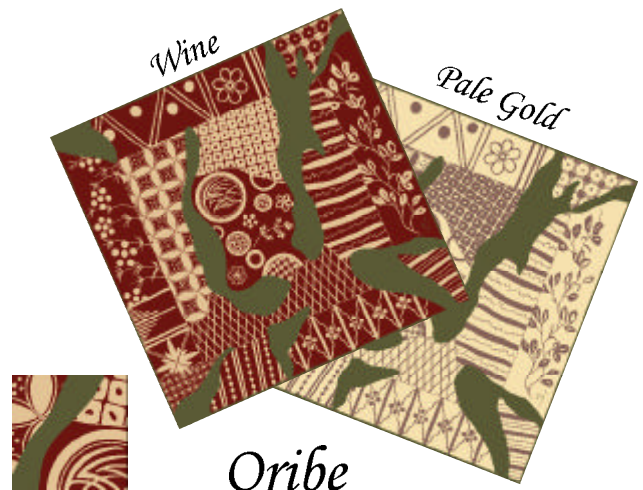
Art Scarves
by TASARAM



Koryo

The crane, cloud and willow tree motifs of the **Koryo Scarf** are inspired by the celadon-glazed ceramics that were perfected in Korea during the Koryo Dynasty (916-1392).

Colours: *Celadon* and *Champagne*



Oribe

The **Oribe Scarf** features the patterns and colours of Japan's distinctive Oribe pottery, created by the samurai and tea ceremony master Furuta Oribe (1544-1615).

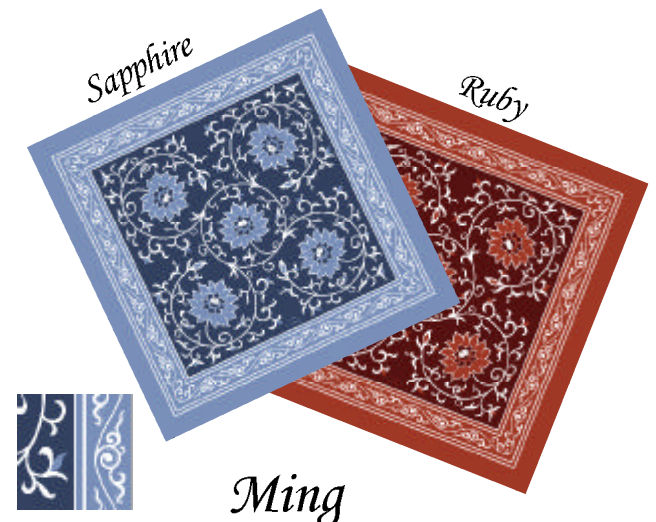
Colours: *Wine* and *Pale Gold*



Taj

The floral arabesques of the **Taj Scarf** are adapted from the richly coloured designs that are intricately inlaid across the marble interior of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

Colours: *Gold* and *Slate*



Ming

The lotus flower scrolls and foliate border of the **Ming Scarf** are both classic designs of the renowned porcelains of Ming Dynasty China (1368-1644).

Colours: *Sapphire* and *Ruby*

£49

10% of the purchase price will be donated to the Bhutan Health Trust Fund

100% silk, hand-rolled edges
Size 34 x 34 inches (85 x 85 cm)

Unsure whether a particular TASARAM Scarf will match your wardrobe? For free fabric swatches call: (020) 7631 0420



TASARAM Scarves come in an attractive gift box with a leaflet explaining the inspiration for the design.

See www.tasaram.com for more information, including a how-to-wear guide.