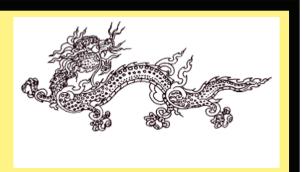
THE BHUTAN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 64 PRESIDENT: SIR SIMON BOWES LYON SPRING 2018

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

My letter, read at the Annual General Meeting and then circulated to members, announced Michael Rutland's wish to stand down as the Society's Chairman. I proposed that he be appointed a Vice President and that Andrew Sutton take over as Chairman. I asked members to contact me before 15 December if they had alternative recommendations for the Chairman. There being no such suggestions, I am very happy to confirm Michael's and Andrew's appointments as of 1 January 2018 and wish them every good fortune in their new roles. We are all deeply indebted to Michael for his enormous contribution to the Society over the last twenty five years and look forward to his continued support and advice from Thimphu for many more years to come.

Simon Bowes Lyon January 2018

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



I am delighted and honoured to take over from Michael Rutland as Chairman of The Society. None of us has the depth of knowledge and understanding of Bhutan that Michael has accumulated and it is a comfort to us all that he will continue to support the Society's contacts with Bhutan from his vice-presidential lair in Thimphu.

I first visited Bhutan in 1999 as a trekker after six or seven visits to the Nepalese Himalaya. TV was opening up in Bhutan then and the 'new' airport terminal in Paro opened the day before I arrived.

That first, springtime, trip took me upstream from Paro to Chomolhari and over to Laya, Gasa and Punakha – and left me hungry for more. More – not just to see other marvellous upland areas but to understand better the people of Bhutan, their culture and their values. So I was back in the autumn of 2000 for a full Snowman trek; now, that really is a wonderful experience and a memorable way to get to Bumthang. Other visits have taken me from Jakar to Tashi Yangtse (on foot), to the southern slopes of Gangkar Punsum and around the country. Over the years my appreciation of Bhutan and its people has deepened through contacts with the extraordinary range of Bhutanese studying in the UK (both while here and after their return home), with officials at the Brussels Embassy, with the other European Friendship Societies, with Society members and with time spent in Thimphu.

Back at home in 1999, I stumbled upon The Bhutan Society on an 'upcoming events' listing at the RGS. I joined up and found interesting members, occasional events, trips and dinners. The tenth anniversary dinner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and a visit to Leiden are amongst my early memories. I took over student liaison and, like other Committee members, reported directly to Michael who thought that a committee was most effective if it never actually met. Later, in 2008, I became Secretary when Michael took over as Chairman. I read the constitution and suggested that we might experiment with annual general meetings. Since Peter Li stood down as longstanding Dinner Secretary, I have organised most of the annual dinners including both the 2011 and the 2017 events at the Inner Temple.

I and today's Committee look forward to the future and to ensuring that The Society continues to support the maintenance of strong and friendly relations between Bhutan and the UK.

Andrew Sutton January 2018

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

FILM EVENING

5.30pm, Friday 16 March, 2018 at the Polish Hearth Club, 55 Princes Terrace, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2PG.

Starting with some short films and then, after a refreshment interval, at 7.45 we will screen **'Kushuthara - Pattern of Love'** a film by Karma Deli, released in 2017.

Kushuthara storyline: A single thread weaves the story of the past and present lives of two people - two people born on the opposite sides of the world, destined to meet and to realise karmic conditions and their consequences. On the surface, it is a typical boy-meets-girl theme, but only on the surface. It explores the Buddhist concept of Karma, the possibility of rebirth and accomplishing what was started in a previous life and ending in the here and now.

No tickets will be issued for this event. Members and Bhutanese honorary members may bring guests. It will be helpful for the organisers to know the likely level of interest and audience size. Those thinking of attending are asked to tell **Elizabeth Jacobson at tookiej@btinternet.com**. Coffee and tea will be served after the film so allowing the audience an informal opportunity to discuss what they have seen.

The Polish Hearth Club offers audience members the option to book for its members' one or two course meal in the interval; those interested should call the Club on 020 7589 0101, say that they will be at the Bhutan Society event and wish to have the members' meal.

VIEWS OF BHUTAN

7.00pm, Thursday 10 May, 2018 at the National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE

Three speakers will give their views on aspects of Bhutan today:

Dr Frances Harris – Building Resilience to Earthquakes in Bhutan

Following earthquakes in Bhutan in 2009 and 2011, and the major earthquake in Nepal in 2015, there is more awareness of the possibility of a large earthquake in Bhutan. Dr Harris of the University of Hertfordshire will summarise work from a research project on Building Bhutanese Resilience Against Cataclysmic Events (BRACE) and outline some of the potential impacts of an earthquake and the measures being taken to mitigate its effects.

Ms Tashi Yangzom – Food Safety and Related Issues

Tashi Yangzom is a current Chevening Scholar here studying for an MSc in Food Policy at City University in London. She has served as Food Safety Officer at Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority, under Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, for the last six years and has worked in initiatives to promote human and animal health. Tashi will discuss ways to resolve some of the food issues of Bhutan.

Mr Kinzang Dorjic – Challenges and Opportunities of Development in Bhutan

Kinzang Dorjic also has a Chevening Scholarship from the British Government and is currently at the University of Buckingham studying for an MA in Security, Intelligence and Diplomacy. He is from the Mongar Dzongkag and, after an undergraduate degree course in Australia, has worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he has had responsibility for Bhutan's relations with countries in Europe. He expects to return to the MoFA and maintain contact with Europe. He will share his thoughts on socio-economic development in Bhutan.

The Club bar will open at 6.30 pm

SOCIETY NEWS

Royal recognition

On December 17th 2017, the National Day in Bhutan, His Majesty The King made a number of awards, one of which was to our esteemed Vice President, Michael Rutland.



Michael was granted the National Order of Merit Gold - in recognition of distinguished and meritorious services to Bhutan. Apart from being the Honorary Consul of the United Kingdom to Bhutan, he served as the Science and Mathematics tutor to His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo when he Kingdom to Bhutan and him His MajestyThe King granted him Bhutanese Citizenship in 2006. Michael Rutland said he was honoured to work for 46 years on behalf of Bhutan. "It was very kind indeed of The King to recognise that, through the award of this Merit," he said. "It signifies the long connection with the Kingdom."

Also awarded the National Order of Merit - Gold for her contribution in the field of education research was Francoise Pommaret. Francoise works pro-bono as an associate Professor at the College for Language and Cultural Studies in Taktse, Trongsa. Originally from France, His Majesty The King also granted her Bhutanese Citizenship. Speaking in Dzongkha, she said she is thankful to His Majesty The King and the people of Bhutan. "This was unexpected, but it's a great

honour.



Those of you who know him, will also notice that Dr Lotay
Tshering was awarded the high honour of Druk Thuksey (Heart
Son of Bhutan) in recognition of his contribution to the medical
field and for tirelessly serving people in need of such
treatment. Dr Lotay Tshering (here on the left of the photo)
currently leads His Majesty's Kidu Mobile Medical Unit. He has
also worked as a Consultant Surgeon at the JDWNRH and
Manager Hospital and served as the Technical Coordinator and Mongar Hospital and served as the Technical Coordinator and Chief Surgeon of Bhutanese earthquake relief team to Nepal in 2015.

Dr Lotay Tshering said he was overjoyed to receive the award. "I've done nothing great to receive this prestigious award from the throne. This award also goes to my team who put their hard work and dedication in delivering services to the people," he said. "The award will further inspire me to work harder in the service of the society. Congratulations go to all.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Member subscriptions for 2018 are now due. If you haven't already paid or set up a standing order, can you please forward payment to the Membership Secretary, Rosie Glazebrook (contact details on back page) The subscriptions remain at £25 for household membership and £20 for individuals.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

It is helpful for us to have e-mail contact details for members as occasionally information regarding events etc are sent out via e-mail. Can you please update the Membership Secretary with your e-contact details.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

We have recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of The Society. Since its inauguration, many things have changed including our knowledge and ways of communicating with Bhutan and, even more so, life in Bhutan itself. So it is timely that we explore how the Society should now move forward. Whilst the Committee has many ideas, we want you, as a member, to be part of the discussion. Initially the survey will be sent by e-mail, so please look out for it. It would be much appreciated if you could complete and return as instructed.

SOCIETY NEWS

MEETING REPORT

On a a cold evening this January, members gathered at The National Liberal Club in London to hear a talk by Steve Berry about his climbing adventures in Bhutan and in particular about the possible whereabouts of the Yeti.

Steve Berry has climbed, trekked and explored all over the world but his passion is the Himalaya. He has completed 60 or 70 treks in Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan and various parts of the Indian Himayala. However he has something of an obsession with Bhutan's highest mountain, Gangkar Punsum 7,550m/14,770ft. In 1986, he took a mainly Bristol based expedition to attempt the first ascent. The expedition failed when an early winter jet-stream basically blew the expedition off the mountain. There were all kinds of adventures and the trip was undoubtedly a turning point in his life. It resulted in Steve setting up an adventure travel company which is still his passion thirty years on. In that intervening time, he has taken six more groups to visit Gangkar Punsum and to explore both the western and eastern sides of the peak. Soon after granting a small number of permits to climb Gangkar Punsum in the 1980s, the authorities decided to close the kingdom to all mountaineering expeditions; the

unclimbed. In 2014, Steve was trying to find a route from east to west and standing on a col at 5,426m/17,800ft when his trusty Bhutanese guide, Karma Tenzing, spotted a strange set of tracks high on the adjoining mountainside visible - but out of reach. In 2015, he returned to the same spot and a mile or so down the valley found more unexplainable tracks. Steve's talk was about these findings and he related some of

what has happened since. This included a further visit in 2107 to film material for a TV feature which is likely to be released in 2018. Steve plans to give the Society prior notice of any UK broadcast. In his talk Steve also discussed Bhutanese beliefs in relation to the Yeti and the creature's place in their rich folklore.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

ANNUAL DINNER 2017

On Friday 17 November 2017, members and guests met at the Inner Temple to celebrate the Society's twenty fifth anniversary. One hundred and ninety people enjoyed the reception and then moved to the Hall which looked splendid with candle lighting and delightful table decorations.



At the start of the dinner, our President read a letter from the Duke of Cambridge and Jigme Tenzin, First Secretary at the Brussels Embassy, read a letter from Bhutan's Minister for Foreign Affairs, HE Mr Damcho Dorji. (Copies of both letters are on pages six and seven) Later Sir Simon recounted the progress of the Society since its founding by Lord Wilson,



Michael Rutland and himself in October 1992. He offered a warm tribute to the dedicated service of Michael Rutland first as Secretary and then as Chairman, reflecting that without those contributions the dinner would not be happening.

The Chairman welcomed HE Aum Pema Choden and her colleagues as well as twenty five Bhutanese students and former students and also the leaders of seven other European Friendship Societies. Aum Pema responded

on behalf of the guests. After these formalities, private conversations continued for as long as the Inner Temple authorities permitted. It was a most convivial evening allowing many <u>friendships to begin, to refresh and to deepen.</u>

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



The Duchess and I are delighted to know that the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom celebrates today the Twenty Fifth Anniversary of its Foundation. During all those years the Society has made an enormous contribution to the development of close and warm ties between the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Bhutan.

My father, The Prince of Wales, remembers with great pleasure his visit to the Kingdom in 1998. The Duchess and I were therefore delighted to accept an Invitation from H.M. The King of Bhutan to visit the country in April last year, and we retain the most happy memories of our visit. We were fortunate to be able to walk up all the way to the spectacular Tiger's Nest, and to observe an archery tournament. We were greatly honoured to have been hosted for dinner by Their Majesties and the young Crown Prince.

I hope our visit will have further strengthened the bonds between the two Kingdoms which your Society has done such a lot to nurture, and The Duchess and I wish the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom every success in the years to come.

Lill-

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
THIMPHU

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

16 November 2017

Sir Simon Bowes Lyon,

It gives me great pleasure to offer our warmest felicitations to you and through you to all the members of the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom on the occasion of its' 25th Anniversary. As one of the oldest and largest societies of Bhutan abroad, we take note with satisfaction the contributions the Society has made over the years in fostering friendship and goodwill between the Peoples of Bhutan and the United Kingdom. Our two countries enjoy warm and friendly relations, and the efforts of societies such as the Bhutan Society have certainly played an instrumental part in this regard.

I also would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to Mr. Michael Rutland who I understand will be resigning from the post of the Chairman, for his leadership role in establishing and guiding the Society for the last 25 years. However, I am confident that Mr. Michael Rutland will continue to bridge friendship between our two countries in some other capacity.

On my part, I remain committed to extending my support and cooperation the society may need in further deepening our friendship, and I extend to you, Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, and members of the Society, my warmest Tashi Delek.

With the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Damcho Dorji)

Sir Simon Bowes Lyon KCVO President Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom London

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

Great oaks from tiny acorns grow...

Michael Rutland initiated the idea of a Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom twenty five years ago, and saw it through its conception and birth with the invaluable support of Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, and the late Nicholas Rhodes; and in Bhutan the strong support of the then Foreign Minister, the late Lyonpo Dawa Tsering.



At a seminal meeting in Morpeth Mansions, Victoria, between the host Simon Bowes Lyon, Michael Rutland, Deki Rhodes and the late Sir Robert Wade-Gery, it was agreed that the Society would be inaugurated at a Reception to be held at Dartmouth House, Mayfair, headquarters of the English Speaking Union. The ESU kindly gave the use of its premises free of charge, and just by chance Dasho Nado Rinchen, then Finance Secretary, happened to be in London negotiating the finance for the purchase of the two BAe 147 planes for Drukair. He kindly agreed, at very short notice, to give the Inaugural Speech on behalf of Bhutan, and Lord Wilson gave the Inaugural Speech on behalf of the UK. Michael wrote the Society's Constitution, which was agreed nem con, and thus over a glass of wine and with the minimum of formality the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom came into being with Lord Wilson as President, Simon Bowes Lyon as Chairman, Michael Rutland as Secretary and the late Nicholas Rhodes as Treasurer.

At the initial meeting in Morpeth Mansions, it was agreed that if the Society could attract some fifty members it would be a success! A hundred and twenty invited guests attended the Reception out of which over ninety immediately became members.

Today the Society has over five hundred members and is financially sound. A look at its website today will show a history of its many and varied activities. Its Newsletters, available on the web site, chronicle not only the development of the Society but also many of the most important changes which have occurred in Bhutan in the last two decades. The Society was delighted that HRH The Crown Prince of Bhutan was able to attend its Tenth Annual Dinner, and that, as the Fifth King of Bhutan he was accompanied by the Queen, HM Jetsun Pema, at the Twentieth Annual Dinner.

Clearly the Society has been a great success. Great oaks from tiny acorns grow, but they need good ground and dedicated attention. The United Kingdom's historic connections with Bhutan extending over two centuries ensured the former. Michael Rutland has been Secretary and then Chairman of the Society over the twenty five years of its existence and has nurtured its growth into the strong and respected Society that it is today. Since Michael now lives almost full time in Bhutan, where he is the British Honorary Consul,he has decided to retire as the Society's Chairman, but is delighted to maintain his connection as Vice-President of the Society. Michael would like to express his sincere and heartfelt thanks to all those whose support over the years have made the Society such a success and to all those who started out as members and have become his good and loyal friends – and vice versa! He is confident that in the hands of the President, Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, and the new Chairman, Andrew Sutton, who has already demonstrated his immense competence as Secretary, the Society will go from strength to strength.

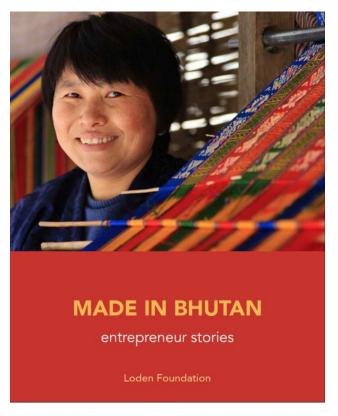
NEWS AND UPDATES

MADE IN BHUTAN

Entrepreneur Stories of 140 enthusiastic young Bhutanese working with the Loden Foundation since 2008.

Available June 2018
Order from www.loden.org

Price \$50.00



"Made in Bhutan, entrepreneur stories" is a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the The Loden Entrepreneurship Programme (LEP).

It all started from learning Tibetan in a pub in Oxford with Dr Karma Phuntsho. A few years later, we decided to share our experience as entrepreneurs and venture investor. Why not in Bhutan? Lets talk to Karma! As the five perfect conditions were present, the perfect place, person, team, time and project, LEP started to take form.

Since then, LEP has trained over 3100 young people, contributed to the creation of over 600 jobs through funding 133 entrepreneurial ventures. Those are spread over 18 of the 20 districts of Bhutan. Beyond financing, Loden is also providing entrepreneurs who are facing unforeseen challenges. Starting a business should not be a lonely journey.

Today, entrepreneurship has gained currency in the Bhutanese society as a preferred choice for individuals to pursue their dreams, to be independent, and to contribute to the community. There is a growing number of young Bhutanese who need to be trusted so that they can fully take advantage of their potential, skills and opportunities.

A new economic behavior, a more sustainable and caring one is emerging in many parts of the world. Following such a global trend of business with human values and taking inspiration from their own traditional heritage, Bhutanese entrepreneurs can play a role model beyond the country's borders.

Gérard and Anne Tardy, London, October 2017

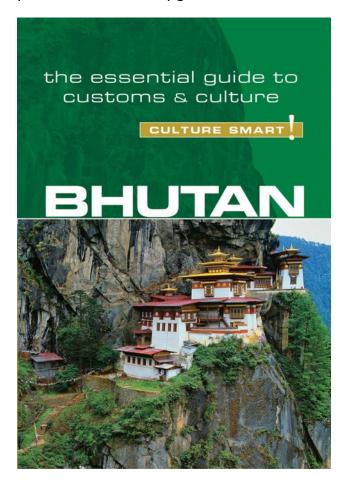
CULTURE SMART – BHUTAN The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture

By Karma Choden and Dorji Wangchuk Published by Kuperard, 2018 £7.99 ISBN 978 1 85733 875 1 168 pp, illustrated

This pocket sized guide is one of the Culture Smart series and does what it claims – provides an excellent summary of customs and culture of Bhutan.

Karma Choden and Dorji Wangchuk – currently London based and great supporters of the Society – have done a great job bringing together the history of the country and the development of its religions and culture, with influences from both north and south, and then describing life and customs in the country today.

It will give a new visitor – whether for work or recreation – a succinct and digestible picture of Bhutan and for those who know the country, it will remind them of and illuminate many of its special ways and traditions. A very good read.



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NEWS FROM THE

Are you a Chiropterologist?

People of Lamthang in Zhemgang have discovered a new avenue which they feel could be suitable for promotion of eco-tourism. Some caves in their community serve as a roosting place for hundreds of bats. Located about half an hour's walk from the road, in densely covered forest, are several caves where hundreds of bats can be seen roosting. The smell in the area is pungent and the ultrasonic sound. deafening.

Elderly people in the community say that for centuries the caves have been roosting places for bats. They said although traditional beliefs are that bats bring misfortune, nothing untoward has befallen the village so far. Meanwhile, the gewog administration feels the roosting place could help in promoting eco-tourism in the region. The office is now planning to put up a proposal to the dzongkhag administration. "We think this will be of interest to foreign tourists. But before we open up the area we will have to agree some rules and regulations on bat watching as well as have government approval," said Zangpo, the Tshogpa of Lamthang Chiwog. If approved, it would be the first bat watching site in Bhutan.

Gene Bank

Farmers of Buli Village under Nangkor Gewog, Zhemgang now have a Gene Bank to preserve and store seeds of their native crops, which are on the brink of extinction. It also provides good storage facilities for preserving commercially cultivated varieties of crops.



Members of the farmers group said the facility will be helpful in maintaining the seeds in good condition and also enable such seeds to be marketed to other dzongkhags. One member of the Gene Bank, Sonam Yangki, said, "The seeds have

been here since our grandparents time. Now we don't have to worry that they will perish." About 38 different seeds have been kept in the Bank and it is funded by UNDP.

Manmade pond invites black-necked cranes

A family of black-necked cranes were recently spotted roosting in an artificial pond in Uruk, Bumthang. Developed by the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) last September, the 20 x 20m pond, developed from a stream that flows through



nearby
wetlands,
ensures safety
of the winged
visitors at night.
"Considering
the high risk of
attack from the
predators we
built ponds,
which are one
of the best ways
to keep the

crane safe," said Jigme Tshering. "The water ripples and sound from water alert the crane at night." There are three similar artificial ponds in the Phobjikha valley. He said, "With these mechanisms in place, attacks on the cranes have been drastically reduced."

KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

Haa halts new resorts to boost home-stay business

Haa dzongkhag is an emerging destination and is exploring its potential for tourism.

Recently Haa dzongkhag Tshogdu decided to issue a three-year moratorium on construction of high-end resorts in the area. So far there is only one such resort in Haa. The basis for the decision was to promote community-based sustainable tourism (CBST) and to allow the benefits of tourism to reach the grassroots. Haa Planning Officer, Gyaltshen, said, "One of the main components of the CBST Project is the Tourism Council of Bhutan's certification of home stays." Twenty five such home stays are planned and so far seventeen have been established.

Interested farmers were given Nu 10,000 to improve traditional homes, construct toilets and other amenities. Accommodation for regional or international tourists costs Nu 1,650 for a night with three meals. In addition visitors will have to pay for services such as hot stone baths, guides, and trekking services. Most homes have three rooms and can at the most accommodate up to six guests. One farmer, who operates his home-stay with his



wife, says a home stay business earns them an average of Nu 200,000 a year.

Planning Officer Gyaltshen said that a total of 16 local homestay owners were trained in Kathmandu through the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) for a week. Besides home stays, the dzongkhag has also trained local guides and established programmes around culture, nature and adventure tours.

The Project has already completed the construction of a visitor

information centre in Haa town. The CBST community will operate from there and it is expected to become operational by March. Tourists will be able to book accommodation or tours directly from the centre which will also manage payments. It is hoped that the pristine natural environment will add to the tourism potential of the dzongkhag.

The Project has been implemented by the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) and dzongkhag administration with technical support from the Japan Environmental Education Fund (JEEF) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) funding of 4.9 million Japanese Yen.

A new Royal orchid



Spathoglottis jetsuniae is a new and striking orchid species discovered and named in honour of Her Majesty Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck.

The new species *Spathoglottis jetsuniae* was discovered by Nima Gyeltshen and Kezang Tobgyel of the National Biodiversity Centre, and the University of Costa Rica's Stig Dalström. It was first discovered accidentally by the staff of the National Biodiversity Centre on November 3, 2016, in the remote region of Ngangla-Kaktong of Zhemgang.

VAST Bhutan

Unlike traditional Bhutanese art, contemporary art started rather late in Bhutan. The Voluntary Artists' Studio Thimphu (VAST) Bhutan, which started in 1998, is at the forefront of this modern art movement.

With kidu in the form of studio rent from His Majesty The King, a group of artists who shared a similar goal to promote arts and crafts among Bhutanese youth, formed VAST. It is aimed at providing a platform for Bhutanese art enthusiasts to nurture and develop their artistic potential. Founder of VAST, Kama Wangdi (Azha Kama), said that the objective of starting VAST was to start and grow an art movement so paving the way for a creative society, nurtured for and by art. Azha Kama said, " The need for such initiative is vital for the growth of a creative society, particularly when we talk about wholesome education in this day and age. If art education is missing, then where is wholesomeness?"



Executive Director of VAST Bhutan, Chimi Zangmo said that Bhutan as a developing country is challenged with addressing poverty and infrastructure development. For this reason, the focus on art and creativity is secondary. However, she said that VAST's concern is that by the time Bhutan becomes self-sufficient and matures in understanding the importance of art and creativity, the society might lack the core values of a GNH society that Bhutan advocates. "Because the concept of GNH advocates achieving a harmonious balance between the material and non-material dimensions of development, the power of art and artistic expressions can help youth foster the value of contemplation, compassion and creativity." In 2014, VAST was formally registered as a Civil Society Organisation.

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NOTE

If you have not already done so, we would appreciate you sending your latest e-mail address to the Membership Secretary at:

rosieglazebrook@hotmail.com

who will then add it to the database. There is no plan for the Society to go 'paperless' but there are times when it could be very convenient to communicate information electronically at short notice.

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