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Tibetan Friendship Group Australia (Inc.)

Patrons: His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
Joan M Wilson OAM

## TFG NEWSLETTER JULY 2024

### DHARAMSALA INDIA – HOME OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA



#### **HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA'S BIRTHDAY**

We wish His Holiness every happiness and long life for his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday on 6<sup>th</sup> July. May he continue to inspire not only the Tibetan people but his followers from all walks of life and all over the world.

His Holiness recently had a knee operation in the US and we wish him a complete and successful recovery. He is a patron of TFG along with Joan M Wilson OAM. I asked our current TFG committee for stories of meeting His Holiness and you can read them on the next page.

#### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

With your help TFG continues to support Tibetan refugees in settlements in India. Despite losing a few sponsors in recent times TFG is still able to send substantial funds to Tibetan Settlements in India. We are so grateful for those sponsors who continue to support Nuns, Children, Elderly Tibetans, Tibetan arts and Delek Hospital. Many of you have been sponsoring for years and we offer our deep appreciation of your commitment.

With regard to TFG finances our Treasurer reports that the amount of \$11,391.00 was transferred to our TFG Settlements from July 2023 to June 2024.

**BELOW ARE STORIES OF MEETING HIS HOLINESS, THE DALAI LAMA, FROM TFG COMMITTEE MEMBERS**



**HOW I MET HIS HOLINESS, PAM TFG**

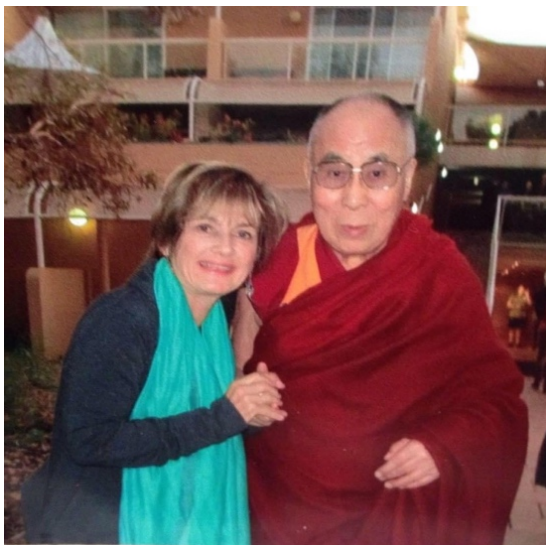
In 2010 I was on a 12-day visit to Dharamsala, home of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, organised by Australian Tibet Council. It was a magic, whirlwind trip visiting NGOs, Tibetan Children's Village, Tibetan Institute of Dramatic Arts, Norbulingka Institute, Library of Tibetan Works and numerous other interesting organisations. Although we visited the compound of His Holiness he was not in residence at the time and although there were certainly no promises, we fervently hoped to meet him.

As our visit drew to a close, we resigned ourselves to not seeing him, so imagine our surprise and elation when on our very last day in Delhi we were told that the organisers had arranged a private 10-minute visit for our group of 18! The feeling of being in his presence is indescribable, I just couldn't manage to speak! However, His Holiness in his wonderful easy way just chatted and chuckled and held his arms out for us to hold for a photo. Here it is at left!

**HOW I MET HIS HOLINESS, LESLEY TFG**

In mid -June 2015 I was in the position of Secretary, TFG Australia and was very fortunate to travel to and stay a few nights at Uluru with Joan Wilson, then President TFG now Patron of TFG. Our visit was planned to coincide with a visit there by His Holiness. During our stay we attended a number of special events including a talk by His Holiness at Yulara oval attended by a large crowd. Prior to that talk he had addressed more than 3000 people at the National Indigenous Training Academy

We were also there when he arrived at the hotel where we were staying and received a very warm welcome from the many Tibetans now living in Australia. However, the highlight for me was meeting His Holiness, chatting to him for a few minutes and shaking his hand and as the dawn was breaking on his last day he flew to Perth. The photo below is one I will treasure forever.



## VISIT OF TCV PRESIDENT TO SYDNEY

The Tibetan Children's Village Alumni Association of Sydney organised the visit of TCV President Mr Gen Sonam Sichoe in April 2024. Gen Sonam was warmly welcomed by the Tibetan Community of Sydney and two events were organised by the Alumni Association in his honour: A Gala Dinner Fundraising event on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April and a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April for talks with the President. Furthermore, on 3<sup>rd</sup> April there was a gathering with former TCV staff and students. A very positive experience for all involved!

**Photos below show Sydney Tibetans at the meeting and our TFG President, Tashi, offering a khata to Gen Sonam.**



## PROCEEDS OF TFG FUND RAISING STALL & GENEROUS DONATION

At our last TFG meeting it was unanimously decided to donate the majority of profits from the TFG fund-raising stall to Delek Hospital. An amount of \$1,518 was raised. Of that \$1000 will go to Delek hospital. Also, TFG received \$1000 from a long-term, very generous supporter of TFG which will also go to Delek Hospital. Our grateful thanks for this wonderful donation!

## VALE DR PHILLIP G. ESDALE

It is with great sadness that we received the news that Dr Phillip Esdale, a long-time supporter of TFG has passed away. He was one of Delek Hospital's longest donors and in his will, he left a substantial bequest to Delek Hospital, an organisation close to his heart. May his memory live on in those he has helped.

## SETTLEMENT NEWS

### TIBETAN CHILDREN'S VILLAGE (TCV)

Below left the Dalai Lama's sister Jetsun Pema, receives the Randolph College Pearl S Buck award for her life-long service and commitment to the education and welfare of Tibetan refugee children in exile. On the right a lovely pic of TCV children in front of a hanging of the Potala.



### DELEK HOSPITAL

#### MESSAGE AND CHRISTMAS CARD FROM DAWA PHUNKYI OF DELEK HOSPITAL

I am writing to convey my deep appreciation for your steadfast support over the years, providing invaluable financial assistance for our endeavours. The trust and confidence you have placed in our work are sentiments that we truly cherish. As you are well aware, our community heavily relies on the support of a select few, and our network connections are often limited. Your generous contributions have played an instrumental role in enabling us to extend healthcare services to those in need, and for this, I am sincerely grateful.



## SAMBHOTA TIBETAN SCHOOLS SOCIETY

As well as sponsorship of students, there are many worthwhile projects needing support at Sambhota. Here are two examples of projects implemented in recent times.

### NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM

Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society launched a three-month nutritional program funded by The Tibet Fund, benefitting 631 children, including 304 girls in four Tibetan Schools in India. The four participating schools are STS Mussoorie, STS Darjeeling, STS Kalimpong and STS Shimla. Supplementary diets include seasonal fruits, vegetables, eggs and meats which are rich in protein and nutrients. This program provides similar meals for 24 days in the month. Here are the children enjoying a healthy meal!



### RENOVATION OF PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL KITCHEN

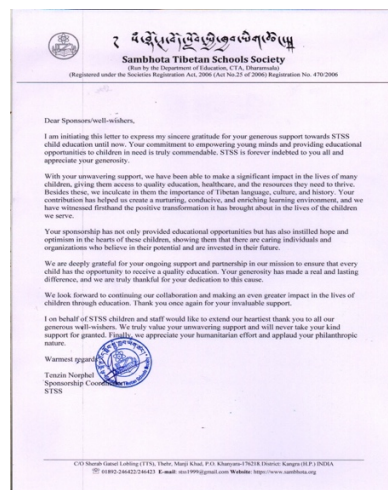
Another school benefitted from the renovation of the Pre-primary school kitchen. This may not seem like a huge project but shows what a difference a small amount of funds can make. TFG accepts one-off donations for projects such as these as well as sponsorship of children. Below is a quote from the school authorities:

- Improved hygiene and sanitation which will help both our students and staff.
- Students and staff have developed a sense of belonging. They are motivated towards teaching and learning activities.
- Positive environment within school.
- Kitchen staff enjoys cooking for our dear students and students also enjoy the meals happily.

Below are before and after photos of the school kitchen and also a lovely thank you letter from Tenzin Norphel, the Sponsorship Coordinator for Sambhota Schools.



Photos After the renovation of the Pre-Primary school kitchen:



## TILOKPUR NUNNERIES

### THE NUNS FROM TILOKPUR NUNNERY ATTENDING THE ANNUAL ARYA KESHEMA GATHERING



The Arya Keshema is an annual winter dharma gathering for nuns. Though intended primarily for nuns within the Karma Kagyu lineage, the Arya Keshema welcomes nuns from other Kagyu lineages and Tibetan Buddhist schools.

It was inaugurated in 2014 by His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, as part of his commitment to raise the level of nuns' education through the graduated study of Buddhist philosophy and debate to bring it to the same level as that of monks.

During the winter dharma gathering, the nuns' study program is based on the same textbooks that the monks use during their winter debate session, which were specially compiled by His Holiness and a team of scholars and shedra students. The Buddhist texts are wrapped and stored very carefully (see below).



## TIBETAN INSTITUTE OF PERFORMING ARTS (TIPA)

### TIPA LOSAR CELEBRATIONS – A report from TIPA

Artistes from the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) attended the 'Losar and Tourism Festival Celebrations 2024' in Lachung, North Sikkim, for 3 days from 1 March 2024, at the invitation of the festival's organising committee.

Despite a troublesome journey due to damaged roads caused by last year's glacial lake outburst flood, the team from TIPA led by the Director and Artistic Director managed to attend the event and performed two traditional Tibetan operas, Chogyal Norsang and Drowa Sangmo, as well as folk song and dance performances during the festival.

The show was the highlight of the festival attracting crowds of over 200 for every show. Commenting on the completion of this visit to Lachung, the Director of TIPA remarked, "We are delighted with the success of our first domestic cultural tour of 2024 as we received quite a lot of positive feedback from the audience towards the cultural performances and much appreciation from the festival organiser."



## **AN APPEAL FOR MORE SPONSORS**

Our TFG settlements in India are always in desperate need of more sponsors for nuns, children and elderly Tibetans. If you have family or friends who are interested, please ask them to contact us. Here are several ways you can help.:

### **One Time Donation**

Make a “once off” donation to a TFG program in need of funds.

### **Regular Donations**

Make a regular monthly, quarterly or yearly donation to a TFG program of your choice.

### **Sponsorships**

Sponsor an older person or nun for \$25 per month or a school student for \$30 a month.

### **A Donation in Celebration**

Celebrate a special occasion by making a donation or ask family and friends to make a donation on your birthday rather than buy a gift.

### **A Donation in Memory**

Make a donation in memory of a loved one. TFG can send a card acknowledging your gift to their partner or family.

### **Bequest**

Leave a gift to TFG in your will. Your generosity will enable us to continue our programs in the future.

### **PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR DONATIONS**

CHEQUE: PAYABLE TO TIBETAN FRIENDSHIP GROUP AUSTRALIA (INC)

DIRECT DEPOSIT: CBA BSB: 062 173 ACCOUNT NO: 2802 0627

PAYPAL: VIA WEBSITE

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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**From all of us at TFG we thank you for your support and may 2024 be a year of good health and special times with those you love**