

# THREADS OF LIFE

July 2009 newsletter



(Left to right) Joanina and Afonso Marques of Timor-Leste. Palm sugar processing on Savu, Rosalia Bubu of Loo Neke

Dear Friends,

After sending the first email newsletter associated with our new website in April 2009, we had planned for the newsletter to be a quarterly event. The speed with which we are adding new material to the website makes a quarterly update impractical however, and we have decided to send a shorter monthly update about our activities with the weavers' communities as documented in the Field Notes section of the website.

June saw Lolet and Putra in [Java](#) visiting batik producers. While in Jogjakarta they visited Hadi Wiyono, one of a handful of remaining traditional batik copper stamp producers. Once the mainstay of production, much of their skill has been eclipsed by modern printed cloth, yet the stamps they make are works of art in their own right. Threads of Life wants to do its part to keep the art going by buying stamps from Hadi Wiyono for sale through the store in Bali.

In May 2009 Threads of Life and the YPBB Foundation collaborated on an initial field visit to the Alola Foundation of [Timor Leste](#), with whom we are hoping to develop an ongoing partnership in support of the development of weavers' cooperatives and a sustainable market for their traditional textiles. Alola staff led us to Tutuala in the far east and Bobonaru in the west of the country as we explored the textile arts and natural dye traditions. Three month-long internships of Alola staff with us in Bali have been planned for the rest of this year. Work will focus on retail and marketing of traditional textiles, developing weavers' cooperatives, and quality control of textiles produced. Since May, the first of these interns has already been with us. The plans for collaboration already stretch into 2011.

By contrast to the weavers of Timor-Leste, who are still struggling to maintain their traditions and build business after the war of independence from Indonesia in 1999, the weavers cooperative in Loo Neke, just across the border in [Indonesian Timor](#), is thriving. Wenten describes the textiles of this group and the efforts they have made to secure their dye resources.

Jean Howe describes the team's long field trip to [Savu island](#) in April. Work included field research into traditional income streams other than textile production. This interested Threads of Life as we consider the whole rural livelihood portfolio of our producers in our work, not just what they receive as income from the sale of textiles. Working with Dr. Tony Cunningham of People and Plants International under ACIAR funding from the Australian government, the lontar palm sugar process was extensively documented and tasted with an eye (or tongue) to opening new markets; the sugars across the island display the same kind of variation you would expect from honey with some being full of citrus tones and others almost peaty, like whiskey.

For those who sent feedback after the initial launch of the website, we thank you for your generous feedback and good suggestions, some of which we applied immediately, others of which we are still working on. Please keep in touch with further feedback.

Best wishes,  
from William, Jean, Pung, Lolet, Weti  
and everyone at Threads of Life

## On Threadsoflife.com

Threads of Life is a fair trade business that utilizes culture and conservation to alleviate poverty in rural Indonesia. The heirloom-quality textiles, baskets and crafts we commission are made with local materials and natural dyes. With the proceeds from sales, we help weavers to form independent cooperatives and to manage their resources sustainably.

### WHAT WE DO

This section explains the breadth and depth of our work. Behind the beautiful textiles seen in the gallery are months of [field work](#) each year [supporting women's weaving cooperatives](#) through [fair trade](#), [revitalizing traditional textile techniques](#), and [conservation efforts](#).

### INDONESIAN TEXTILE ARTS

Fourteen slide shows explore the traditional [textile arts](#) from across the Indonesian archipelago while introducing the [weavers](#) and their [cooperatives](#), and the [materials](#), [natural dyes](#), and production [techniques](#) they employ.

### OTHER PRODUCTS

Traditional links between livelihood, culture and nature are expressed through some of the world's finest [basketry](#). Diverse [culture arts](#), including pottery, woodcarving and bead work, also retain a remarkable vitality.

### HOW TO PURCHASE

Threads of Life sells its textiles, baskets, or other cultural artefacts through its [gallery in Ubud](#), Bali, and occasional overseas exhibitions and sales. Books, music and videos are available [online](#).

### THREADS OF LIFE TEXTILE ARTS CENTER

Jalan Kajeng 24, Ubud, Bali 80571, Indonesia  
Open 10 am to 7 pm daily. [Click for directions](#).  
Gallery Tel +62-361-972187.  
Office Tel +62-361-976581.  
Fax +62-361-976582.  
Email [info@threadsoflife.com](mailto:info@threadsoflife.com).

### FIELD NOTES

Keeping people informed of our ongoing work in the communities is important to us. Every time our staff return from a field visit their experiences and observations are turned into a [field notes](#) slide show. Over time a rich archive of these will build up for visitors to browse through.

### OUR TEXTILE

Detailed descriptions, cultural references and photographs with high-resolution images [catalog](#) a varied and exciting sample of the best textiles produced by the weavers' cooperatives associated with Threads of Life.

### CLASSES, TOURS and UPCOMING EVENTS

The [classes](#) offered at the gallery on the history and diversity of Indonesia's textile arts are an excellent way to gain a new level of appreciation. News of any tours, events or exhibitions we are offering is also to be found here.

### YPBB FOUNDATION

YPBB stands for Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebali and is the name of the Indonesian nonprofit that the Threads of Life business is partnered with in its community work. [Read more](#) about YPBB's projects and funding.

### GET INVOLVED

To join the Threads of Life mailing list, click [subscribe](#). To update your contact information in the mailing list, click [update](#). To remove your name, click [unsubscribe](#). To send us an email, click [contact us](#).