

THREADS OF LIFE

February 2012 Newsletter



Dear William,

Welcome to the new-look Threads of Life newsletter.

In the current issue we have news of an exciting textile tour we are offering to Bali and Flores in September, and previews of two further tours later in the year, including a walking tour of Toraja in Sulawesi.

There are also lots of interesting field notes to catch up on since our last newsletter. All are previewed with links to the articles below.



Textile Tour to Bali and Flores

with Threads of Life
and Jalan Jalan Asia
16 - 28 September 2012

Following the success of last year's textile tour to Bali and Timor, Threads of Life and Jalan Jalan Asia Tours are again offering a two week journey, this time to Bali and Flores, to meet weavers and dyers, and to explore the culture and traditions surrounding the textile arts in Indonesia. During 5 nights in Ubud, Bali's cultural center, we will receive introductions to Indonesia's textile and natural dye arts at Threads of Life and the YPBB Foundation, meet local weavers, explore Bali's rich culture and countryside, and visit wood

Left to right: A natural dye workshop in West Kalimantan; Kalimantan field staff Lius, his wife, and their new baby; a weaver from Ile Mandiri, Flores

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Apologies

We apologize for not sending a newsletter since last May! We had a serious problem with our business email. The account that this newsletter is sent on got hijacked and was being used to send junk mail. We apologize to any of our long-term subscribers who may have received such emails. Once we found out, we closed that email address, and started looking for a new email solution. We are now using Constant Contact, which employs an industry-standard Confirmed Opt-In for new subscribers, and a secure Unsubscribe link at the foot of every email. Although there has been a long gap in our communications with you, this new solution will help us better serve your interests.

explore Bali's rich culture and countryside, and visit wood carvers, mask makers and painters. With 4 nights in Flores, we will spend focused time with the Bliran Sina Cultural Arts Cooperative with which Threads of Life and the YPBB Foundation have been working since 1998 to help weavers re-establish local natural dye traditions and create high-quality textiles that balance their desires for sustainable incomes and cultural integrity. During two days with the co-op members, tour participants accompanied by the tour's bilingual guides, will engage with weavers during their daily activities - dye plant harvesting, natural-dye preparation, ikat work, or weaving - as an opportunity for personal interaction and meaningful exchange that will be the highlight of the tour. The community also has a musicians group that we will spend time with to understand their traditional music and instruments. Returning to east Bali for the final 3 nights grants us the opportunity to visit Tenganan and meet its double-ikat weavers, and visit one of Threads of Life's weavers' cooperatives on the island's east coast. The tour price is USD 3,795 (not including international airfares).

For more details, [download the brochure](#). Sign up soon as space is limited. Contact Jean at jean@threadsoflife.com or Choy at karipedas@yahoo.com



Field Notes

The [field notes](#) section of our website gives up-to-date information about our fieldwork activities, and what we discover in the communities we work with. The following summarizes what's new in the field notes.

In July, we posted a field notes about [Bali](#) without going anywhere! Ubud made two new sacred masks for the Pura Dalem temple to Siwa, and textiles donated by Threads of Life and made by weavers on Nusa Penida were used to line one of the masks.

One of the highlights of last year was meeting with a new weaving group in [Flores](#) around Ile Mandiri mountain near Larantuka in September. The people here still highly regard their traditional textiles and are also eager to make textiles for Threads of Life.

In October, Pung, Wenten and Wayan along with Threads of Life Dayak fieldstaff Lius ventured to the Kapuas river



About Threads of Life

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



Donate to our Partner: YPBB Foundation

Threads of Life's nonprofit partner, the [YPBB Foundation](#), works with the same communities as Threads of Life to support cooperative development and environmental sustainability. YPBB trains weavers in the establishment and maintaining of credit unions, and the sustainable cultivation, harvesting and use of dye plants. Its groundbreaking dye plant and dye recipe identification and documentation is the backbone of ongoing work to safeguard endangered indigenous weaving traditions, and the livelihoods they represent, from extinction.

YPBB's quarterly Indonesian language magazine to its network of weavers' groups across Indonesia is called Suara Budaya, or The Voice of Tradition. With circulation of 1500 copies, it ties the loose association of cooperatives we work with into a functioning network. For just USD 3.50 we can print and mail four editions of

headwaters in [West Kalimantan](#) where they held a natural dye workshop welcomed with enthusiasm by weavers. Before the red dye work could begin, the villagers enacted a nakar ceremony for the mordant part of the dye process.

The village of Bokong in [West Timor](#) has been frequently mentioned in our field notes, but in November our field staff had the opportunity to visit the community's ancestral clan houses for the first time.

Also in November, a field trip to [Sumatra](#) documented some beautiful Batak wood sculpture, and the field team's search for traditional master carvers.



More Tours - Coming Soon!

We are also putting together two further tour packages for 2012. More news of both of these will follow in the next newsletter.

In October, we will be running a hiking tour to Tana Toraja in Sulawesi. Tana Toraja offers both a rich cultural and physical landscape, which will be explored on foot during day hikes and cultural excursions through the spectacular countryside.

Also in October, we will be offering a short 5-day textile tour based at the Alila Manggis hotel in east Bali. We will meet weavers in their homes, their studios, and cooperatives in the villages of Seraya on Bali's dry east coast, amongst the lush rice fields of Sidemen, and in the ancient and storied community of Tengenan Pegeringsingan. Experiencing the weavers' lives through these visits, and seeing their textiles, will be the highlights of a tour that offers unique insights into the forces at play in Bali's contemporary textile traditions.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark blue color.

from William, Jean, Pung and everyone at Threads of Life and the YPBB Foundation

print and mail four editions of Suara Budaya for a small weavers' group. With distribution to over fifty such groups, Suara Budaya is just one of the cost-effective ways YPBB multiplies the impact of its work. To support the publication of Suara Budaya, please donate at www.ypbb.org via Give2Asia, PayPal, or bank transfer.

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