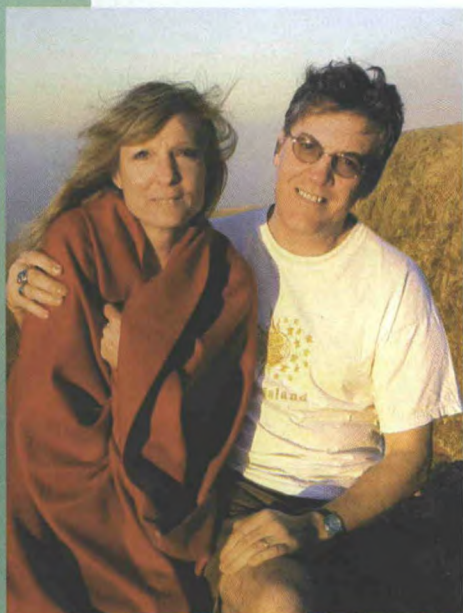




the bean counter who works for free

SEAN JONES is co-founder and treasurer of Appropriate Technology for Tibetans (ApTibeT), a UK registered Charitable Trust founded in 1984. Over 160 projects have been successfully implemented. Sean's unpaid work takes up to 60 hours a week, but he says "playing even such a tiny part in His Holiness's mandala of enlightened activity" gives meaning to his life.



Sean and Ariane Jones

My work involves lots of administration, especially finance and accounts. I work mostly from home by e-mail. I can work voluntarily, being retired from business (and from directing Jamyang Buddhist Centre in London) since 1993/94. In 1995, my wife Ariane and I took over to rescue ApTibeT from threatened collapse.

Ariane was working in Geneva and when we were married she joined ApTibeT's London Board. By 1998 we had stabilized ApTibeT, established a solid funding base and a professional staff, and could step back a bit. However, we are still involved in organizational development and working whenever requested by the director general. Now, we can rely on competent and committed staff, some of whom work as much as 120 hours a week in the field. Ariane is responsible for personnel and makes an effective contribution in various ways. With the help of her sheer determination we pulled ApTibeT through three difficult and critical years, and helped build it up to what it is today.

This year we relocated our HQ and Chief Executive Alexandra Jones to Kathmandu, since the field is where the real work takes place. It is a tribute to the ethos and professionalism of the staff that we have zero turnover in field employees: no one who ever joined the field staff ever quit.

The work like that of most voluntary sector undertakings is often difficult and frustrating, but satisfying and

beneficial when one sees the results. We help the most impoverished people to advance themselves – particularly Tibetans, although following good development practice we no longer favor Tibetans outright above other impoverished peoples. So we also help Indians, Ladakhis, Mongols, Nepalese and even Chinese, depending on where we find the greatest needs.

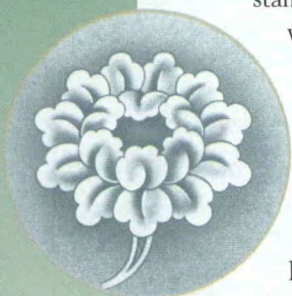
We feel lucky, being able to work voluntarily, while most people are obliged to work in less beneficial circumstances. We have to remember to dedicate merit by offering the merit from whatever virtuous actions we can carry out using our good qualities of body speech and mind, to all sentient beings.

technology makes life easier

By introducing appropriate and environmentally friendly development technologies, we help people fight poverty, disadvantage, hunger, thirst, disease and ignorance.

The 418 impoverished households in our 'Provision of safe drinking water' project at Ri-sar-ma village in Amdo now have two water taps each, one in the kitchen and one in the courtyard. Previously, the women had to make five five-mile round trips daily, fetching two buckets of water from the nearest well, and starting at 1.00AM. The villagers participated so enthusiastically that with surplus material they constructed 57 unplanned pigsties and 10 toilets.

In Kollegal, Karnataka, two checkdams were constructed and water piped 12 miles to 7,000 Tibetan refugees and neighboring Indian tribal villagers who had only six liters of water per day, compared to the 25 liters minimum set by WHO. This involves drilling 14 new bore wells, installing hand-pumps, platforms and fencing, renovating the dilapidated existing system, training Tibetans and Indians in water quality monitoring and maintenance and repair of the systems, constructing fifteen 30,000 liter capacity overhead water tanks and renovating nine old ones. One village had a 50 per cent incidence of cholera. They will have a reliable, adequate,





Caravan of emergency relief in Ladakh

photo: ApTibeT

safe water supply, a purification plan and a storage and distribution system, which they can maintain, with a maintenance fund managed by community groups to cover the cost of future maintenance, making the project fully sustainable. This three-year project is past the halfway mark, but there is a funding deficit of \$40,000.

At Tashi Jong settlement in Himachal Pradesh, Khamtrul Rinpoche's seat, masons were trained in ferro-cement construction techniques to construct low-cost twin-pit pour-flush composting toilets; 20 such toilets were installed where none existed, and a bore well was drilled with a submersible pump and a distribution system.

trapped in the snow

In Ladakh, 15,000 high-altitude nomads were trapped with their starving herds on the Changthang by disastrous early snows. To save them, and working against the clock, we organized tents, warm clothes, first aid kits, emergency food and 1,100 metric tons of animal fodder to be purchased in the Punjab, transported to Ladakh and distributed all over the frozen, snowbound Changthang. Despite the enormous logistical difficulties, it was a triumph of co-operation between many partners; even the Indian Air Force helped us to airlift fodder up to Leh. This operation, funded by a \$1,000,000 European Community Humanitarian Office grant, prevented any loss of human life and minimized livestock losses. It also enabling the unplanned purchase of fresh livestock to replenish depleted herds so all the nomads could continue their ancient way of life instead of becoming destitute migrant workers.

Technologies used include appropriate water supply methods and agricultural techniques; solar-powered water heaters, ovens, pumps, lanterns, lighting and heating systems; rammed earth, ferro-cement and other environmentally friendly building methods; biogas plants; passive solar architecture; UNESCO-approved composting toilets; windmills; greenhouses; and improved, fuel-efficient cook-stoves. Tens of thousands of examples of these items now exist in the Tibetan settlements, monasteries, nunneries and scattered communities all over India. Schools, community centers, hospitals, bathhouses and clinics are also constructed or re-fitted to

improve facilities. Projects are needs led, sustainable, replicable and designed using participatory rural appraisal techniques whereby solutions to problems are designed and implemented with the stakeholders' full participation.

I first became struck with Dharma by reading of the Dalai Lama's escape from Tibet in a newspaper in 1959. I can still picture the article in my mind. In 1961, I met Kevin Rigby, who introduced me to Hatha Yoga and Zen, and in 1965 we decided to hitchhike to India, without money.

After 10 years of adventures and wanderings, I arrived in Dharamsala and attended the Library teachings of Geshe Dharghye. I lived in the cowsheds at Glenmore, an old house in the forest above McLeod Ganj, and with other friends went run-

photo: ApTibeT



Two examples of pour-flush composting toilets

ning down the hill every morning to the library. At those cowsheds I first heard of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa in Kathmandu. Geshe la's teachings answered all my questions without my even having to voice them. I met His Holiness. I took refuge.

What I do for ApTibeT benefits me, as it's an opportunity to create merit. It seems that I can work effectively and that Ariane and I have the conditions and the karma to enable it to succeed. ☸

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