

Chapter 1: Notes & References

For more information about Lama Shenpen Hookham and her hermitage see: www.ahs.org.uk

My stop in Ruthin was with Zara Fleming, an old friend from my first ever visit to India and Nepal who went on to set up The Tibet Foundation to help preserve Tibetan culture. She now leads trips to Tibet, including Mount Kailash, and gave me excellent advice about what to see in Western Tibet and how to see it.

I have to add one other story Andrew Yeats told me – about his first trip to India in 1982, when he met Buddhism. “I did the Everest trek and there was this Buddhist monk doing it, too, from Thailand. He just had his light orange robes, sandals and a shoulder bag. So I lent him some of my thermals and we walked together. We shared my tent and I bought him food in the rest houses. I didn’t know why he was doing it until we got there. At Everest I woke in the middle of the night to find him sitting there meditating. We were up in the snow and he was holding this big lump of packed snow in his hands, melting it into a bottle. He told me not to worry and to go back to sleep. He was doing it for the people back in Thailand. It was a bloody big bottle; he must have been at it all night!”

Refs:

The Tibet Guide: Central and Western Tibet, Stephen Batchelor, Wisdom Publications, Boston, US, 1998.