

# WHERE WE CAME FROM

Nepali Women as seen by Toni Hagen in the 1950s





A big smile with a new baby nestled in the warm woollen clothes and held tight against her body. Women among the highland dwellers of the Karnali Region, especially from Thakuris and Chhetri castes, love silver coins as ornaments of reserve wealth while turquoise stones and coral beads provide additional colour.

January																2010
FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Weaving is a widespread domestic chore for women in the hills and the Himalaya. Backstap or body-tension loom is widely used among hill dwellers such as Limbus, Rais, Gurungs, Magars and Tamangs.

February													2010			
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				



As part of their daily routine, Bhotiya women milk the Chauri cow (a cross between highland yak/nak and lowland cattle).

March														2010		
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31



The western hills of Nepal are well known for wheat. Here, a woman wearing a long chain of pretty coral beads is seen busy harvesting.

April														2010		
THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	



Bhotiya people of Tibetan origin such as Sherpas produce finger chips of dried cheese *chhurpi* as a by-product of the process of butter-making. Sun-dried *chhurpi* is being carefully collected.

May															2010	
SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	



Tarai girls from groups such as the Tharu people love solid silver bracelets around their arms.

June														2010		
TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	



De-husking paddy with a *dhiki* is a common chore for all Nepali women of the mid-hills. A simple lever machine with a long wooden shaft is lifted by human weight at one end and the falling or beating end that is fitted with solid wood beats the paddy. The dehusked rice is being collected by a young girl. She has a pretty nose-ring, *bulaki*, common among Bahun and Chhetri women.

July														2010		
THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31





A ball of butter is being weighed on a single pan balance which does not need weight blocks. Weighing is based on principles of gravity and the functioning of simple lever machines. The bracelet of valuable elephant tusk on the woman's wrist and golden/silver rings on fingers depict her wealth and status.

August														2010			
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		



A mountain woman enjoys her baby after breast-feeding. Ornaments of coral beads around their neck add to the beauty of women.

September																2010
WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	



Weaving with the simple handloom is a common practice in mountainous Nepal. A Magar woman with a typical sling-bag across the body and wearing giant silver earrings displays her wealth and identity.

## October

2010

FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Girls of the mid-hills of Nepal, especially Tamangs, Gurungs and Magars, collect cinnamon leaves from nearby forests for extra income. Nepali cuisine uses whole leaves as a flavouring agent for meat preparations.

November													2010				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		



Brewing Tibetan tea in the Himalayan highlands is a special technique to cope with the low boiling point of water. Tea leaves are boiled in salt water to extract tea substances. Sherpa girls churn hot tea with butter in a wooden vessel before serving it.

**December**

**2010**

WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# WHERE WE CAME FROM

Nepali Women as seen by Toni Hagen in the 1950s



JANUARY



FEBRUARY



MARCH



APRIL



MAY



JUNE



JULY



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER



DECEMBER



Toni Hagen (1917-2003)

Calendar ©Toni Hagen Foundation Nepal



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Swiss geologist Toni Hagen first came to Nepal in 1950 as part of a technical assistance team sent by the Swiss government to help with the tentative steps at introducing western-style development. That was an era when foreigners had to seek government permission to travel outside the Kathmandu Valley. As the geologist in the Swiss team, Hagen was allowed to go around the countryside, an experience that whetted his desire to see more of this 'unknown' land. Thus began a relationship with a country that grew into a close friendship over the course of half a century.

Toni Hagen was later taken over by the United Nations to conduct the first geological survey of Nepal, making him the original 'UN expert' in the country. He spent nearly a decade doing that during which he travelled more than 14,000 km on foot. His explorations took him all over Nepal and he saw the country like no one else had before him, and very few have since. Hagen's experience of those early days, his geological findings and his views on the society and economy of Nepal have been documented in *Nepal: The Kingdom in the Himalaya* (4th ed, Himal Books, Kathmandu, 1998). Hagen's colour photographs in the book for the first time exposed the social diversity and varied landscape of Nepal. This was a landmark book which introduced Nepal to the world and to Nepalis themselves.

With time, Hagen became deeply involved in the study and practice of development in Asia and elsewhere. But he always kept a keen interest in what was happening in Nepal. He continued to critique Nepal's path to progress and never faltered in his belief that socioeconomic advancement was not possible without genuine democracy achieved through decentralisation. For his contribution to scholarship on Nepal, in 1984 the then Royal Nepal Academy awarded him the 'Birendra Prayalankar', the highest recognition given by the Nepali state to foreign scholars.

The Toni Hagen Foundation Nepal was set up in 2000 to continue the work begun by Toni Hagen long ago to promote an understanding of the Himalaya and its geography, among Nepalis themselves and in the outside world. This calendar is part of the same attempt and contains pictures taken from the 1950s by Toni Hagen. The slides from the Toni Hagen collection were made available by his family