

Some International Projects

written July 2021

Nepal - Anne Prescott



From Left: Richard Jackson, Anne Prescott, Allan Waldon and Jan Cameron

For some years local butcher Allan Waldon had given some support to the people of Nepal. To obtain additional help he approached the Rotary Club of Wahroonga and that is how we came to be involved in this wonderful project.

As at 2020 Wahroonga Rotary has been involved in Nepal for over ten years, initially supporting teacher professional development and school building programs. The Earthquake in April, 2015 unfortunately occurred in the region of Gorkha where most of our work had been carried out, and much of what had been built was destroyed. This is an update of our work in Nepal.

Bhawani School Hostel

Bhawani Secondary School in Manbu village serves its surrounding villages including some beyond a sensible day return walk to school, so over 100 students aged between 8 and 20 years board during the week at the hostel. Manbu is towards the upper limit of the habitable zone in the Himalayas and is cold at night in winter, very cold for students trying to sleep in a room with no heating, no insulation, no ceiling, no glass in the windows and hard stone walls, or a tent. The hostel was all but demolished in the earthquake in April, 2015. Three 8 room buildings have been completed and furnished, with plans and money-raising underway so we can build another. This year we gained a \$12 000 District Grant to furnish the rooms, especially bunks, bedding and floor coverings.

The girls in the hostel also received donations of warm jumpers, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Bunk beds bought for the hostel and a fully furnished room in hostel and below popular books for learning to read in Nepali or English



Jumpers, toothpaste and toothbrushes

- **Teacher Training**

In January, we returned to Bhairabi and Manbu for teacher education sessions. Again, we had UTS student teachers, teachers and friends who provided basic teacher training for primary and lower secondary teachers. Teacher training has grown to become a key focus for our work in Nepal. Primary teachers do not receive any teacher education – they simply move from the classroom to being the teacher. This used to occur when the student/teacher finished Year 8 but has recently been raised to Year 12. We conduct two sessions each day covering classroom management (to reduce the amount of shouting and hitting in class), ways to teach particular topics in Maths, English and Science. Many teachers walk more than 2 hours each way so they can attend.

This year we had a first aid trainer on the team. In about 2 hours at each school he was able to give all the teachers basic first aid. It was a lot of fun as arms and legs were bandaged but obviously with a serious message.

Traditional Nepalese folk art



The 2019 Nepal group with Rotarian Anne Prescott centre.



English teachers in the new classroom

Science teachers in the great outdoors, with the magnificent scenery in front of them.

Rebuilding schools.

Classes in some schools are still being held in tents, half demolished buildings and even buildings that are so damaged they should be demolished. It is only now that we can use the money raised immediately after the earthquake to complete the refurbishment/rebuild. It is exciting to see school buildings completed in Bhairabi, Dharapani, and Manbu, as well as many other schools rather than classrooms with dirt floors, a roof letting in the monsoonal rains and shutters that will keep out the cold but also the light, as electricity is not always available.



The new building of Bhawani School in Manbu.



The Bhairabi school new building



Dharapani School in the course of construction

In September 2018, we held a Trivia Night raising money for both Days for Girls and the Indochina Starfish Foundation, Australia.

- **Days for Girls**

Since 2016 the Rotary Club of Wahroonga has been working towards setting up a centre in Nepal for producing the Days for Girls sanitary kits and then handing them out to the girls in the schools in Gorkha. We have arranged with DfG to be the Gorkha Centre for Days for Girls so they will help train the women in Araghat. We will continue to raise money for DfG to pay the women and buy the materials supplied by the Days for Girls organisation in Nepal.

South Africa — Jo Karaolis

Kopanang Women's Co-Operative South Africa

After several months working with the Project leaders via email, a detailed programme of training for the leadership team in management skills has been agreed. It will include the employment of a professional business coach, experienced in development programmes in South Africa, to work directly with the leadership team. In addition, members of the team will undertake short courses in financial management, project management and people management skills. \$35,000 was transferred in April, 2019 for this training. An outcomes-based reporting regime is currently being drawn up in association with Sister Sheila Flynn and Mr John Cameron of the Wahroonga Rotary Club. In addition, a partnership has been made with a Sydney-based group, Friends of Kopanang, to send two young graduates to work at Kopanang for three months to assist in implementing the leadership team's project management. \$7000 is to be provided for one of the two fellowships. A small balance remains in the RAWCS account.

Cambodia - Jim Fulton

Indochina Starfish Foundation Australia

The Rotary Club of Wahroonga again donated \$1500 to ISF as a scholarship for a student to get an education. This is an important initiative for all students but has been particularly important for students who have had to drop out of school because of the costs.

Bunleng is one student who thought he would have to be a construction worker or some other kind of labourer because he could not get an education. With an ISF scholarship, he worked very hard at school and graduated in 2017, and his family were given regular food parcels. He is now applying for scholarships so he can undertake a bachelor's degree in business management.



A very happy Bunleng pictured here looking forward to further studies.