



We have been busy as usual! Som went to Nepal in March to support work in Batase and the school and to organise treks for Take on Nepal. This was a good opportunity for Som to spend an extended time in Nepal to oversee all the projects in the village. The monsoon season started in late May and this is the time when rice is planted. Children are on holidays during the monsoon so they can help with farming chores.

All children (65) from the hostel stayed in the hostel this holiday so they could be supported in their studies and to make sure they are well fed and looked after. If students are left to their own devices during this time they tend not to return to the school. Sujan Tamang has been running regular film nights in the new library which have been very popular.

Here in Cairns we had a successful social gathering at the German Club on 9th June where a number of people told stories of their time in Batase village. Thanks to Chris Zilm for his generous support for this event. We have also had two general meetings recently that were well attended and very positive. Som was away for a week promoting Take On Nepal in Sydney and then all the family went to Brisbane for a few days for a similar promotion. Som is leaving for Batase on 26th August and will be gone for the trekking season, returning to Cairns in the mid November.

Kind regards Som and Susan



FRIENDS OF HIMALAYAN CHILDREN (FHC)

PROGRESS

DONATE/SPONSOR NOW



AUGUST 2019

CONTENTS

FHC Sponsorship explained by *Mary Frances de Jourdan*

Rimmaya by *Brian Duncan*

Jitman needs help

Nijita's progress (update)

Cardistry was here by *Brian Duncan*

Hostel news

Membership Form & Can you help?

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEXT GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday 25 September
6:00pm, Stratford Library
Tea/coffee & refreshments served.
All welcome.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Sunday 1 December
3:00pm (venue to be confirmed)

IDEAS? WE WANT YOU!

We have nearly 600 people who are paid up members or who donate regularly to FHC. If you have an idea for a fundraiser, however small, please email me at donations@f-hc.org. If you'd like to give a talk about FHC to work colleagues or friends please let us know and we can supply advertising material. Every cent counts and we are responding to more and more needy children in Batase. Thanks.

FHC HOSTEL NEWS



Name: Binisha Gautam

Binisha is a new resident in the Friends of Himalayan Children home. She is from Gorkha in a region very far away from Batase.

Her father got married for second time and left the village and her mum. Her mum has a mental health problem so she cannot support her child's education. That's why she is here now.

FHC is struggling to meet the growing demand for help for Nepalese children. \$50 per month provides for the needs of a hostel resident. Please help if you can. [Donate here](#)

FHC Sponsorship explained – *Mary Frances De Jourdan*

FHC was founded by Som Tamang in 2007. Since then it has grown, developed and provided for many vulnerable children in Batase Village, with the hostel now housing over 60 children.

In addition to children living in the hostel, FHC also supports some children living with relatives at home, a teacher in the local school, students doing their Plus 2 education (equivalent to Year 11/12) in Kathmandu and several separate issues (a community member is in need of a prosthesis after losing his leg in the 2015 earthquake, another child has congenital hip problems requiring on going help/surgery etc). Sponsorship is the key to providing for all parts of the charity.

When sponsoring a child, FHC endeavours to match all sponsors to a particular child in the hostel. Some sponsors thoroughly enjoy this connection and want to send messages to the children and create a relationship, while others are happy to make donations without this connection. In reality, all donations are pooled to collectively cover costs to support all branches of the charity. Recently all sponsors were sent an end of year statement showing their donations for the year. The email stated that the real cost of supporting a child in Batase is \$50/month. Some sponsors



contacted FHC to willingly and generously increase their donations to this amount. If you haven't done this and would like to increase your donation, please contact us. Conversely, if you are unable to financially cover this added cost, your existing donation of \$30/month is still greatly appreciated. Students doing their Plus 2 in Kathmandu require approximately \$150/month to cover all costs associated with their education, accommodation and food.

[Continued on page 3]

My time in Batase village with my foster child, Rimmaya – Brian Duncan



Brian with the FHC Hostel children



Rimmaya, Brian and Anita

“Thanks to FHC, the children of Batase, girls in particular, are meeting the future with choice in their lives”.

“Thanks to a generous gift from my family, I recently had the opportunity to briefly experience Nepal in her magnificent and spectacular beauty, in her soulful and kind people, and the stark reality of life in a third world country. With my two best mates, we not only experienced trekking, but were blessed with an unforgettable visit to Batase Village, rural Nepal.

Our journey was laden with uncertainty, adventure and possibility. The key to comfortably dealing with the uncertainty, was the reassurance and kindness of the Take On Nepal staff, both in Kathmandu and Batase. Meeting everyone in Batase, and feeling the genuine warmth and kindness of the Nepali people, is indeed the highlight of my experience, punctuated by connecting with our sponsor child Rimmaya.

Thanks to FHC the children of Batase, girls in particular, are meeting the future with choice in their lives. Courageously navigating a future other than arranged marriage

or child trafficking, having been empowered by education, many are engaging in trekking, either as guides or porters.

We were so privileged to experience the Everest Base Camp trek. The adventure, the challenge, and the spectacular landscape, all combined with a beautiful connection with these wonderful young people from Batase, guaranteed the experience of a lifetime.

Following the trek, I again visited Batase, and was given the opportunity to return to Kathmandu with our sponsor child Rimmaya, who could then spend a few days with her sister Anita. Both girls came under the care of FHC six years ago, both have secure and bright futures, and both shine as examples of the difference FHC is making in the lives of many young people in rural Nepal.

I can't thank enough Som and Susan, FHC, Take On Nepal, and the beautiful people of Nepal. Life will never be the same again.”

Jitman needs help

Jitman Tamang (no related to Som) lost one of his legs, crushed by a falling rock while repairing his home from earthquake damage. An injury like this has a huge impact on a person's ability to contribute to his family and the community. There is no government assistance. His hospital expenses have been paid by a generous FHC volunteer, however he is accruing a debt as interest mounts on money borrowed from a money lender to secure his farmland and livelihood.

His efforts to reduce the debt by crushing rock with a hammer to produce gravel for a construction project, were insufficient so his family of six faces enormous stress.

An FHC volunteer bought Jitman a sewing machine and he's now gainfully employed by FHC, making uniforms for the children, in return for food and essential support. His debt stands at AUD\$710 and FHC hopes to raise the funds to off the debt, before considering raising further funds for a prosthetic leg (around \$1,200)*. FHC is very grateful for any contribution you can make towards reducing the hardship Jitman endures. If you would like to help Jitman, please donate [here](#).

* PS, a generous anonymous donor has presented a cheque for \$1,200 to FHC to cover the cost of Jitman's prosthetic leg.



Tree-planting project



So far 160 trees have been successfully planted near the village of Batase, the earliest of which have now reached about a metre in height. Firewood is ongoing issue in Batase, with children having to go further into the jungle to find supplies. A new trend – the buying up of rural land by wealthier Nepalese from Kathmandu – is impacting on access to the forest. By planting trees, it is hoped that a sustainable supply might be secured into the future.



Nijita and her dancing shoes

Nijita's progress (update)

Remember Nijita? She was in FHC's hostel with a serious walking disability. This disability came from being born with hip displacement, a problem relatively easily fixed in the Western world. Steve Johnson met her while visiting Batase and decided to help.

Now, a very excited Nijita is back in Batase after having surgery on 22 May to correct her hip problem, which had prevented her from walking properly all her life. She is now on a special diet and exercise routine to build strength for further surgery in March next year to lengthen her short leg by 20mm. Now she is mobile with the aid of a walking frame.

FHC is very grateful to Steve for his advocacy and commitment to helping Nijita walk.

After almost 12 weeks in Nepal, supporting Nijita through her hospital stay, Steve is now back in Australia, leaving Nijita in the very capable hands of Sangita, who is supervising her rehabilitation. His parting gift? A pair of dancing shoes, chosen by Nijita. Any financial help you can offer Nijita will be greatly appreciated by Steve, whose 'My Cause' page is located [here](#).

PS, Nijita has stated in the future she wants to 1) walk; 2) dance; 3) ride a motor bike.

Winter vegetable crops



Cabbages, brussel sprouts and spinach are growing well in the new garden. An experimental crop of corn, producing two heads per stalk, is doing OK. Som will report further when he assesses the value of the crop during his next visit.

Cardistry was here – Brian Duncan



James Milaras showing the children of Batase that cards can be fun, not just a tool for gambling.

Brian Duncan best captures the amazing efforts of James Milaras and American friend Sean in his FaceBook post (31/07).

James learned about the fantastic work Som and FHC were doing to improve the lives of children in Batase and wanted to help. He and Sean travelled to Batase to teach their skills of cardistry to the local kids.

Card gambling is a major problem in regional Nepal and children grow up in an environment exposed to this ugly and destructive side of life. James wanted to change their perception of what cards were about, not just a tool for gambling but a source of fun and dexterity. Their visit was a huge success and has been captured on a video that you can access on [YouTube here](#). Brian Duncan witnessed the aftermath of cardistry visit and talks about it on his FB page.

"Hi there FB friends. Having met James Milaras a number of times recently, I was just so buzzed at who this young man is, what this young man does, how this young man inspires, and how this young man puts vision and compassion into action."

He and his friend Sean went to Batase Village with an intent to do good. In support of Friends of Himalayan Children, they made this wonderful documentary about well, you'll see (acrobatics with cards is how I would describe it).

This was filmed in March – I was there in April, unaware that Cardistry even existed, and that James had already embarked on this remarkable short film. I noticed the kids in Batase randomly doing really cool stuff with playing cards, but nothing like any traditional games that I knew. How cool to look back now and realise where the seed was originally planted by James and Sean, and how their inspiration is growing in the general outlook of the kids.

Immense kudos to you both, James and Sean, I am sitting here enjoying the warmth of possibilities for the wheels of compassion and positivity you have set a rolling.

So dear friends, set aside 18 minutes to feel the same warm and fuzzies as everyone else who watches this video."

Watch video [here](#).

James also set up a [mycause](#) page to raise funds. As of 21 August James had raised \$2,432. His goal was to raise \$1,000!

Hostel news from Batase

"If you run in the morning it keeps you strong, fresh and smart for all the day".

This is Bir Bahadur and Buddhi Tamang (not related to Som). They are brothers. They have a sister called Buddhu Tamang. After the 2015 earthquake that devastated much of central and eastern Nepal, the family moved to India with their mother while their father worked abroad in an Arab country. They

stayed for about two years in India but tragically lost their mother. They then lived with their aunt, moving back to Nepal. FHC heard about their problem. They were rescued and given a home in the FHC hostel in Batase.

They are very talented and smart kids in the hostel. FHC provides everything for them. With help, I am sure they have bright future. You can sponsor or donate [here](#).



Bir Bahadur and Buddhi Tamang

New buffalo shed



With the new school finally ready to open in September, FHC hopes to obtain some of the corrugated iron from the temporary school. This will be used to build a new buffalo shed, incorporating accommodation for the chickens and possibly goats (a proposed acquisition).

FHC Sponsorship explained [continued from Page 1]

So, in reality, your name may be against one child but more than one sponsor may be required to cover all costs. Much of the administration of sponsorship takes place in Cairns with helpful support in Batase Village and The Banana House (FHC's Plus 2 Hostel in Kathmandu).

We try to keep connections between sponsors and children up to date. If you would like to send a letter to your sponsored child, please post to: The Banana House, PO Box 8303, Sundara, Kathmandu, NEPAL.

Some well-intentioned sponsors have suggested sending gifts. With over 60 children in the hostel in Batase alone, we ask that all donations be sent for all children. Separate gifts are not appropriate in this situation. Also, Christmas is not celebrated in Nepal. Christmas gifts are not a normal part of Nepalese life.

If you have any questions regarding sponsorship and how funds are used, please feel free to contact us, Mary Frances de Jourdan or Tim Trehearn, at donations@f-hc.org.

The library



Jonathon reports from Batase that the movies shown weekly in the library are a big hit with the hostel children. They run down the hill after dinner on Friday nights and Subash chooses a movie for them.

FHC hopes to be able to fund a supervisor for the Library so that it can operate optimally, but must currently prioritise the essential needs of the children over staff salaries. Various volunteers, both local and visiting, are doing what they can to facilitate library access. Anyone with ideas for a Librarian-focussed fund-raising campaign, please get in touch.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Members receive FHC news updates, 10% discount at Himalayan Dreams and 10% off on all FHC sponsored events.

MEMBERSHIP TO FHC

Membership to FHC is to be paid annually. Becoming a new member, or renewing your membership, is a 3-step process:

1. Indicate your membership type
2. Make payment through your online bank via 'Direct Debit' (see below)
3. Provide your details and send back to us.

1. Membership type

SINGLE (\$10/year) COUPLE (\$20/year) FAMILY (\$30/year)

2. Payment

Please make payments via 'Direct Debit' to:

Friends of Himalayan Children

BSB Number 034 664

Account Number 262 957

[Please put your 'name-membership number (if you have one)' in the 'Payee Reference' box]

3. Member Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Preferred phone contact: _____

Email: _____

Contact Details

Friends of Himalayan Children Inc, PO Box 5213 Cairns Qld 4870 AUSTRALIA

Mobile: 0428 861 001 (Tim Trehearn)

Email: info@f-hc.org

Website: www.f-hc.org

Please print the form, fill out and sign, then email, scan or photograph to info@f-hc.org

CAN YOU HELP?

FHC DONATION TINS



If you know of a high pedestrian-traffic venue (ie. café, bakery, corner shop, butchery) that would be willing to have one of our charity tins displayed on their counter, please contact:

- Daniel- 0450270399; or
- Jonathon- 0414281196

If the tin is lost or stolen, the venue will have no liability whatsoever.

We are also able to supply a chain and attach the tin to the counter.

IDEAS

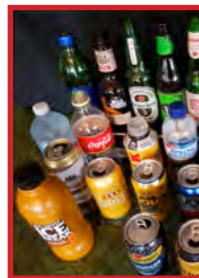


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to FHC. If you have an idea for a fundraiser, however small, please email me at donations@f-hc.org.

If you'd like to give a talk about FHC to work colleagues or friends please let us know and we can supply advertising material. Every cent counts and we are responding to more and more needy children in Batase. Thanks.

REDEEMABLE CONTAINERS



Would you consider collecting containers for our cause? Most soft drink cans, plastic bottles small and large, beer bottles and cans, juice poppers, even Yakult bottles are redeemable. Just look for '10c redeemable' printed on the label.

To redeem recyclables for our cause you can either:

1. ring Daniel on 0450270399 or Jonathon on 0414281196; or
2. email pascaleclayton@gmail.com with your address for pickup; or
3. drop them off in **Redlynch** (front of the garage door at 29 Eugenia Cres); or
4. drop them off in **Edgehill** (8 Fleming St) – Di Andrews 0408180201.