

PHOTO BY BIJAY TAMANG

"Always fun and exciting to wake up early morning and climb those beautiful hill and get this stunning sunrise just top of Batase village where you can see the panoramic view of all the villages, mountains and this amazing sunrise!"

Bijay Tamang



DONATE/SPONSOR NOW

FRIENDS OF HIMALAYAN CHILDREN (FHC) • Empowerment through education

PROGRESS



"Our volunteer administration ensures nearly 95% of funds raised go directly to supporting disadvantaged children in regional Nepal."

MARCH 2022

Women's trek to EBC



Nepal is now open for business and accepting international visitors. **Take on Nepal** is celebrating by organising their first trek for over two years – 'Women only Everest Base Camp Charity Walk'.

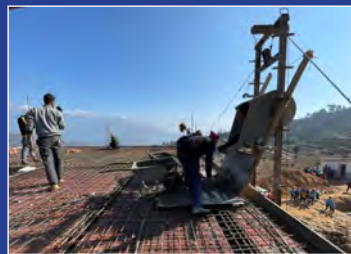
This is a unique trek because not only are the trekkers all women, the guides are too. This is part of the Take on Nepal vision by Som and Susan to empower women into careers and a life of choices. By supporting this trek you are supporting these enthusiastic young women. And it's for charity.

The trek starts 29 December and finishes 11 January 2023. A free information evening will be held at Friends of Cominos House (27 Greenslopes street) on Friday 1 April, 6 to 7:15pm. Visit FaceBook. Everyone is welcome.



Take on Nepal

New classrooms



Construction is well underway on the new school classrooms and facilities for the Batase School. These facilities are being built on the school grounds. The Nepalese government is using relief funds from the 2015 Earthquake donations for the build. Labour is provided by local villagers.

One of the rooms will be a computer room with computers generously provided by Rotary International and Rotary Club of Cairns Sunrise. One room for a science lab and another room for presentations where students will practice leadership skills and project presentations. The fourth room is a teacher's common room and store room.

Congratulations Christina



Sincere congratulations to Christina Lee, whom has just graduated from the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra with a joint degree – Bachelor of Law/Arts (Human Rights). Her dream is to become an international human rights lawyer.

Christina was the driving force behind the construction of the library in Batase. The library has had a massive impact on the lives of the children in the village and has been heavily used, especially during school lockdowns. It's also used as a community centre so the benefits go far and wide.

It was her interest in human rights that took her to Batase in 2016, four days after graduating from high school. She recognised –

"...behind their smiles were traumatic scars. The girls, their sisters and mothers are targets for human trafficking to India with false promises of hope."

"From that moment I decided to give everything I have to eliminate injustice, such as modern slavery in our international communities, through education."

Inspired, Christina convinced Libraries Without Borders (LWB), a Paris-based organisation, to help build Batase's first library. The community rallied and the library opened on Christmas Day, 2018.

We're all very proud of you Christina and we know you will continue to do amazing things to make this world a better place.

'Look away' – COVID vaccines for our kids



It's easier to look the other way... As of mid March, Covid infection rates in Nepal have plunged, now recording about 83 new cases per day (7-day average). This is great news. The vaccination roll out is has been well underway for adults but now the children are the focus. Eleven to 17 year-olds from our

hostel and the village are receiving their vaccines.

Sadly Nepal has recorded a total of nearly 12,000 deaths from Covid, compared to a world-wide total of 6 million. The Government hopes to have all adults fully vaccinated by mid April.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Thanks Heather



A big thank you to Heather English for dropping off this 'cargo' of 10c bottles and cans. Heather is a great contributor of recyclables, which goes to supporting FHC. She drops off her collection to Jonathan, who is one of our collectors.

If you would like to help as well, visit the back page to learn how. There you will find a list of collectors with contact details.

Or you can take your containers to one of the 'Containers for Change' depots and use our code **C10010512** to direct the money to FHC.

Thanks Ros



Many thanks to Rosamond Buglar from the Atherton Tableland for her continued support of Friends of Himalayan Children.

Ros supplied another 2kg of finger limes to FHC, which sold for \$50. Together with her earlier harvest, her donation has raised \$170 – in Cairns, Queensland.

Som Tamang's life story by Kirsty Nancarrow



Som with Kirsty Nancarrow

Som Tamang, founder of Friends of Himalayan Children, is just 38 years old and has already lived an extraordinary life. In fact, he's lived a life so remarkable that it could easily fill a book. Kirsty Nancarrow thinks so too. She has just finalised a manuscript of Som's life, *'Himalayan Dreams – The story of Som Tamang'* – and is now seeking a publisher. The book will be available in the near future.

Som grew up in the village of Batase in the shadow of the Himalayas in regional Nepal. From a very early age he understood the importance of education to the quality and freedoms of a happy life and set about to make changes for himself and his community.

He and his friends experienced some of the worst that life could offer – poverty, sex trafficking, child slave labour and violence.

Rather than succumbing to it, he chose to grow strong and fight back. He recognised that much of the injustice he was witnessing, particularly with the unfair treatment of young girls, was the product of out-dated and cruel cultural traditions.

Incredibly he made his way to Australia and worked hard to become financially capable enough to do something for his family, friends and his old community back in Nepal.

Som's story is huge and Kirsty Nancarrow has eloquently captured all in her book. Kirsty knows first-hand about the limitations of life in Batase having travelled there twice in recent years. She was recently interviewed on local ABC Radio. The interview is available here: <https://youtu.be/H2SZ4OVbegw>

Personal views



"Having magnificent view of mountains here in Batase village. Doing the village activities like ploughing the field for spread the corn, collecting firewood for rainy season, volunteering at school and hostel and other social activities and other work which makes us better, fit and happy everyday. Hope everyone is having great time and loving your beautiful time, NAMASTE."

Bijay is a trekking guide with Take on Nepal and a big-hearted supporter of the Batase School and Friends of Himalayan Children, helping out when and where he can. Our young friends in the village are often posting on the FHC and the Take on Nepal Face Book pages. Follow them here for the latest in news and their personal observations of life in Batase village and surrounds.



Friends of Himalayan Children



Take on Nepal

Nepal open to tourists

Nepal has opened its borders to international tourists again. Covid infections are in decline and vaccination rates are high so visitors are being welcomed back.

If you are thinking of travelling to Nepal, there are a few things you need to consider, when leaving Australia and entering Nepal:

1. **Visas** – available on arrival (by air or overland) or pre-planned (<https://www.immigration.gov.np/page/visa-on-arrival>); and
2. **Covid rules** (to exit Australia and enter Nepal) – rules and regulations for travel to Nepal are changing rapidly as the Covid pandemic situation improves. As of writing, travellers are required to be fully vaccinated (currently means two vaccinations) and proof of a recent (48 hours) negative Covid test to leave Australia. Fully vaccinated visitors are not required to quarantine when entering Nepal but you are required to have a covid test done on arrival (<https://www.kayak.com.au/travel-restrictions/nepal>).



CAN YOU HELP?

There are many useful ways you can contribute to our cause.

BECOME A MEMBER



For just \$10/year you can become a member of Friends of Himalayan Children.

You will be added to our email database and notified of up-coming FHC activities and events. Members get a 10% discount. And you will receive a quarterly news letter with all of the latest news about what has been happening in Batase and beyond. You can join online at:

www.f-hc.org/support/become-a-member

FHC DONATION TINS



Do 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?

If so, please contact Jonathan on 0414 281 196

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

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

FUNDRAISING IDEAS?

We have nearly 600 people who are paid up members or who donate regularly to FHC.

If you have any ideas for a fundraiser, however small, please email Tim Trehearn at: donations@f-hc.org

If you would like to give a talk about FHC to work colleagues or friends, please let us know and we can supply pull-up banners and advertising materials.

Every cent counts and we are responding to more and more needy children in Batase Village.

RECYCLING FOR FHC



Most soft drink cans, plastic bottles, beer bottles and cans, juice poppers, and even Yakult bottles are redeemable. Just look for '10c' printed on the label.

You can take your redeemable containers to any recycling centre in Queensland and the code **C10010512** will direct the money straight to FHC.

Big thank you to the Brisbane recyclers who are already directing refunds to FHC.

Or get your collection to us and we can process them:

- **REDLYNCH:** call/text Jonathan – 0414 281 196; or email pascacleayton@gmail.com with your address for pickup; or drop them off in front of their garage door at 29 Eugenia Cres, Redlynch; or
- **EDGE HILL:** call/text Di Andrews – 0408 180 201, or drop them off at 8 Fleming St, Edge hill; or
- **CARAVONICA:** call/text your location to Annett Musumeci – 0434 702 126 and she can collect; or
- **FRESHWATER:** call/text Maureen Cameron – 0407 737 337, or deliver to 16 Merrybrook Street, Freshwater.
- **ATHERTON:** call/text Mary Frances – 0400 607 323, or deliver to 3B Crisp Close, Atherton.

WANT TO BE A COLLECTOR TOO? email info@f-hc.org

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Support a child in Batase

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$30 PER MONTH

you can provide essential support for a child to be able to succeed at school to Year 10, while living at home.

You can make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Sponsor a child in FHC Hostel

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$50 PER MONTH

you can guarantee a child a place in school and the support needed to help the child in our Batase Hostel succeed to Year 10.

You can make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Sponsor a youth in Kathmandu

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$150 PER MONTH

you can support a young adult attending college in Nepal's capital, Kathmandu.

You can make a difference.