

FHC General Meeting

Minutes

24 November 2023

Meeting opened: 6.20pm

Attendance: Som Tamang, Susan Devitt, Tim Trehearn, Mary Frances de Jourdan, Jonathan Clayton, Peter Gaudron, Doreen Gaudron, Kirsty Nancarrow

Apologies: Kay Smith, Angus McColl, Fiona Sewell, Sue Lowth

1. Welcome (Tim)

Meeting opened at 6:20pm and all welcomed

2. Som Update

There is a new committee in Nepal. Anil Tamang is now in the position of President, Dinesh Tamang is in the position of Secretary and Sangita Tamang and Bimaya Tamang are committee members. Sujan Tamang resigned from his position of President.

Regular supporter, Donna Smith has donated approximately \$9000 to FHC with a focus on scholarships for +2 and University study. As a result 7 students (from schools other than Batase) with high performing students have been given the opportunity to study in Kathmandu.

Innocents Relief has supported the wages of 2 teachers for 2 years. Mary Frances will contact IR to see if this support can continue. It is a priority for Batase School and village

Najita Tamang is no longer living at the FHC hostel. Her accommodation, food and schooling costs 5000 Rupee/month. Payment for Najita's care has come from Steve Johnson through FHC account. Som suggested that now Najita is 18, the payments should be distanced from FHC. Mary Frances and Susan thought FHC should still assist Najita as she is still studying Yr 10 and her disability makes her life more difficult. This payment needs to be clarified.

Action – Tim Trehearn will contact Steve Johnson to clarify payment and account it will be paid to.

Good News Stories in the Village

Kirsty has been in touch with Robina (who she sponsored throughout her schooling). She has won a scholarship with the Samaanta Foundation and studying in Kathmandu for her +2.

Ganumaya is in the USA and doing very well. Her assistance from FHC and her hard work has opened doors to many opportunities. Sandra Carter has provided funding for her to follow her education there.

3. Himalayan Dreams – Kirsty Nancarrow

Kirsty's years of research and work on Himalayan Dreams is about to go to print. Elizabeth McLean heard Som and Kirsty's interview at the Cairns Festival this year. She reached out to Kirsty and is assisting with publication. Kirsty has had a very intense 3 months with release forms and covering all legal aspects. The goal is to have the book published for International Women's Day 2024 (1 March) Several book launch ideas are in the planning stages. It was decided that Kirsty will launch the book at St Andrew's film night (Women Take On Nepal – Tania Verbes). The two stories (film and book) are inextricably linked. Final pricing for the book is yet to be determined and Kirsty is giving FHC a reduced price of cost + \$10.

Other Book Launch ideas include:

- Cairns Tropical Writers Festival - 1 March 2024
- Cairns Business Women's Lunch – 8 March 2024

FHC are very excited and grateful for Kirsty's amazing achievement. Thank you for all you have done Kirsty and we look forward to seeing the book read by many!

Action- Tim to confirm book launch with Mark at St Andrews College

4. Upcoming Fundraising Tanya's Film in Cairns and Atherton (Tim)

Tim has booked venues for both Cairns (1 March, 2024 St Andrew's College) and Atherton (2 March, 2024 Atherton Hotel). Tanya will be present for both nights. Som Tamang and JP Clayton will work on a Sausage Sizzle for the first night 1 March, in Cairns. Som will source BBQ for the event.

Pricing was discussed :

- General Admission/Concession \$15
- 14 – 18 years of age \$10
- Children under 14 free
- Family \$40

Susan will organise tickets through Eventbrite

The Mayor of Atherton will welcome Tanya, FHC, Kirsty to the Atherton event.

Action: Som to source BBQ for Cairns event.

Action: Tim to organise Mayor of Atherton for Atherton event

5. Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS) – Peter Gaudron

Handout from Peter Gaudron

Friends of Himalayan Children (FHC) is now registered with Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS)!

Why did we pursue this outcome, how does it help our work in Nepal, and who do we need to acknowledge for this successful outcome?

A very detailed application has been submitted to RAWCS, nominating several "projects" in great detail for execution within the village of Batase, Nepal.

One of the approved projects at the lower funding end (\$20~25k) are media & speaking tours to promote the book produced by Kirsty Nancarrow on the life & work of Som Tamang, founder and President of FHC. We feel these tours will elevate the audience's understanding of Som's passion, & proven success in providing opportunities to all children, particularly girls, to rise above the grinding poverty which is the history of much of Nepal's rural inhabitants.

This in turn, should increase the success of fundraising towards the RAWCS approved projects.

Our signature project is a large building to provide teacher accommodation, student facilities, and possible additional classrooms, to be constructed on land donated to the school by FHC Nepal – budget estimates are in the range of \$400K.

It is important to understand that RAWCS do not fundraise!

RAWCS operate as a bank for registered entities – money donated & held by them for approved projects, and offers tax deductible status, a huge benefit for us.

Registration with RAWCS, however, gives FHC an introduction to every Rotary branch in the Australia to promote our charity dreams, with a reasonable possibility of some financial support every time we present.

First and foremost FHC needs to acknowledge Rita Zappulla (Sunrise Rotary, Cairns) for her unwavering belief in the charity work we do in Batase, and for fighting all the way to achieve this important milestone registration.

Without the support of RAWCS members Paul Asprey & Barry Tennent, success would have been unlikely.

Crucial to the registration process was FHC developing a successful relationship with a Nepali Rotary Club & we deeply thank the Kathmandu area Rotary Club of Balaju and it's members, headed by past President Kumar Kaushal, for endorsing us and accepting our stated ability to complete the nominated projects in Batase.

Closer to home, Jonathon Clayton deserves a special mention for the many hours he donated to develop a preliminary building plan, and then to create a construction budget.

PG

Thank you for your efforts with this Peter, Som and Kirsty

6. End of Year Thank You cards to Sponsors and Donors (Tim/Angus)

Angus has produced our end of year thank you card while in Vietnam. Kirsty reinforced that she really appreciated getting the card and thought it was a great thing for FHC to do. Mary Frances suggested the card come in a postcard format as

it is impossible to access envelopes for the size we send and postage is quite costly. As we do not have addresses for all sponsors, we will send ecards to any that we just have emails for.

Thank you (again) Angus for all you do for FHC...we would be lost without you.

Action – Tim to contact Angus to change format if possible.

7. Hostel Toilet Basin (JP)

The toilet basin is requiring plumbing

Action – Sopm will inquire with Bijay, Anil and Dinesh to cost

Long-term Project – Cooks need more food storage. JP suggested that 2 rooms be developed upstairs for this. Hot water tank/shower could be part of this project.

More discussion needed .

8. Motor bike and laptop (JP)

There has been difficulty reclaiming the motorbike/laptop used by FHC since Sujana has stepped down as president of FHC. Anil, Dinesh and Bijay have been borrowing these items from other people to fulfil their duties. Tim suggested that FHC should purchase new items for FHC committee use. Costs for a new motorbike is between \$4000-\$5000 (AUD) and laptop \$1500. The committee present (Tim, Mary Frances, JP, Som, Susan, Roz) agreed to this expenditure. Mary Frances suggested that documentation (stating this is property of the FHC committee) should be completed from the committee in Nepal to avoid problems in future.

Action – Som to communicate with Sue Lowth for money to be transferred to Nepal for these items.

Action – Mary Frances to develop documentation for FHC Nepal committee to sign when funds are received.

9. Other Business

ACNC and AGM preparation

Elizabeth McLean is starting paperwork for registration of FHC with ACNC (Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission)

FHC will work toward this but as a grassroots organisation working on tax deductibility status will be reviewed at a later date. In preparation for the AGM, Presidents Report, Secretary's Report and Treasurers Report will be completed as close to what is suggested by Elizabeth as possible

The AGM will be held at the Stratford Library on 1 February at 6pm.

Meeting closed: 8:45pm

(Minutes recorded by Mary Frances de Jourdan)