



Nepali Village Initiatives Association Inc.

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Newsletter No. 2 – November 2014

Eight months have passed since our Newsletter No. 1, and much has happened in that time.

LEARN established; first LEARN Training Program delivered.

LEARN (“Lifting Education, Advancing Rural Nepal”) has been established as our own NGO to deliver teacher training into the future. Its first 10-day Basic Training Program was delivered at Muktimarga Secondary School, Ghara, in April. 40 teachers attended the training which was delivered by our Chief Training Officer Kailash Tamang; CEO Krishna Pun; Sherab Sherpa; and Dumber Angdembe. Dumber is a founding Director of REED, the NGO that has delivered our training over the past three years. We are very pleased to be able work in cooperation with REED and to adopt their strategies.

The training began with an Opening Ceremony in which the sponsorships of the Nepali Village Initiatives Association and the Rotary Club of Kyneton, Victoria were acknowledged.

An addition to the normal training program was provided in this instance by World Peace Clown Susan Carew. Susan had joined the small group of volunteers travelling from Australia, and was able to incorporate some of her school-oriented activities into the program.

A Closing Ceremony was concluded by a group photo of trainers, trainees and visiting volunteers, followed in Nepalese style by dancing.



Volunteers Visit

Peter Hall led a volunteer group comprising Pat Baines (returning after her first visit in 2012); Susan Carew; and Gordon Nightingale, member of the Rotary Club of Daylesford. Between attending the training Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the group made their way up to Paudwar village on the opposite side of the valley. Here they delivered a Holiday Program for the village school children, comprising singing, reading, painting, games and other activities.



Gyan Bahadur Pun



Krishna Bahadur Pun



Dil Bahadur Chetri



Purna Bahadur Pun

Note: “Bahadur” means hero, brave warrior. All of these former headmasters were brave warriors!

Pat took the opportunity to record oral histories of four retired head masters - Gyan Bahadur Pun head master of Paudwar Secondary School for 34 years; Krishna Bahadur Pun who succeeded him 2002-04; Dil Bahadur Baruwal Chetri, former headmaster of Muktimarga Higher Secondary School; and his successor Purna Bahadur Pun.

These interviews revealed how desperately keen these men were to achieve their own education at a time when this was more than a simple challenge. Having achieved that goal, each was determined to pass on the benefits of education to the following generations of children of their villages.

Back in Kathmandu and Pokhara the team visited a number of Rotary Clubs and several schools where Susan was able to entertain the children with her clowning activities.

Rotary International Convention

The Rotary International annual Convention was held in Sydney at the beginning of June, attended by 18,000 Rotarians from around the world. We had a booth for Quality Education Nepal in the House of Friendship. This attracted much interest, adding to the number of people in receipt of this Newsletter. We look forward to maintaining contact, and the possible involvement of Rotary clubs near and far.



Our booth at the Rotary Convention

Project Videos

We indicated at the Convention that we would be producing a video about the project. It has become three videos:

- “QEN – A Project for Rotary” explaining how Clubs can initiate their own project with Global Grant funding from The Rotary Foundation
- “QEN - What the Nepalese Think” – interviews with a teacher and three Rotarians about the project and its impact on education in Nepal
- “QEN Live”, showing scenes in Nepal and the teacher training in progress.

These will shortly be posted to YouTube – search for QEN Nepal. They have also been prepared for release on a single DVD, giving the higher resolution needed for display at Rotary meetings, etc. If you would like a copy, please email info@nepalaid.org.au. Some people have already indicated their interest, but I need postal addresses.

As I will be away visiting Nepal once again from 20th November to 18th December, I may not be able to duplicate and dispatch DVDs until after Christmas, but I am very keen to distribute them to spread the word about the project. A modest contribution to costs and postage would be appreciated (see www.nepalaid.org.au/donations.php for making donations).

I should emphasise that I (Peter Hall) am very pleased to speak at Rotary Clubs and other gatherings about the project, but hopefully the videos will substitute for those who are too far away.

During our volunteer visit last April / May, Dr Pat Baines interviewed four retired secondary school headmasters to record their oral history. Most, though not all, of these interviews were recorded on video, and are also being made available as separate DVDs:

- Gyan Bahadur Tilija Pun, Headmaster, Paudwar Secondary School 1968-2002 (57 minutes)
- Dil Bahadur Baruwal Chetri and Purna Bahadur Pun, both former Headmasters of Muktimarga Higher Secondary School, Ghara (23 + 32 min.)
- Krishna Bahadur Tilija Pun, Headmaster, Paudwar Secondary School 2002-04 (27 minutes)

Please indicate if you would like these interviews as well (Krishna's can be included on the QEN DVD).

AusAid Grant

In August we were advised that an application that we had submitted for Direct Aid Program funding from the Australian Embassy in Kathmandu had been successful – just one of 15 applications to succeed out of 94 received.

The sum of Au\$12,312 enabled us to commence yet another training program, this time comprising the schools of Rima Resource Centre, the Education Department office for Histan and Ramche VDCs.

And so, in October, we had our biggest 10-day Training Program ever, at Adarsha Secondary School. Our photo taken at the Closing Ceremony shows LEARN President Umed Pun (centre, yellow shirt) with others involved in delivering the program.

The Graduation Ceremony was the biggest ever -





Donations

We are very fortunate to enjoy Tax Deductible Gift Recipient status through our registration with Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS). Gifts paid into the RAWCS Rotary Australia Overseas Aid Fund are receipted accordingly, then passed on to us for project use.

The volume of such receipts via RAWCS has increased markedly in recent years and now exceeds \$30 million per annum. In consequence RAWCS has reviewed its method of operations, leading to the adoption of a centralized, automated system of donation receipts.

The system accepts donations by credit card, direct credit or cheque. However, to ensure that it reaches our project and to receive your donation must reregistered online. If you are not able to do this, please contact the Project Manager (e.g. call 03 5424 1453). Otherwise, follow these steps:

- Go to www.rawcs.com.au and click Donate in the topline menu (or go directly to www.rawcs.com.au/donations.htm)
- Type in the project number (43) and select the Year Registered (2009-10), click 'Find this project'
- "Nepali Village Initiatives Project, Nepal" should appear. Click "Donate now" (right hand side)
- Fill in the Donor Details
- Enter the donation amount, and any special requests. For instance, if you want your donation to go only to our teacher training program, please indicate this (enter 'QEN only' or 'Education only'). Note that most our funds received go to this purpose anyway.
- Select the method of payment. If you select Credit card, enter the card details. If you select Direct Credit or Cheque, click PayNow and then follow the prompts.

Please note the options of fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, biannual or annual donations. Clicking one of these will trigger reminder emails at the appropriate interval. These emails give the option to:

- Proceed with donation - deduct a further donation now
- Skip next donation, then continue with schedule
- Cancel all future scheduled donations

If you do not select any of the options within five days of the email being sent, then the 'Proceed with donation' option will be selected for you.

We would very much appreciate donations made on this basis, as the information will assist us in our budgeting.

Donations received via RAWCS have hitherto been free of any charges. Donations received after 30 June 2015 will be subject to a 3% charge unless the donor is a Rotarian. Rotarian donors should record their Club and District in the Requests box to gain exemption from this fee..

Annual General Meeting

Formal notice has been given of our AGM to be held at 4:00pm on Sunday 16th November at 29 Blue Mount Road, Trentham. Please call 5424 1453 if you wish to attend in person (but please note that the formal meeting will be very short, though it will be followed by a showing of our new promotional videos). Otherwise to join a Skype conference phone call, send your Skype name, or if you don't have one, your phone number, to admin@nepalaid.org.au.

Those in other time zones, please note that it will be at 10:45 am in Nepal and 2:00pm in Timor Leste.

Forthcoming visit

Peter Hall will be making his third visit to Nepal this year in December, this time accompanied by his wife Ronda and stopping en route for a two week tour of Bhutan. He will be working with Krishna Pun and the Board of LEARN to review the administration of current projects and to plan the way ahead. Also taking the opportunity to visit Rotary Clubs (including the Rotary Club of Thimphu in Bhutan).

Seasons' Greetings

We wish all a happy festive season, looking forward to our own return from the Land of Happiness. Bhutan adopted Gross Domestic Happiness as the measure of well-being of the nation around forty years ago, recognizing the misleading nature of measures such as Gross Domestic Product. So we're looking forward to meeting many happy people in Bhutan, as well as those we know we'll meet again in Nepal.

