



*Bringing help to
Philippine Children with disabilities*

NEWS

Issue No 14 - February 2008

Keeping you in touch with the work of the Project

WHAT THE PROJECT HAS ACHIEVED IN 2007

A warm welcome to our supporters and readers to this edition of our newsletter, in which we highlight the events, activities and achievements of the Project during 2007. It is May last year since our last newsletter but the Project has been as active as ever. You will learn in this newsletter some of the ways in which our Partner Committee in the Philippines have been helping to improve the quality of the lives of many children with disabilities. On the administrative front, you will see that we have a new Treasurer. Alan Beavis, who has been Treasurer since 1999 and Laurie Tickner who has acted as Auditor, both resigned at the AGM in June and we thank them both for the efficient and valuable assistance they have given to the Project over that time. We are pleased that Michael Pinto has kindly agreed to take up the position of Treasurer and a profile of Michael appears later in the newsletter. We also welcome Juanito Salcedo to the UK Committee.

It was a year full of exciting events for both committees, working together towards helping children with special needs. We express our sincere and heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all the good people who generously support this cause. Without them we would not be able to give help to the children and their families. Please continue to support us and remember us in your prayers as we remember you in ours.

Raising fresh interest in Florida

Secretary Florencia and Membership Secretary John, paid a visit to Florencia's sister in Florida in 2007, where they had the pleasure of meeting the officers and members of the Filipino-American Social Club. Tom and Gigi Smith, Chairman and Secretary respectively organised a party to welcome Florencia and John who both gave a talk about the Project after which the officers and members of the club pledged their continued support.

Florencia's sister Nena Schwartz and husband Eli, organised a bowling fundraising evening where a sum of \$200 was raised and sent to help the children of the Project. Florencia and John also met an amazing American/Indian couple, Bill and Carol Newell, who in their late 70s are still active in charity work through the Rotary club.

Nena Schwartz made arrangements with the Bambang Rotary Club for Bill to make contact to talk about helping the Project. This is an exciting development and we are sure the commitment of Bill and Carol Newell will ensure it is a fruitful one.



St Anne's School children support for the Project

One of our members, Eric Concidine, who is also a Governor of St Anne's Roman Catholic Primary School in south London, kindly arranged for Florencia to make a presentation about the work of the Project to the senior classes at the school. Sister Linda Gallagher, the Head of the school has generously included us with other charitable causes the children support and presented the Project with a cheque for £195. The children were very interested to learn about the Project and discover something about the lives of disadvantaged children in a land far away.

Wet but profitable summer festival at Westminster Cathedral

We were invited to participate at this annual event in the Cathedral Hall in June. We were delighted to receive donations of books and bric-a-brac from many generous supporters. Our penguin display of photos of the children that we are helping created much interest. John, Florencia, Frances Lina, Gigi and Tom took turns in manning the stand and explaining what we do. At the end of a rainy and windy summer's day we raised the sum of £150. Our grateful thanks to our supporters.



Wonderful result from Hydro Challenge

The number of runners and walkers in this annual fundraising event has gradually increased over the years and twelve women participated in the Hydro Run in Hyde Park on 16th September 2007. Well done to the lovely ladies who did a fantastic job in raising the wonderful sum of £1104.55. Our thanks also to the dedicated men who came along to give their support and to the generosity of the supporters who sponsored the women runners. The Project has been actively involved in this organised run for the last ten years. Florencia collected her tenth medal having participated every year since it started in 1998.



Those taking part:

Ana Dunn and son Philip, Aylne Ibasco, Frances Lina Batten, Hermie de la Cruz, Elizabeth Stacey, Shirley Reyes, Florencia, Perly Richardson, Fe, Corpuz, Rosie Stacey, Hermela Gilmay, Alex Stacey, Remy de la Cruz and Stephen Dunn.

Come and join Eric walking the bridges

Eric Concidine has volunteered to walk 8 Thames bridges to raise funds by sponsorship for the Project. Why not come along and join Eric on Saturday 23rd February, he would be pleased to see as many supporters as possible. Eric, who celebrated his eighty first birthday last month, has promised that the pace will not be too severe, so there's no excuse for not keeping Eric company and in the process raise some money. For further details regarding the walk, or sponsoring, please contact Florencia on 07875 867 739.

UK Contact: Florencia C Kingscote, Secretary Bambang Sunshine Project Tel 07875 867 739
email florak@tiscali.co.uk www.bambang sunshineproject.org.uk

REPORT FROM THE PHILIPPINES

How your donations help the children with disabilities

Annual Field Trip

In April 2007, Frances Lina Batten, member of the UK committee, visited Bambang whilst on holiday in the Philippines. She had the opportunity to join some of the children, their carers and volunteers in the annual field trip to the provincial capital, where they enjoyed a picnic and boating on the lake. This was a special occasion for some of the children who were recognised for their achievements at their respective schools. The Chairperson, Mrs Soriano, presented the recognition awards to those who did well in the school year 2006-2007.



The Award Winners were:

Jean Asuncion, Amy Grace Garcia, Elsa Mahor, Rhyza Recites, Aubrey Gay Banejo, Drake Randell Pacheco, Ariza Joyce Alvarez, Emelyn Bautuista and Anierose Runbawau.

Christmas Programme

The Christmas Programme is an event that the children and their parents look forward to and this was another successful occasion for the children and their carers to celebrate Christmas as a 'family'. The new Municipal Mayor kindly donated apples that were distributed to all the children. The Committee in Bambang purchase goods to make up parcels for each child and these are distributed during the party. The children look forward to them with eager anticipation. Generous supporters in the US and Australia donated toys, clothing, towels as well as books for the children. There was also hotdogs and burger patties for the children to enjoy, kindly donated by the daughter of Mrs Urban one of the Bambang Committee. It was a happy event for everyone who attended, with the children showing their talents in singing, drama, playing instruments as well as dancing.



Artificial limbs

Through the Bambang Committee's initiative, the Project was able to get help from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes who paid P145, 000 for the prosthesis of three children. The Project paid for the travel expenses and accommodation for the parents and children when they went to the city for their prosthesis fitting.



• Ben Jeremiah Castro.



• Jaimer Jan Navarro.

Cleft Palate Operations

Two of our children, Emelyn Bautista and Jomar Maguslog had successful cleft palate operations in August. One in every 600-700 children are born throughout the world with cleft palate or cleft lip. The highest prevalence rates are amongst Native Americans and Asians. Because they look different they are often shunned and not able to integrate into society. We are pleased to have been able to arrange these operations for a number of our children.

Home Business Support

After the Project's gardening competition, vegetable and pig raising is a continuing project for some of the children's parents whilst others engage in small business enterprises such as selling homemade cakes.

Special Medication

The Project continues to provide the necessary assistance for those children who need special medication.

Reflexology Training

A course in Reflexology was attended by some parents in September and they are now able to earn an income from the skills they have learnt from this training which was paid for by the Project.

Help with Schooling

The Project provides tuition fees and miscellaneous expenses for 35 children who attend mainstream schools. The Project also pays for the education of children without speech and hard of hearing who continue to attend the school for children with special needs. Elsa, who is one of three blind children who go to a Braille School, received honours at the end of the school year as the best in reading Braille in English. She was also awarded the Most Polite Pupil of the year. Jake, one of the blind boys, continues to play the organ for special occasions and is paid for providing entertainment. The other boy Reynante, is sad that his mouth organ is no longer working but one of the Committee members has promised to buy him a new one.

Profile of our new Treasurer

I am honoured to be elected as Treasurer to the Bambang Sunshine Project. It will be a privilege to work with the Committee, Members and Friends to achieve the exciting objective, which is to provide support to children with disabilities in Bambang.

This is a worthy cause that will enable the group here in London and the Philippines to raise the profile of the needs of the children and their families. The effort continues to ensure provision of education, and practical support to the children which is so important.

I have gained experience in my life as a Health Care Professional, Educator and Manager which I hope will help contribute to the group's development and ultimately give greater support to the children. I am married to Imelda (Dioso) who is from Laguna, Philippines, and we have three daughters and one grand-daughter. We appreciate and thank the Lord for their health and wellbeing. Through this Project we offer our blessings and support to the children and families in Bambang.



• Michael Andrew Pinto

Your support

If you would like to support our work in bringing help to Philippine children with disabilities, please send donations to: Michael Pinto, BSP Treasurer 118A Eltham Road, Lee, London SE12 8UH Cheques should be made payable to **Bambang Sunshine Project.**

Thank you

Although Alan Beavis retired as Treasurer, he agreed to continue sponsorship of our newsletter produced by the wonderful team at Berkshire Scout Enterprises Ltd. Our special thanks to Dick Sawdon Smith for his editorial skills and to Don Honey for the design work.

Find out more by visiting
www.bambang sunshineproject.org.uk

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