

December 2018

Merry Christmas to all as another busy year draws to a close!

It's a great pleasure to be able to report that 2018 has been another happy and successful year for Meg's Children Nepal, thanks in no small part to your continued and extraordinary support.

In Nepal, the 12 new children we welcomed into our home in 2017 are happily settled at Noble House, enjoying life and making great progress at school. A number of them are pictured here, resplendent in uniforms donated by the Mullengandra Public School! The Mully School sadly closed its doors at the end of 2017, after nearly 150 years of service, and avid support for Meg's.



Following on from the successful integration of our newest charges, and a successful year of fundraising, the Meg's Children Committee recently made the decision to welcome six additional children to Noble House in 2019. This will bring Noble House to capacity, and we will work closely with the Nepalese child welfare authorities and with our colleagues at the Siddhi Memorial Hospital over the next few months to identify children in need of our support.

There have been a number of milestones for our older children this year, including graduations and a move to full time employment (details are included in the following pages). We are so proud of what these kids have achieved, of their mature and joyful approach to life, and of their ongoing commitment to their younger siblings at Noble House.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the enduring and huge generosity of our supporters. This year has seen a redoubling of

fundraising efforts, by new friends and old. Some of these stories are set out in this newsletter – including sponsored sobriety, open gardens in Albury and an Oktoberfest celebration. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of those who have supported us this year, and of course to the Meg's Children Nepal Committee, whose dedication continues to inspire me. This year we welcomed several new committee members, and David Taylor has taken on the role of Committee President. I must sincerely thank outgoing President Mark Lynch for his years of service to Meg's.

Wishing a safe and happy Christmas holiday to all!

Our newest arrivals have well and truly settled in

The group of 12 children that joined our family at Noble House last year are now well and truly settled in their new home, and are living a stable and happy life, attending the local Global Life School. While many of the children had only limited schooling previously, they are catching up and perhaps more importantly, are loving being at school. Our thanks also go to Mr Manohar Gauri, who manages Noble House. Manohar plays a very important role in the children's life, providing care, mentoring, advice and tuition.



Sagar set to graduate in early 2019

We are exceedingly proud of Sagar, who will graduate from the IEC College of Art and Fashion in March 2019 after four years of study and an internship. Sagar is pictured here signing a contract for the graduation ceremony, as his cohort's student representative. Sagar has put his heart and soul into his studies at IEC, and by all accounts has had great success. He is a natural leader and plays a central role in keeping Meg's on track in Nepal, assisting with administration and oversight, and acting as a mentor to the younger kids. Sagar has been with us since he was just 7 years old, and has grown into an exceptional young man, remarkable for his warmth, humour, drive and sense of social responsibility. We wish Sagar every success and know he will always be a part of our family.



Sita and Sushmita embark on their 'Plus 2' studies



Sita and Sushmita are both 17, and started their 'Plus 2' college studies in September (this is essentially a year 11/12 equivalent). Both girls sought vocational advice from their teachers at Global Life School, and have planned their Plus 2 studies to support their future goals – Sushmita would like to be a cook, and Sita is interested in the fashion industry. Both girls are working hard, and are great role models to the

Trish receives a Weekly Times Shine Award

In late 2017 Trish was nominated for and awarded a Weekly Times Shine Award. The Shine Awards highlight the contribution and achievements of women across rural and regional Australia in six categories – Courage, Grace, Dedication, Belief, Passion and Spirit. Trish was awarded the 'Passion' award, in recognition of her role as the founder of Meg's Children. This was a great accolade, which gave Trish the opportunity to extend the message of the importance of helping those less fortunate than ourselves, in whatever way you can.



Another year of Meg's in March – and a surprising entrant!

We were very pleased to be able to hold our Meg's in March fundraising event for the third year running this year, and thank all of those who held an event during what was another very successful season. Thanks must also go to Erin Wedgwood, who conceived the idea for this event and has driven it since 2016.



This year we were surprised and delighted by a new Meg's in March fundraising event hosted by Rural Funds Management (RFM), a Canberra-based agricultural fund. In an event dubbed 'Miserable March', a small and committed group of RFM employees pledged two months of sobriety in return for sponsorship by RFM and its generous employees.

We were completely overwhelmed by the funds that were raised through this initiative, and thank RFM for their huge generosity, which has made a significant difference to our kids in Nepal, and

supported our decision to welcome more children in 2019.

The initiative was led by Tim Sheridan, pictured here with his partner Adrienne, enjoying the wholesome pursuit of bushwalking during Miserable March (which doesn't look too miserable at all!).

A great year of fundraising – huge thanks to all who participated

It's been a busy year of fundraising events – old favourites, reinventions and new ideas. Our two main fundraising events were Oktoberfest, and the Albury Open Gardens in November.

This was the first time we've held an Oktoberfest event, and we were delighted with how it went. The Goods Shed Craft Beer Cafe in Wodonga was an excellent venue, and the charity auction, led by auctioneer Narelle Robinson, was great fun and raised a significant sum for our work in Nepal.





Following the success of our first open gardens event in the Wymah Valley last year, Marie-Lou Morrell took the lead on an Albury-based open gardens event, which was a roaring success. Three beautiful gardens on Macauley Street were open to the public, and there was a real festival atmosphere along the street with food and drinks, craft goods and plants for sale, and talks on sustainable gardening and renewable energy throughout the day. Huge thanks to all involved.

Siddhi Memorial Foundation celebrates its silver jubilee, during a turbulent year

We continue to work closely with the Siddhi Memorial Foundation, which is also based in Bhaktapur. Our partnership and friendship with Siddhi is hugely important, and helps us to ensure the good governance of our organisation in Nepal, and that we are in step with any changes in Nepalese regulations for child welfare. In turn, this allows us to focus on fundraising efforts in Australia.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible contribution of Mr Hari Adhikari, who until recently worked with Siddhi Memorial Foundation and has been a great friend to Meg's. Hari recently stepped back from Siddhi due to ill health, and is now recovering. We wish him all the best.

This year saw Siddhi celebrate 25 years since it was established. We heartily congratulate Mr Shyam Dhoubadel and his wife Mrs Ranjana Dhoubadel as well as the whole Siddhi Memorial Foundation community on this important milestone.

Unfortunately, in August 2018 the Siddhi Memorial Hospital experienced severe flash flooding. While thankfully no lives were lost, there was extensive damage to the hospital premises and equipment. Siddhi has bounced back, but it hasn't been an easy journey. Siddhi is an extremely important institution to the people of Bhaktapur, and we look forward to continuing to work with Siddhi in the coming years.



Emergency Department



Drowned hospital premises

Last, but by no means least – a huge thank you to all of our supporters

We've been blessed again this year by the huge generosity of our supporters. Special thanks must go to Rural Funds Management, Fr Adrian Meany and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Australia, the Geok Hua Wong Charitable Trust, Koorngal Rotary, North Albury Rotary and Bill McDonald, the Great Aussie Holiday Park, Whorouly Inner Wheel, Saint Anne's School Albury, and Saint Joseph's School Beechworth.

Special thanks to Marie-Lou and Steve Morrell, Judith Sowden and Shaun and Dimity Field for opening up their gardens in November, and for all their hard work in the lead up, and on the day.

Thank you also to all of those who donated items for our charity auction, including Sancon Civil, Dalcheri Natural Fibre Concept Store, David Taylor Photography, Chris's Pest Control, Gwen Lavis Counselling,

Calimo Cabinets, Essential Ingredient Albury, Vince Ryan, Leo and Leisa Whyte, Chrissy Lavis and Nicky Spalding. Thanks also to Narelle Robinson, who was our auctioneer on the night.

