Hope you enjoy. If you have an article to include in future newsletters, please forward to sydney@kiwanis.org.au

#Kids need Kiwanis!

Do you want to help kids? Kiwanis Sydney needs your help to continue our work in the local, Australian and world communities. Come along, obligation free, to one of our monthly meetings, or a Bunnings barbecue to meet the team, or simply meet with one of our members over a coffee and hear about what we do and how you can help. You will meet new friends and get that warm feeling from helping kids in Sydney Children's Hospital, HeartKids, Sir Eric Woodward School, Giant Steps, Nepal or others. Contact us at sydney@kiwanis.org.au

President’s Message

Hello everyone, it’s good to be back from a successful and entertaining Convention.

The highlight of the trip was our visit to Rainbow Children’s Home. We got to celebrate the festival of Holi which is a festival of Spring/Colour and signifies the victory of good over evil. I would like to thank all of you for organising the gifts and donations for the children of RCH. The smiles and joy on their faces was priceless.

In contrast to that heartwarming experience, we are now in uncharted waters where the challenges can sometimes feel insurmountable. But we are all in it together and we can harness our energy, love and understanding to stay safe and help each other through this difficult time.

*There are no great things, only small things with great love (Mother Teresa)*

Rainbow Children’s Home

Kiwanis Sydney has supported Rainbow Children’s Home (RCH) in Pokhara for the last 5 years with annual donations of $1,000. While recently in Nepal a group of 5 from Kiwanis Sydney took the opportunity to visit RCH.

Rainbow Children’s Home is an orphanage currently housing 39 boys and girls between the ages of 2 to 16 years old. The children live in two buildings on the site, one for the boys and one for the girls with two house mothers living in the girls building. They can play in a small courtyard or go to three study rooms catering for the different age groups. The bedrooms we saw, each house 4 to 6 girls in bunk beds with a very small locker for each child. A kitchen serves up the two meals of daal (lentils) and rice each day with the treat on Fridays being some chicken. The meals are prepared and served by the girls and all children eat at long tables, and then washup their plates at an outside tap. All the children go to school outside the home each day.

Goma Dhakal is the principal of the home and has run it for 14 years from 2007. For 20 years before that Goma concentrated on helping the poor, advocating for their justice and played a crucial role in the fight against
different social injustices.

RCH also supports 40 other children in local villages, with education sponsorships. Goma is rightly proud of “her” children who in the past years have graduated from school, studied at University and now have professional careers. These past students now support RCH.
Goma is certainly enterprising!

She runs a farm in a nearby village that grows organic food for sale, and to provide for the home. The farm provides an opportunity for the villagers and students from RCH to learn farming skills as well as welcoming tourists to farm stays, to supplement income.

Goma has engaged local women to develop their weaving and handicraft skills and sells their work through an onsite outlet plus other outlets. She has expanded this strategy to working with women in prison to also develop their skills.

We have seen over the years, that she continues to help villagers affected by poverty or crisis. Recently in February she distributed warm clothing to a Chitwan community.

Our visit! Prior to our trip, Patricia had organised several ladies to knit lots of scarves and beanies. We thank these ladies for their invaluable work. Killara Soccer Club had also donated a few dozen soccer shirts. Well, we all managed to cram these extras, into ours and other Kiwanians’ suitcases to get them to Nepal. Unfortunately, Patricia couldn’t travel to Nepal due to the impending coronavirus. We also had lots of Australiana toys and school supplies.
We walked to the Home on Monday 9th March carrying our many bags of gifts and were met by the children, who quickly set up the chairs in the courtyard for their welcome ceremony. Unbeknown to us the day was a public holiday called “Happy Holi” which is a festival of colours and love. It celebrates the Hindi victory of good over evil.

After lots of talking to the kids, other volunteers and Goma, we toured the girls building, kitchen and store. We then sat to receive the welcome. Goma placed a neck scarf on each of us, and then was quite reserved in applying colours to our faces. Then, President Naz was less reserved in adorning the children with colours, and from there the children and adults all got into the spirit, and colours were applied to everyone with gusto, even the home’s two dogs.

Before leaving we handed out the soccer shirts to most of the children, and some of the scarves and beanies.

What a beautiful morning! It certainly was the highlight of our trip to Nepal and reinforces the good our help to causes like this, is doing for disadvantaged children.

Postscript! With the Covid-19 crisis, India closed its’ borders and cut off Nepal’s main supply routes. Goma is rightly worried about the welfare of her children, and wants to ensure their food supplies for the next few months. She has appealed to Kiwanis Sydney for help. Kiwanis Sydney has transferred extra monies to support RCH to buy food for the kids, enough for at least 3 months. We have also agreed an extra amount to be sent in approximately 1 month for other costs that may arise.

Kiwanians cook their own lunch and help Seven Women

In Kathmandu eleven Aussies went to an organisation called Seven Women to cook their own lunch! https://sevenwomen.org/

This organisation empowers marginalised women in Nepal with education and employment. It was started by Stephanie Woolard from Melbourne, after she met seven disabled women working in a tin shed in Kathmandu. These seven women were struggling to make a living in the face of harsh discrimination. With her last $200, Steph paid for trainers to teach the women how to produce products for sale locally and abroad – and Seven Women was born.

Nowadays they have quite a large site and buildings including:

- Accommodation for some of the women to live when no other option is available
- A workshop with several sewing machines (old treadle versions) where ladies make handicrafts
- Education rooms and a library where the women are taught to read English and Nepali and can study outside of their school or University
- A large cooking room with dining tables where they can take classes and teach preparation of local Nepalese dishes.
- An outlet shop for their handicrafts
- A packaging and postal room for goods being sent overseas
The girls and ladies come from all over Nepal to live at Seven Women, or elsewhere in Kathmandu. Some are quite a long distance from their home villages. The girls who talked to our group were all attending school or University. Their day usually starts at 6am and after school they work in the centre.

Our Kiwanians were there to learn the “finer” skills of cooking vegetarian Mo-mos and the accompanying spicy tomato sauce. These cooking classes have proved to be a valuable source of income for the centre. We had eight ladies and 3 men attend, and have a lot of fun. I must say the finished mo-mos looked sub-standard compared to our Mo-Mo instructor’s samples, however they all still tasted pretty good. The dexterity of folding, pleating and sealing the pastry was challenging. After the cooking we all enjoyed the fruits of our labour.

**Australian Himalayan Foundation**

The AMF, who sponsor children in remote Nepalese villages to get an education, reached out to our member Jeff for help. They had dozens of solar powered inflatable lights to allow kids to study at night, that they wanted transported to Nepal. Jeff and Dave took these in their suitcases and delivered them in Kathmandu. They delivered the lights to Action in Nepal who provide health, education and clean water services to children in remote areas.

**ASPAC Convention**

Kiwanis Districts from Nepal, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and the South Pacific, Philippines South, Philippines Luzon, Japan, Taiwan, India and Korea held their annual ASPAC Convention in Kathmandu, Nepal in early March. Eighteen Australians including six from Kiwanis Sydney attended and enjoyed other side trips in Nepal while there.

Kiwanis Nepal certainly put on a great convention, with just over 300 Kiwanians in attendance. They expected 1,000, however, with the threat of the coronavirus, Taiwan and Korea had mass cancellations and most other nations were down in numbers significantly. Several Kiwanians were also there from KI Office, Europe and the USA.

On the election front, Australia’s Tony Gunn was seeking re-election as a KI Trustee for a further two years. He was against Wilfredo Aguilar from Philippines. Unfortunately, Tony lost the vote. We wish Wilfredo every success in his new position.
Our Kiwanis Australia display looked great with examples of our projects. Even with bribes of Caramello Koalas the judges still awarded the best district service project to the Philippines South Kiwanis Club of Geo-Ormoc. Their signature project was titled Protect Children – Child Rights Campaign which seeks to end child labour, human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse. They are feeding the children; educating the children and the community; advocating with community leaders; and using printed materials and media to change the attitudes of all to child exploitation.

We heard from KI President Daniel Vigneron, President Elect Art Riley, KI COO Jeff Otess and KCF CEO Ann Undergrath Spleth. Art told us we “need a bigger team” in order that we can do more service in the community. Jeff talked about KI and how their 120 staff around the world can help us if we have an issue. He also commended ASPAC as the 2nd largest, and fastest growing area in the Kiwanis world.

Ann from Kiwanis Childrens Fund (KCF) outlined the five causes they support through grants. 1. Local projects particularly improving literacy and fighting childhood hunger. 2. Service leadership programs. 3. Disaster relief. 4. Eliminate addressing maternal neonatal tetanus (MNT) and 5. IDD (Iodine Deficiency Disorder). MNT is down to 12 countries, where mothers and babies remain at risk. Unfortunately, most of these are conflict countries, however UNICEF requires the cash in order they can get in to vaccinate as the opportunity arises. In 2018-19 KCF gave US$1.8 million to UNICEF for MNT. With IDD, 86% of households in the world have sufficient iodine in their diet. KCF continues to address IDD where the need is, and recently gave US$336,000 for use in Morocco and Myanmar.

Each District Governor gave a ten minute snapshot of their district. Japan has helped abused children shelters with the donation of 8 cars. Malaysia is building a new children’s centre to cater for children with literacy issues, and children with cerebral palsy. NZSP is introducing Terrific Kids as a common club project. Philippines Luzon is running the Key Leadership program for ASPAC this year. Philippines South has a nutrition program for 2 to 6 year-olds. Taiwan is promoting an international volunteer exchange program and also an anti-drugs/anti bullying campaign. Nepal has a bicycle project, kids Olympiad, self defence training, girls menstruation project and they want to build a street kids rehabilitation centre. India has an artificial limbs centre which provided 9,000 limbs in 2019, a cerebral palsy centre and a physiotherapy centre.

At each ASPAC Convention each district is asked to perform a “cultural” display. This year eighteen Australian Kiwanians sang the Seekers song “We are Australian” with a couple of extra verses, relating to recent bushfires.

After a great convention most Kiwanians went on to explore areas of Nepal.

Helping Girls achieve their education goals

Kiwanis Sydney recently made a donation to the Harding Miller Foundation and received “sincere thanks to all the team” from Mel at Harding Miller. www.Hardingmillereducationfoundation.org.au

Harding Miller offer the tools and support to lift the educational outcomes and career aspirations, of high potential girls who are facing disadvantage. They support girls in years 9 to 12 all over Australia.

Our donated funds will be used to pay for online homework help for five Harding Miller girls across rural and regional areas of NSW.

The homework help is through a service called Studiosity - https://www.studiosity.com/ and will mean that these girls can get real time advice and guidance, on school assignments as well as 24 hour turnaround on written assessments. Many of the scholars don't have the support that other more socio-economically advantaged students have at home, so
this service really helps to level the playing field for them. On average, students who use Studiosity do 15% better in assessments.

Kiwanis Sydney hopes to be able to support disadvantaged girls through Harding Miller, consistently over the coming years.

**Beautiful Nepal**

Nepal is a country of contrasts. The spectacular mountain peaks can be seen from almost everywhere. Eight of the mountains are over 8,000 metres. The people are beautiful, happy and always willing to help. Children play happily outside, usually without manufactured toys, and adults sit and talk to each other at days end. Age old temples, villages and buildings abound.
Contrast that to very thick smog, especially in Kathmandu where a face mask is essential. Kathmandu lies inside a bowl-shaped valley high in the hills area with a population of 2.5 million, and very fast growth. All the supplies have to be trucked in, with no trains or ships, and the factories and many vehicles lead to the smog that doesn’t dissipate. Litter is also a major problem with limited rubbish removal. Quite a few of the ancient temples and the palace in the Kathmandu Durbar central square were badly damaged in the 2015 earthquake.

Nepal suffered a decade long revolution against the monarchy until eventually in 2006, a democratic government was elected. In the years of hostilities, it is believed 17,000 lives were lost affecting a million children. Then in 2015 the major earthquake killed nearly 9,000 people. It is no wonder there are so many children orphaned or displaced.

Pokhara with a population of over 400,000 on the other hand is a clean city, and welcomes trekkers from around the world. It is set on a beautiful lake and overlooked by the World Peace Stupa. It sits at 830 metres asl and has grand views of the nearby Annapurna range.

Chitwan National Park is home to rhinoceros, elephants, the Bengal tiger, crocodiles, monkeys, deer and teems of birdlife. Tourists and resorts abound, and guided tours by dugout canoes, walking or jeep, let you see the wildlife.

Roads in Nepal are appalling. Our trip to Chitwan of 170 kilometres on the major arterial highway took 5 hours in a car. And it didn’t pay to be a nervous traveller as we overtook trucks and buses on “blind” corners. Land slips had also taken part of the road in places. Streets in Kathmandu are congested, road rules are non-existent and traffic jams are the norm.

Unfortunately, wherever we went the serious effect of the coronavirus is impacting heavily on the massive tourist industry. Hotels and restaurants are nearly empty and shops are desperate to attract the few tourists.
Otherwise, we thoroughly enjoyed our trip, seeing the beautiful landscapes and meeting the lovely people.

Covid-19 Effects on Kiwanis Sydney

Like everyone around the world, Kiwanis Sydney is affected by the Covid-19 crisis, and will have to change the ways it operates. Hopefully this is relatively short-term.

Our Bunnings barbeques are cancelled “indefinitely”. Bunnings has recognised that the many charities they support will suffer at a time when they will be called on to help in the community. Bunnings has donated a $500 Bunnings gift card to organisations with barbeques planned up to 13th April. **We thank Bunnings for this generous donation!**

Our meetings for April and May will now be held by GoToMeeting which is an online portal. We will still endeavour to have our guest speakers at these meetings, and keep people connected.

Our involvement with Sir Eric Woodward Terrific Kids presentation has been postponed, until it is safe to visit the school again.

Hopefully the dreadful virus can be overcome in a couple of months and we can again function in the public to help our many causes.

Aussie Helpers

We recently sent another donation to Aussie Helpers and received the following response.

_Thank you for your kind donation and your continuing support. Please advise your members how your kind support will be used to assist our Aussie Farmers._

_Aussie Helpers assists farming families with stock feed, stock feed supplements, groceries and personal care items._

_We also send out gift cards for the necessities which they can spend in their local towns, which benefits local business too._

_We appreciate your kind support._

_Jo Stever – Aussie Helpers_

Exodus Foundation

At a recent Board meeting it was decided to donate more funds to Exodus to help with meals for the needy and homeless, especially in this higher time of need.
Events Coming Up: 2020

Meeting - **Wed 8th April** - Online via GoToMeeting 6.30pm to 8.00pm –

*Guest Speaker – Ruchi Liyange – Child Development Centre in Sri Lanka*

Bunnings BBQ Artarmon - **Sun 19th April** 8.30am to 4.00pm – *probably cancelled*

Mothers Day Cards and Flowers at Caroline Chisholm Nursing Home - **Sat 9th May** - *probably cancelled*

Meeting - **Wed 13th May** – Online via GoToMeeting 6.30pm to 8.00pm – **Annual Meeting and Elections**

*Guest Speaker – Kirsty-Leah Goymour – Comfort Care Cases*

Bunnings BBQ Artarmon - **Sun 17th May** 8.30am to 4.00pm - *possibly cancelled*

Meeting - **Wed 10th June** - Chatswood RSL 6.30pm to 8.00pm

*Guest Speaker – tba*

Bunnings BBQ Artarmon - **Sun 14th June** 8.30am to 4.00pm
**Deserving Causes we have helped**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sydney Children’s Hospital Randwick - Comfort Care Cases</td>
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<td>Sir Eric Woodward School - Terrific Kids and gardening</td>
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<td>Children First Foundation - life changing medical help for children</td>
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<td>HeartKids Australia - research into children’s heart disease and local respite</td>
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<td>Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Womens Shelter</td>
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<td>Eliminate - Kiwanis / UNICEF program to stop newborns and mothers dying from tetanus</td>
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<td>Rainbow Children's Home Nepal - house and educate orphans</td>
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<td>Nepalese school children - Aust. Himalayan Foundation and Tribal Foundation</td>
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<td>Harding Miller Foundation – part sponsorship of a Yr 9 girl for High School studies</td>
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<td>Bear Cottage and Soldier On thru Pollie Pedal</td>
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<td>Pallister Killian Foundation</td>
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<td>Noahs Ark Toy Library for children with special needs</td>
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<td>Giant Steps Chiswick - school for autistic children</td>
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<td>UNICEF Cycle for Children in Laos -</td>
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<td>Aussie Helpers to Farmers and thru Cobar Rotary Club and Hampers for farmers</td>
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<td>RFS Killara for fit-out of new brigade shed</td>
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<td>Longest Day Golf Challenge for Cancer Council - sponsored a golfer for 72 holes to support CC</td>
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<td>Endure for a Cure - Children's Cancer</td>
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<td>Exodus Foundation Rev Bill Crews - helping the homeless</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Children’s Fund - various worldwide projects – annual club gift</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Australia District Charitable Foundation – annual club gift</td>
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<td>Caroline Chisholm Nursing Home Lane Cove - Mother's day cards and flowers</td>
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<td>Alola Foundation - Timor Leste</td>
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<td>Operation Rainbow / Kiwanis Club of Cebu - operating on cleft lip and palates</td>
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**The Objects of Kiwanis International**

1. To give primacy to the human and spiritual rather than to the material values of life.
2. To encourage the daily living of the Golden Rule in all human relationships.
3. To promote the adoption and the application of higher social, business and professional standards.
4. To develop, by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive and serviceable citizenship.
5. To provide, through Kiwanis clubs, a practical means to form enduring friendships, to render altruistic service and to build better communities.
6. To cooperate in creating and maintaining that sound public opinion and high idealism which make possible the increase of righteousness, justice, patriotism and good will.

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