

Sunrise Children's Association Inc.
"Bringing a brighter future to the needy children of Nepal"



NEWSLETTER
Edition 3,
June 2007

Dear friends of Sunrise,

We hope that you are all enjoying the Winter months in Australia, and the rains are bringing some relief to your farms and gardens. We in Nepal are experiencing the annual monsoons, which started at the beginning of June. The monsoons are a wonderful relief to many in the Kathmandu valley who regularly suffer severe water shortages throughout much of the year. The rains also bring with it beautiful lush green hills and gardens, and help to reduce the heavy dust and pollution on city roads.

April 15th saw the start of the new Nepali year (2064 on the Nepali calendar) and boy has it been a busy start to the year! We are very excited to bring you lots of news from both SCAI and Sunrise in Nepal....

Visitors from Australia

This quarter we have had many visitors from Australia, including all four SCAI committee members! **Emma** returned to Nepal on March 26th, and is now planning to stay for around 3 years to oversee the further development of Sunrise and work hands on with the children. Emma's mum **Pamela** joined her for 2 weeks, followed by a visit from **Michaela** and her mum **Erica** for just over 3 weeks. The children were very excited to meet their Australian grandmothers and greeted them both very warmly. Both mums had a wonderful time and were very excited to see first hand what their daughters have been working so hard on for the past 3 years!



Above: Emma and Pamela's arrival at Daisy House



Above: Erica (front) and Michaela (back middle) with Sunrise children

As well as enjoying some of the picturesque sights of Nepal with her mum, Michaela put her psychology and training skills to good use and conducted our first of many training sessions for the staff of Sunrise. The first session on 'Child Behavioural Management' proved to be very effective and was greatly appreciated by all involved.



Above: Training session at Sunrise

Urmila Cuganesan just returned to Australia after a two week visit to Kathmandu, which she enjoyed immensely. Before coming to Nepal, on Sunday 13th May (Mother's Day) Urmila hosted a tremendously successful fundraising event in Sydney, "Sunrise at Night", raising over \$10,000. It was Urmila's first visit to Nepal, so it was very exciting for her to meet the children and see Sunrise first hand. We would like to sincerely thank Urmila and all those involved in putting on the Mother's Day fundraiser and all those who attended the event. The guests, primarily from the Sri Lankan and Indian communities in West Sydney enjoyed the event so much, that Urmila is planning for it to be an annual event.

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Above: Urmila with Sunrise children

Sarah and her new husband Bikash Bhattarai sadly left Nepal recently and returned to Sydney, where Sarah is continuing her medical degree. They are planning to stay in Australia now for the next few years whilst Sarah completes her studies, returning again to visit family and Sunrise in Nepal in October 2008. It was wonderful for the Sunrise family to have Sarah and Bikash here in Nepal these past 5 months, and we are missing them both.



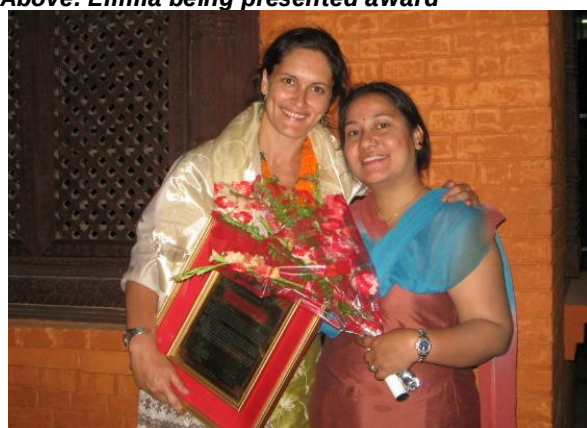
Above: Sarah and Bikash's farewell

A word from Sangeeta Bhandari, Sunrise Orphanage Chairperson, Nepal

Shortly after Emma's arrival, we were very happy to be invited to attend a special Award Ceremony at the well-known Rajdhani Cultural Centre in Kathmandu. The ceremony was attended by many dignitaries and special guests from various areas within the arts and cultural sector, including well known singers, dancers, poets, authors, actors, social workers and the like. We are delighted to announce that Sunrise Orphanage was honoured, with Emma receiving a Special Honourary Award for her ongoing dedication and support of the children of Nepal.



Above: Emma being presented award



Above: Sangita and Emma

Following this award ceremony in early April, all the staff and children of Sunrise were invited to a party held in their honor at the District Police Headquarters in Swayambunath Halchowk, where the children enjoyed performances by some of these famous Nepali actors, singers and dancers. They were given the opportunity to not only meet them, but also dance with them and be served dinner by them. This was a very exciting night for us all, and the children were absolutely thrilled!



Above: Sunrise children with famous Nepali actor Dilip Rayamajhi (centre back)

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Congratulations Daniel & Renee!

Daniel McLeod and Renee Blight were the lucky winners in our SCAI raffle, won at our Melbourne fundraiser last October, which incorporated a trip to Nepal. Along with a trip to the amazing Chitwan National Park, some local sightseeing and a trek through the Annapurna's, the highlight of their trip was their engagement! Daniel proposed to Renee at Poon Hill, a beautiful spot on the Annapurna circuit, how romantic! Upon their return to Kathmandu, we celebrated their engagement, along with Sarah's birthday at Sunrise, with lots of games, food and as always lots of fun! Daniel and Renee also spent a few days with the children at Sunrise. It was great to have the happy couple with us for a short time and wish them all the very best for a wonderfully bright and happy future together!



Above: Daniel, Renee and Sarah



Above: Renee with Sunrise children

More Celebrations!

Whilst on the note of celebrations, Emma was thrilled to again be able to celebrate her birthday with the children at Sunrise. It was a fantastic day with the children enthusiastically participating in singing, dancing, drawing and poetry competitions. Once again they demonstrated their enormous enthusiasm and amazing talents. As always the children were incredibly thoughtful, making

many beautiful cards, poems and drawings. Another very special day shared with the children, followed soon after by Mother's Day in Nepal, where both Sangeeta and Emma were spoilt with beautiful hand made cards, flowers and notes from the children.



Above: Sadhumaya and her beautiful birthday card

School Exams

It has been more than just parties and fun and games at Sunrise these past few months. The children continue to study very hard and have an amazingly positive attitude towards their education and their futures. The children's exam results were sent out to sponsors in early May, and we are pleased to announce that ALL children passed! We are incredibly proud of all the children for their hard work and dedication to their studies. A special mention must go to Lal Bahadur Biswokarma and his younger sister Khim Maya Biswokarma for their outstanding improvement. After having little opportunity to study previously, they improved from 30% to 83% and 33% to 75% respectively.

Nine of the forty-one children who attended school last year came 1st, 2nd or 3rd in their class. A great achievement by all!



Above: The happy Sunrise children at end of term

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Rescued Children Returned to Families

As mentioned in our March newsletter, the Child Welfare Board (CWB) closed down a poorly run orphanage in Kathmandu in February 2007, and Sunrise agreed to provide ten of the abandoned children with emergency accommodation and care. We are pleased to announce that a further four of these children have been safely reunited with their families, leaving only three with us. These three children have become an integral part of the Sunrise family, and we will continue to provide them with the love and support they need in the absence of any family members coming forward to be re-united with them.

Welcome to 16 new children to Sunrise!

Thanks to the ongoing generosity from individual sponsors we have been able to provide a safe, loving home for a further sixteen very needy children this past quarter. Twelve of these sixteen children came from another orphanage in Kathmandu, which is now in the process of being closed down due to the corrupt management, neglect and mistreatment of the children. In only a matter of weeks, these children have settled in to Sunrise extremely well, and are delighted to be re-united with some of their 'brothers and sisters' who were also living at that same orphanage until being transferred to Sunrise over a year ago. All children are attending school and are already showing their enormous courage and spirit, both at school, at home and in the extra-curricular activities that Sunrise is now providing.



Above: Tenzing, one of the new members of our Sunrise family.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Since the beginning of June, the Sunrise children have been given the opportunity to attend basketball, table tennis, dance and more recently traditional Nepali wooden violin and madal lessons every Saturday at our Daisy home. We have some incredibly talented children in the Sunrise family, and the children are continuously amazing us with their positive attitude and enthusiasm.



Above: Ganesh practicing table tennis



Above: Susmita, Deewaki, Suruchi and Anita practicing their dancing



Above: Pema and some of the big boys practicing basketball

Excursion to the Zoo

The children enjoyed an excursion to the zoo in early April, a great day was had by all!

Below: Children at zoo

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Excursion to Bhaktapur ("The City of Devotees")

Seventeen of the older children enjoyed an excursion to the historic city of Bhaktapur in April, renowned for its art, culture, colourful festivals, traditional dances, palaces, temples and monastries. Bhaktapur lies 12km East of Kathmandu and was founded in the 12th century by King Anand Dev Malla. As well as having lots of fun, it was an educational tour, with the children learning about the art of thanka paintings, making pottery and a visit to the Bhaktapur Museum and Art Gallery.



Above: Sunrise children at Bhaktapur



Above: Sunrise children on chariot in Bhaktapur Durbar Square, recently used during the Nepali New Year celebrations.

Hepatitis B Vaccinations & Tuberculosis Tests Complete

All children have been vaccinated against Hepatitis B and tested for tuberculosis over the past 3 months. We are very please to announce that all children are clear. Diseases such as polio have now been eradicated in Nepal, however diseases such as HIV still pose a large threat to many people. HIV tests for the children that may have been exposed are being organised currently.



Above: Kisan bravely having his Hep B shot

Beautiful bright smiles and clearer vision...

Over the past 3 months all children have undergone dental checks and all necessary treatment has been completed. Many children had little opportunity to use a toothbrush and toothpaste before coming to Sunrise, resulting in many decaying, rotting teeth. Over the period of a few weeks, several teeth were removed and many fillings were given. It is great to see the children now being able to flash their clean white teeth, without any pain or discomfort.



Above: Shanker, Amber and Bharat

Two children also received new reading glasses, relieving their regular headaches and making a tremendous difference to their ability to study and concentrate in the classroom.

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Above: Sabin with his new glasses

One young girl was given a new lease on life through the provision of a new hearing aid. At the age of 11, her speech has been somewhat muffled, and we are delighted to say that she has made enormous progress since wearing the hearing aid, and is an active part of our "Books for a Brighter Future" Reading program.



Above: Chirring (middle) with sister Anita (left) and Niruta (right)

These children have shown incredible spirit and through their determination and persistence to be the best they can be, continually inspire us to achieve all we set out to achieve with no hesitation. They are a living example of the following words....

"The only limits on your life are those that you set yourself".

We recently asked all the children again what they want to be in the future. They respond with such conviction that we are confident that we can help them turn their dreams into their reality.

This year 22 children want to become doctors, with teachers close behind. Others include pilots, nurses, singers, dancers, artists, actors, engineers and a social

worker. We even have a jockey, Miss Nepal and Spiderman in the making!



Above: Muskan (Miss Nepal)



Above: Tenzing (Spiderman)

Encouragement Awards

Every month we give out an encouragement award to those children who stand out in the following key areas:

- Showing the greatest love, respect, care, kindness, service to their Sunrise family. This includes staff, carers and importantly their numerous brothers and sisters.
- Positive attitude and dedication to their education and personal development. This is not only results based, but is heavily focused on dedication and effort, courage, and persistence in achieving their goals.
- Responsibility and care of themselves and their belongings, including prayer and meditation, personal cleanliness and hygiene, care of school items, books, toys etc.

This month we are pleased to announce the following children were awarded with art sets; Palchhen Lama, Sabin Ghalan, Pasang Sherpa and Lokjan Rokaya.

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Above: Palchhen, an incredibly enthusiastic and inspiring young girl

Kids Column

In mid June, one of our kind donors sponsored a 'party' for the children at Sunrise. We treated the children to momos, hot chips and ice-cream. It was an absolutely fantastic day, full of fun activities, including singing, dancing, drawing and poetry writing competitions. Below is some of the beautiful artwork, now being displayed at Sunrise.



Above: Some of the children's drawings

Other Projects....

As well as spending many wonderful hours a day working hands on with the children, organizing fundraisers and fitting in many of our ongoing regular activities at SCAI, we are also currently running or shortly commencing the following projects and programs;

Education: "Books for a Brighter Future" Reading Program

Further to the standard school education, we have implemented a Reading Program, whereby each child from Class 2 upwards receives regular one-on-one reading time with a native English speaker. We have already seen a dramatic improvement in the children's reading ability; confidence, pronunciation and

comprehension, which are all vitally important in a country where English is essential for future employment.

Stage 2 of this Program is the development of partnerships with schools in Australia, setting up pen pal systems and having text books, story books and other creative materials sent from Australia, increasing the children's exposure to the international community and to high quality English materials.



Above: Anita reading to Emma

Skill Development and Work Experience

Whilst providing basic care, such as food, education, medical care and clothing, SCAI are committed to developing the skills of the staff and children of Sunrise Orphanage to enable them to become employable and self-sufficient in the long term.

Over the next quarter we will be focusing on basic life skills training for staff and children over 12 years, including Housekeeping (cooking, cleaning, basic maintenance); Health (treatment and prevention; general, dental and re-productive health); Nutrition and First Aid. We will also be commencing skill development and work experience programs for children over 14 years, providing them with practical work experience in sectors within the local community that will provide potential employment opportunities for the children in the future (medical, the arts, tourism/hospitality...)

Sunrise Children's Village

In line with our philosophy of promoting self-sufficiency and sustainability in the long term, we are working towards buying land and building a permanent home for the children, in the name of "Sunrise Children's Village".

Unless in the case of extreme emergency, we do not plan to house any more than **80 children** at Sunrise Orphanage until we have bought land and built a permanent home. To purchase a block of land sizable enough to build Sunrise Children's Village we require \$200-250,000.

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For as little as one or two coffees a week you can be a founding donor of Sunrise Children's Village! Every individual person can make a significant difference; small steps lead to large victories!

Contact Emma today for more details!
emma@scai.org.au

Agricultural Project

As well as Sunrise Children's Village, we are looking at some government land being offered just outside Kathmandu to grow crops and graze animals, which Sunrise can both consume themselves as well as sell surplus for profit. A feasibility study clearly outlining the return on investment (ROI) is currently being conducted.

New Water Pipe in Kakani Village School

Kakani is a rural village just outside the Kathmandu Valley which has a primary and a secondary school, providing a basic education to around 350 students from around the Kakani area. Due to its remoteness, some children have to walk for up to 2 hours to get there, but the community is well aware of the importance of the children's education and the children enthusiastically make the daily journey. Up until recently there was limited water supply, at the primary school which can cause a whole range of problems, including illness and disease. For a donation of only R6000 (or AUD\$120) from SCAI, a water pipe was installed, enabling the school children regular access to clean water. It is amazing what such a small contribution can make to the lives of so many children!



Above: Inauguration of new water pipe



Above: Some of the children in front of their school building in Kakani

Volunteers

We couldn't achieve all we do without the help of our wonderful volunteers! So we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all again very much for your help.

Chaun Soh joined us from Melbourne in April, adjusting immediately to the daily routine at Sunrise. Chaun's assistance with some of the daily chores was greatly appreciated by the live-in carers, and her basketball skills, morning exercises and enthusiasm to play with the children was greatly appreciated by all. She also brought with her some very useful photography knowledge which she imparted to the children. Chaun kindly collected five cameras from friends in Australia before she left, and gave the children the opportunity to express themselves and capture important moments through the lens. We will be seeing some of the children's and Chaun's work in the near future, which we know you will enjoy!



Above: Chaun on her first day at Marigold House

Chlothilde Bell also joined us from Melbourne in April/May. Cloe (or 'Clobby' as she was affectionately called by some who could not pronounce Cloe), helped us with the reading program on a regular basis, and brought with her a talent for sketching. In some of the quieter

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moments, she sat with the children and sketched their portraits, which they loved. She also got into the daily routine, of helping the children get ready for school, helping with homework, mealtimes and bed time. It was wonderful to have her bright smiling face around Sunrise.



Above: Cloe at the party at Police Headquarters

Maree Taberner joined us in mid June from Horsham. Maree is an absolute delight to have around and the children adore her. She is making the most of every day, and warmly shares her numerous 'wow' moments with us on a daily basis. Maree has already made a huge contribution, helping with the reading program, painting, playing sport with children, helping with their homework, teaching at the children's school, and is actively participating in the daily prayers and meditation. With Maree's positive attitude, open mind and never-ending smile, she a great role model for the children. We look very much forward to having Maree with us for the next few weeks.

A word from Maree....

Lets Play, Learn and Love

"After arriving from Australia with an open mind and sense of adventure to spend five weeks with the children I had read about on the web living in an Orphanage in Nepal, I have experienced the overwhelming love between the children, their carers and those like myself they welcome wholeheartedly into their lives. The genuine rapport, sharing, caring is the essence and foundation of these children's lives. For me, now into my third week it is a privilege to witness. What I have experienced is these children have been given the most powerful gift of hope and love, being dished up in bucketfuls by the wonderful people who saw a need to help and are committed in every sense to the children's wellbeing.

If you didn't know better you would think the children had been hand picked for their beauty, sweetness, talents...sadly that is not the case but regardless, every one of them share the dream of a future, just ask them, their faces beam as they tell you they would like to

become doctors to cure the world of disease, dancers, singers, entertainers.

With seventy four children to be cared for, the children respect and follow the rituals of homework, mealtimes, bathing, teeth cleaning, prayer and meditation without question, but with joy that you are there to share their lives....my biggest privilege and honor.

Maree Taberner

HORSHAM VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

mareet@netconnect.com.au



Above: Maree helping Sabin, Kashmi and Bishnu with their homework

If anyone is interested in volunteering in Australia or Nepal, please contact Michaela Michaela@scai.org.au. It really is a very fulfilling experience, and we can always do with extra hands in Australia!

Upcoming Events

3rd Annual Cultural Fusion Evening! This exciting event will be held in Sydney on **September 1st 2007**. It will be another fantastic night of energetic bollywood dancing, traditional nepali dancing, delicious Asian cuisine, raffles, auctions and more! Mark the date in your diaries now!

A final word...

Thank you again to all our generous sponsors, donors and volunteers. This dream began just over three years ago in Kathmandu, and already it has become one of the most exciting, rewarding and beautiful realities imaginable, thanks to your ongoing support.

There is still a lot more to do and many more children in need, so we look forward to continuing to share this journey with you.

The Sunrise Family

Emma Taylor	President
Michaela Killips	Secretary
Sarah Kemp	Treasurer
Urmila Cuganesan	Committee Member