

Newsletter

March 2015

Partners in Aid

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Bright Luncheon

There won't be many of you who haven't met or at the very least heard of Joy Handley, who has a long history with Partners in Aid. Every year she runs a luncheon, along with the Alpine Women's Group, to raise funds, and the one held late last year was no exception in being a wonderful event both for the guests and for the amazing funds raised. Here is Joy's report.

WORLD FOOD DAY LUNCHEON IN BRIGHT

17 November 2014

Once again, we had our annual World Food day which we call "Italian Lunch in the Garden".

This was held in the grounds of 'Ellendale', which Heather and Steve McNamara have very generously allowed us to use the last 6 or 7 years.

We were once more very lucky with the weather a lovely sunny day not too hot!!

Roughly 64 people attended and we had a beautiful lunch provided again by Patricia and Anthony Simone of Simone's Restaurant in Bright. They have been doing this for 15 years! All their staff are involved in the preparation of the meal giving up their day off to help prepare it. I personally, am very grateful to them for this huge commitment every year and they are

happy to keep doing it! The funds raised at the Luncheon go to cover the cost of our Tailoring and Knitting program at ABWU. Without these funds we could not do it.

The total raised was almost \$3,000 and I couldn't do this without the help of many friends and especially my husband, Barrie. Several people made cakes and slices for desert and a local Cafe provided some very yummy Petit Fours.





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The All Bengal Women's Union provides for underprivileged girls and women in Kolkata. The ABWU provides clothes, food, counseling and education to the girls and women, and encourages them to become self-reliant socially-responsible citizens.

Partners in Aid runs a sponsorship programme, where people can assist girls who live at the ABWU. Four girls have recently come to our attention as needing sponsors. You can contact us if you'd like to know more. Details of the girls appear below.

RHAKI SHARMA:

We have recently lost a sponsor for one of our girls and would love to have a new sponsor for her. Rhaki Sharma has just commenced study in Year 10. She lives in the Children's Welfare Home at ABWU.

She is very good at sport, plays in the hockey team, has 2 belts in karate and is a very good traditional dancer.

Rhaki is 14 years old.

SATHA BAKLY:

Sathy is in the After Care Home, which is for girls over 18 years. She is 20 and has been through a forced marriage 3 years ago. Badly treated she left the marriage and after making several distress calls to a member of ABWU she managed to get there and is now in their care. She was trying to study B.Sc. (Chemistry Hons.) but situation at home meant she failed her 1st Year at college. Sponsorship would give her the opportunity to return to these studies. She herself has instigated divorce proceedings.

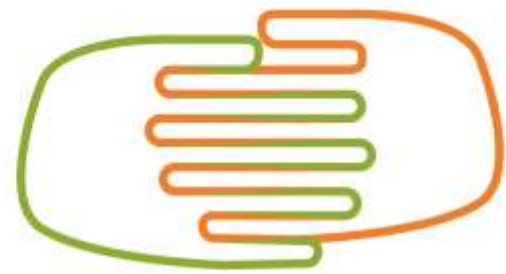
JANNATH KHATUN:

Jannath's father used to work in a goldsmith's factory. He died of snakebite in Oct'2011. Her mother is a housewife who was left to look after four children without any source of income. The family lived in a mud house fenced in with bamboos – there was no electricity or running water. They were turned out from their home after the father died by relatives. Her mother sought shelter in her maternal home. Unable to maintain her family, she has admitted the elder son to a boy's hostel and both her daughters to the ABWU CWH for their education.

Jannath has been admitted to the ABWU Primary School in class – V. She has settled down well in her new environment. At present (in 2014) she is in class – VII of Hindu Balika Vidyamandir.

ROKSUNA KHATUN:

Jannath's sister, Roksuna was admitted to class – III of the ABWU Primary School. She is a good student and has adjusted well both in school and in the shelter home. At present, she is in class – V of the ABWU Primary School.



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as our World Food Day and meeting people who make compassion part of their lives and wallets, makes it all worthwhile for me. Everybody was able to have a pleasant night, ask questions about the work we do and raise some extra money for our projects.

There are many people to thank but most of all we thank those people who attend the event and those who make donations to Partners in Aid; we thank you! I also need to mention all the work that Lyn, Ian and David Pickering put in to set up the tents and make the place ready for guests. We would also like to thank all those who helped in any way from making the salads to serving platters of snacks. That's what it's all about really, giving a helping hand, to put on the event, to educate a child, to rescue a young woman from abuse or to provide a school on a river. That is who we are and that's what we do.

World Food Day thank you

Lynne O.

Many thanks for the great evening last night, with your beautiful food, lovely



setting (and the gorgeous weather. All of the Mirboo Northites really enjoyed the evening and it was good to hear some more of the work of Partners in Aid. I am attaching a photo of some of the fruit and vegetables at church this morning - most of our sponsorship money comes from donations for these goods. We look forward to having you visit us, hopefully, after your trip in August.

The annual Bayles World Food Day dinner was held this year in February. It was again a resounding success, and our board member Phil has written about the fun that was had, and we've included a note from one of our supporters.

World Food Day report

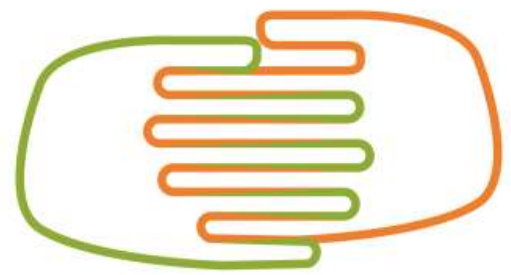
Phil McMillan

The last couple of years we have had dodgy weather for our annual World Food Day event but Andrea and Geoff Pickering bypassed all that this year and moved the event forward into February and reaped the reward of a real Goldilocks day, not too hot and not too cold; it was just right with no wind and a perfect evening.

As normal we had a great meal of roast meats, various salads, potatoes, snacks and desserts and as always there were also lots of fresh vegetables to purchase which were donated by a generous supporter of PIA.

All that brings me to the event itself.

Partners in Aid is a small organisation and actually we like it that way, we are able to maintain very low administration costs and actually meet, talk to and have a drink with the many generous supporters of the work that PIA does. That was the best part about the event for me, meeting our donors. I doubt such close contact between a board and donors is available at many international aid organisations so having an event such



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SEDS have been doing some exciting things, here is a report from our chairperson Amanda Stone.

World First at SEDS in Low Carbon Farming

The Low Carbon Farming project at SEDS took a big step forward recently, when it went through validation and verification – the first of its kind in the world. This means that the systems set up to capture and measure carbon emission data in crops have been approved by an independent auditor meeting the requirements of the UNFCCC ([United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#)).

560 farmers are now involved in the project, using farming methods which produce fewer greenhouse gases, recording their practices in special diaries and submitting these regularly for checking and data collection.



Farmers completing diaries

SEDS provides regular training to farmers in sustainable agriculture and low carbon farming practices, helping farmers to keep their diaries up to date. SEDS has also assisted farmers form co-operative groups, small companies which are necessary for carbon trading.

As well as growing low growing crops such as ground nuts, azolla and paddy, the LCF project has extended to agri-forestry, including trees for the first time. Integrating trees on farms and in the agricultural

landscape leads to a more diversified and sustainable production system than many treeless alternatives and provides increased social, economic, and environmental benefits for land users at all levels.

All tree plantings will be recorded and verified for purpose of carbon calculations.



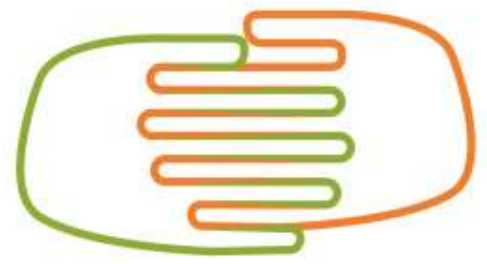
Taking GPS reading of plots for data collection

Unfortunately things don't always go to plan

on the land. Due to poor conditions, many farmers have been unable to grow crops in the past year so there have been fewer carbon reductions to measure. This is balanced by the increased productivity of the land using sustainable agriculture practices, and the long term view is essential, as with all projects.

Tank Desilting Ready to Go for 2015

Five villages, Konathattupalli, Gonipeta, Sanipalli, Mallapalli, Buchepalli, are lined up to participate in the tank desilting programme for 2015. They will share the cost and labour to improve local water supply and soil quality to benefit the village. Partners in Aid is the major funder of this ongoing programme. Without the funds provided by our donors, this invaluable and essential work providing sufficient water would not be possible.



Our Secretary Graham Moore has recently taken on the role of Project Director for Symbiosis. He's currently getting ready for his first visit to the project – here is a report on recent goings on in Bangladesh.

Cooperation, Education, Awareness. Livelihood and Health!

These are the major objectives of the Jamuna River Development Project in Bangladesh, and they are hard-won objectives achieved by the dedication of the community of the Jamuna River sandbars. As I prepare for my visit to Bangladesh in March to conduct monitoring and evaluation of our projects as part of my annual holiday from my day job I am finding many interesting stories that trumpet those achievements. Here is the story of Momota, written by Aktara Bagum from Symbiosis, Bangladesh.

Forty years old Momota lives in Kazipur, Sherajgonj. She is married to a day laborer; they have two daughters and a son but no land. They live by cultivating in others land and working as a day laborer.

Momota did not know how to read and write so she admitted in adult education class with the assistance of JRDP staff. After completing eight months of study she admitted herself in “Bubali Mohela Committee” which was formed on 06/03/2006. She started savings and now she has 7974 taka (about \$130). Momota also received training on small business from the Symbiosis office. After receiving the training she took 8000 taka loan from the group and she and her husband managed another 12000 taka (\$200) to buy a horse with van for 20,000 taka. Her husband rides the horse van and earns

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300 to 400 taka (\$6) daily. She uses that money for her family and to pay back the loan. Now her financial condition has improved. She has taken another 15000 taka loan and made a tin shed house which has improved her living condition. Momota also has ducks, chickens and grows vegetables in her yard.

Momota has become aware about environment. Her one son and daughter go to the school. Her family use sanitary latrine. She always keeps herself busy and she does not think herself helpless anymore.

Momota says “practical education has removed my darkness, I have increased my income by doing savings which has improved my family and financial condition”.

The photo shows her family's horse and cart (van). It is by the assistance Partners in Aid give to



Symbiosis Bangladesh that the education, support and business skills are disseminated into the community, and how your donations can be leveraged to change lives.

In my next newsletter article, I shall report on my visit to Bangladesh.



PARTNER NEWS

SEDS

SEDS has launched a new website -

<http://www.sedsngo.org/>

You can read more about the programmes they run and link to their blog with stories involving Partners in Aid.

ABWU

Karate training is a fantastic programme we help sponsor at the ABWU. You can watch the girls practising on YouTube at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYZBILJNnfk>

GOODWILL WINE

As we have noted in earlier newsletters, you can now enjoy quality wine and support Partners in Aid projects at the same time.

We have joined Goodwill Wine, who offer high quality wines at excellent prices. For every case of wine sold, a proportion goes directly to Partners in Aid, with no overhead costs.

Goodwill Wine has been established to support charities and not-for-profit organisations.

For further details go to

<http://www.goodwillwine.com.au/charities/partners-in-aid> – you can order wines or buy gift vouchers.

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www.partnersinaid.org.au



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Partners in Aid Donation Form



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Donations

I would like to make a general donation to Partners in Aid

\$

I would like to make a donation to (circle/note where applicable):

ABWU (orphan trip/sewing supplies/books/project support)

\$

SEDS (stationery/school bag/check-up/sewing machines/project support)

\$

Symbiosis Bangladesh (stationery/garden/teacher/project support)

\$

Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child at ABWU/SEDS (Please circle and note in the box number of children you would like to sponsor)

Please tick the appropriate payment box:

3 months = \$60

☐

6 months = \$120

☐

12 months = \$240

☐

Total amount enclosed \$ (donations and child sponsorship)

If paying by EFT please email admin@partnersinaid.org.au for bank account details. If paying by cheque, make it out to Partners in Aid and send to PO Box 42, Narre Warren LPO, VIC 3805

Name for receipt: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email (for internal use and occasional updates): _____

Gifts of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible (receipt will be issued)

Thank you for your support