

# Newsletter

September 2016

## Partners in Aid

Enduring, Capable Communities

Partners in Aid Ltd  
ABN 50 006 946 550

PO Box 42, Narre Warren LPO  
VIC 3805 Australia

Phone: 03 9704 6315  
Email: [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au)  
Web: [www.partnersinaid.org.au](http://www.partnersinaid.org.au)



### Partners in Aid are undergoing a Board restructure.

You can read a report from our Chair on page 2.

*Simone's*

### The annual Bright Luncheon is on again!

It's always a fabulous day out at Simone's of Bright, raising funds for the ABWU in Kolkata.

Details of the lunch can be found on page 4, with a recent visit report on page 5.

### CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF BEING RUN ENTIRELY BY VOLUNTEERS

20 years ago in June, Partners in Aid moved from the small office in Hawthorn, into the home of Board directors, and ceased having any paid employees.

This has allowed our administration costs to be kept to a minimum – ensuring as much as possible of donor's money goes directly to our partners running very effective projects.

Since becoming entirely a volunteer organisation, our income has gone from ~\$60k per year to ~\$140k in recent years.

20  
Years



It's almost Christmas! We have some gift ideas detailed on page 10 that might help sort out your Christmas shopping list.



# Open Letter to Partners in Aid Members and Supporters

Amanda Stone – Chair

Dear PIA Members and Supporters

The Partners in Aid Board is made up of dedicated and hard-working team, some of who have served for many years. They have built strong relationship with our partners in India, Bangladesh and the Philippines and have also built a strong and loyal support base here in Melbourne. It is through those valued relationships that we have been able to support thousands of children and families in developing countries to improve their standard of living and their future prospects.

Times are changing however, and the expectations on Boards have increased. There are many more legal and regulatory requirements and the governance and compliance role of the Board is taking more time and requires particular skills.

The Board has spent the past 2 years positioning Partners in Aid for the future, to ensure that we can continue to provide valued support to our partners and projects, deliver good value for our donors and supporters and also meet our compliance obligations.

We have decided to restructure our Board for the first time in our history!

From this year's Annual General Meeting, the Board will be smaller and more skills-based and its role will be to support the work of a number of volunteer sub-committees who will continue to

raise funds, manage child sponsorship programmes, liaise with donors and partners, and look after our projects. With the Board focused on governance and compliance, the committee members can focus on what they are passionate about and experienced in.

For our donors and supporters, there will be little difference in how you interact with us. All our projects will be managed by the same people and you will hear from them when there is news to report on our projects, when your child sponsorship is due, when school reports arrive, and when we have fundraising activities. Our registered office will remain in Narre Warren and those who call the PIA number will still hear the voice of Lyn or Ian Pickering when it answers. For others, our website, Facebook and newsletter will also remain the key way we connect with you.

Because this is a big change, we would welcome any feedback, questions or concerns you might have. Please email these to [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:admin@partnersinaid.org.au) or call the Chair Amanda Stone on 0437 004 446 before 15th September.

We will all remain volunteers of course and will continue to ensure that over 90% of all funds raised go directly to the projects and children that you support.

We want to ensure that Partners in Aid is in a position to continue to do what you have told us that you value. Providing support to those in need in India, Bangladesh and the Philippines through a

range of innovative and effective projects and with few overheads. We are confident this new structure will enable us to do that and look forward to your continued support.

### Keep in Touch



[www.partnersinaid.org.au](http://www.partnersinaid.org.au)



[@PartnersinAid](https://twitter.com/PartnersinAid)



[Partners in Aid](https://www.facebook.com/PartnersinAid)

Partners in Aid will soon be launching a crowdfunding project for the Low Carbon Farming initiative at SEDS. We are very proud to be a part of this exciting initiative – a world leading project! Go Live date is 26 September, at 2 PM.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to find out more – details will also be on the website when the launch date is confirmed. This is an exciting new fundraising initiative for Partners in Aid, and we hope to not only raise funds for the Low Carbon Farming, but also to let more people know about the work we do.

You can view the project at this link:

<https://pozible.com/project/205721>

*Pozible*

Low Carbon Farming India



Anne-Marie Maltby – Project Director

## **ITALIAN LUNCH IN THE COURTYARD** Joy Handley

# Partners in Aid

It's that time of year again!!

The Annual lunch at Bright will be held on Monday 14 November 2016 at 12noon. Cost is \$30

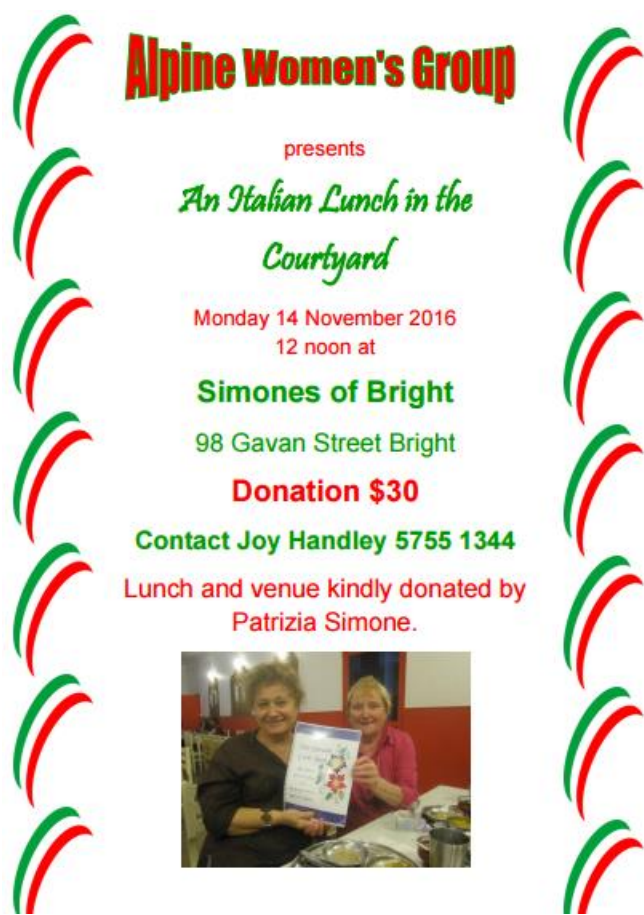
This is our 17th Year

Quite an achievement!!!! This luncheon has been supported by the Bright community and Alpine Women's Group. Many of these ladies assist on the day helping with setting up, dishing up and serving meals and give much financial support for which I am very grateful.

The lunch will take place again this year in the courtyard of Simone's Restaurant. Patrizia Simone, her son Anthony and husband George has been providing the beautiful pasta and salad at no cost all these years.

We had a fabulous day last year with over 80 people attending including some of our donors and sponsors. The number of supporters of PIA attending is gradually growing and I thank them for making the trip!

For more information, please contact me (Joy) on 03 5755 1344.



**Alpine Women's Group**  
presents  
*An Italian Lunch in the  
Courtyard*  
Monday 14 November 2016  
12 noon at  
**Simones of Bright**  
98 Gavan Street Bright  
**Donation \$30**  
Contact Joy Handley 5755 1344  
Lunch and venue kindly donated by  
Patrizia Simone.



The photo below is of Patrizia Simone and I having lunch in ABWU restaurant Suruchi, holding their own Recipe Book.

## **An Outsider looking in at ABWU, Kolkata**

Marg McCallum – ABWU visitor

The first day that Joy took us to the All Bengal Womens' Union hereafter ABWU building I was filled with trepidation. What would a residence for homeless children in Kolkata, one of the poorest most overcrowded areas in India, be like? We walked along the



busy street with broken sidewalks, piles of rubbish and endless traffic noise and cooking smells from street vendors. We came to the grey walls of the building. We entered into a calm sanctuary away from the clatter of the outside world. The large central courtyard with a few trees surrounded by two storey grey building with verandas and windows was a surprise as space must be a premium in this city.

We were welcomed warmly by the staff and the board members who were there; also some of the older residents were pleased to have the visitors. All were delighted to see Joy and her good relations with staff was very obvious. The board members we met were a surprise to us all. They were all dressed in saris. A complete surprise. They were outgoing, intelligent and very good company. And their dedication to their voluntary work was obvious. I felt this board is the backbone of the institution and without their tireless work would not function at this good level of care for these babies, girls and women of all ages. We hope they continue to recruit younger and smart women to keep the board proactive in the competitive world of philanthropy.

Our first strong impression of the children was their obvious wellbeing. They looked healthy, happy and well-fed. Those we saw first were babies and younger preschool kids as others were at school but they were going through their daily routine with the obviously caring well trained staff. When we returned on the weekend we met the older girls and enjoyed chatting to them. They were cheerful and noisy as teenagers are. It was delightful to see how the older kids all related and cared for the prep kids and the babies and gave a warm family feeling. It is nice having all the older residents in the same building as it reflects the age mix common in family groups in India. The children seem to be in awe of the board members and no bad behavior was tolerated.

The different rooms and workshops we visited were clean and tidy, and the cheerful murals on walls made it feel more welcoming in the kids' areas.



The various workshops and the trainee kitchen are great training grounds for those pursuing employment or who won't complete formal education or cope with the pressures of a workplace in modern India due to disability. They are also a great fundraiser for the home... with a restaurant run on the premises serving lunches to the paying public.

The fact that past students are encouraged to revisit ABWU and talk to present students is an important factor in the motivation of teenage girls.

It was satisfying from a sponsor's point of view to see that the money raised in Australia is so wisely spent whether it is on various projects, equipment for workshops or extra classes for the girls and the kitchen project was really a success. I would like to see modern office equipment in a workshop to train the girls in office procedures and using

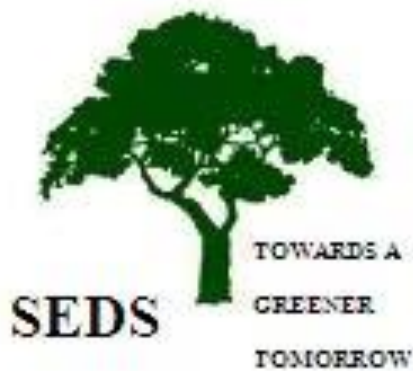


various software and computer programs to make them employable. It also helps with study if they go onto tertiary education. Education and training are the only way these disadvantaged kids will survive in the competitive life of modern India. The 70 girls who are sponsored through Partners in Aid are getting a start in what will be an exciting future for them as they try and make their way in the world.

Our visit to India was a great eye opener, exhausting and exhilarating and inspires us to put more effort into helping ABWU to care for the children and prepare them for the future.

We thank Joy for the opportunity to visit ABWU in Kolkata.

(thanks to Joy and Marg for the images which capture the atmosphere at ABWU)



## Partners in Aid

### Christmas gifts for SEDs help women and farmers

In recent years, generous donors have provided funds at Christmas time for sewing machines to assist women who have been trained by SEDs in tailoring skills to set up their own businesses. Using a hire purchase arrangement, women have paid for their machines over time and those funds have assisted other women with their first machine. SEDs is seeking support in a similar way to provide farmers with beehives. In March we reported on the arrival of beehives which will not only help pollinate crops and improve yield, but also provide beautiful honey to supplement farmer incomes.



### Child Sponsorship news from SEDs in India

This Christmas, why not consider the purchase of a beehive as a “gift” for someone you love, and help improve the livelihoods of the farmers in the SEDs region. Details on page 10.

Amanda Stone: Director – SEDs

The results for the Year 10 students this year were all very good. Reports for all the other children are still to come in from a number of the schools with some of the schools being very late to release them. The new school year has been going for a couple of months.

Ian and I will again be travelling to SEDs soon, at our own cost, and look forward to seeing all the sponsored children, and to carrying out some other voluntary work with other friends. We will update



ourselves on the project work carried out by SEDS and visit many villages. Spending time wandering around villages and speaking to the local communities with a SEDS team member allows us to absorb the atmosphere of the village and families. As well as giving us a better insight into small rural village life, we enjoy it.

We plan to be at SEDS for one of the monthly activities for the students, and will take the opportunity to visit a number of the village schools where the sponsored children are enrolled. As with all schools, whether in Australia or India, there are some that show great results and others that could improve. The important thing is giving opportunities to students to attend school without putting more pressure on very poor families.

Our other work through some Rotary friends will see us being part of a distribution of bags and educational supplies for students whose families face difficulties in keeping them at school. Our Rotary Club have supported this project with funds and some of our fellow Rotarian have made personal donations to cover a number of children. These supplies will be handed out in schools in a very large town about one hour from SEDS.

The doctor in the group has been responsible for bringing in other doctors, dentists and eye

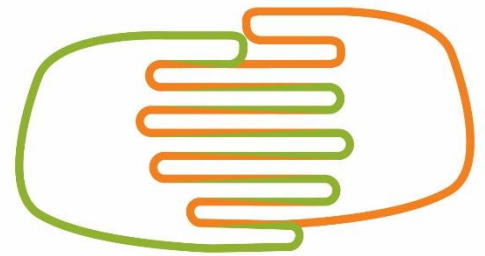
specialists for the Partners in Aid/SEDS Health camps held annually. This has been an ongoing voluntary effort by this team and has proven very beneficial for the sponsored children. It has also been a worthy partnership in-country.

Some readers may remember a friend, Judy Berends, travelling to India with Ian and I two years ago. Judy and her husband John had purchased and donated thousands of small bears for a successful fundraising venture they ran with their Club, but they slightly over catered the bears, and there are quite a lot left in boxes. Over the past two years, starting with Judy's visit we have distributed over 150 small bears to some of our sponsored children, and also to the Doctor for his young and very sick patients. Our Thanks to Judy and John for their donation of the bears. We will take a further 40 bears for this visit for Dr. Subbarao's patients, with the number being dependant on how many clothes Ian thinks he needs!!

We are looking forward again to visiting India and look forward to giving you some updates in the December newsletter.

Lyn Pickering: Director – Sponsorship at SEDS



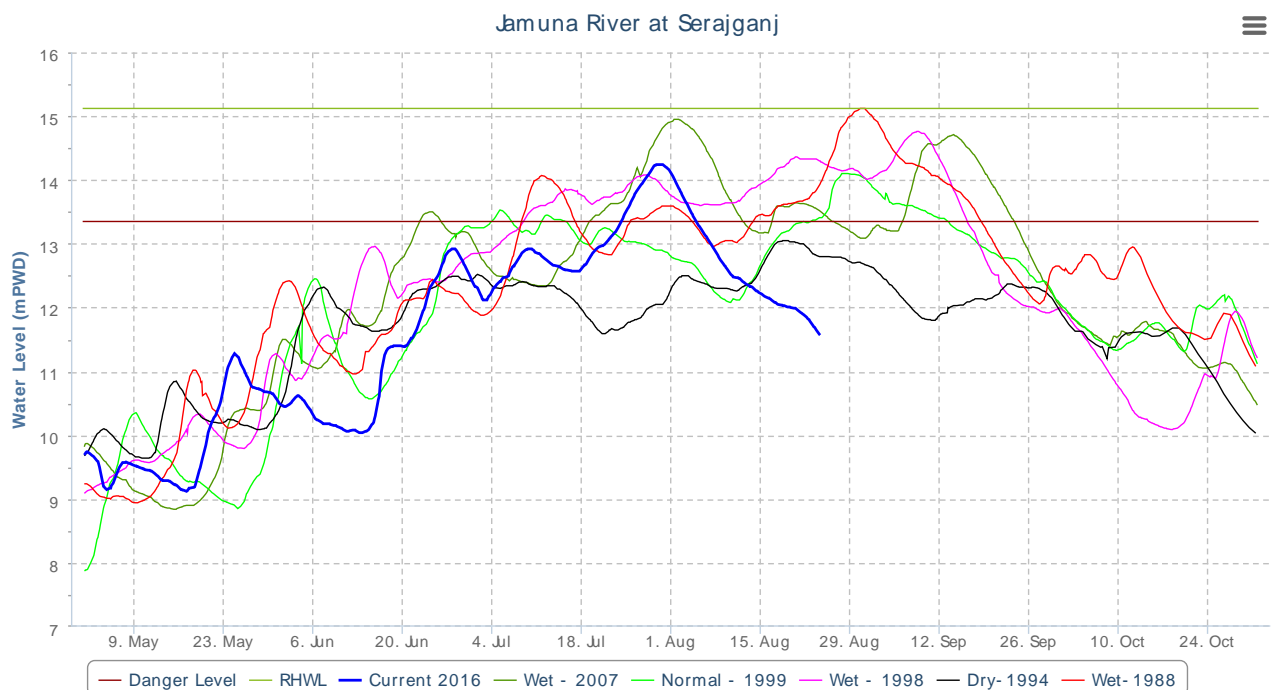


## Sponsors still being sought to build capacity to cope with floods.

## Partners in Aid

The annual monsoon is in full swing in Bangladesh, and we have tens of women's group could improve their capacity for coping with this annual hazard with our support. In the last newsletter, I made a call for anyone that knew of small common interest groups that may be interested in sponsoring a women's group in Bangladesh to contact me. I am in discussions with one group at present, but I am still seeking many more, so if you know of any potential group sponsors, please let me know by email at [symbiosis@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto:symbiosis@partnersinaid.org.au)

The graph below shows the river water level in the area of the Jamuna River Development Project. The blue line is the river level this year, and the brown horizontal line is the danger level. At this level virtually all land where food is grown is underwater and some homes are flooded. So far this year the river has been above the danger level for about 3 weeks straight, and the monsoon is not over yet.



## A success story to celebrate!

I have received the following report from our partner Symbiosis about one of the women from a group we sponsored. It shows the importance of a

long term commitment to capacity development. Investments of your donations in Anzura's women's self-help group from 2008 has allowed her to move from complete poverty and illiteracy to being an income generator for her family and

service provider for her community. Thank you to all those that have contributed to this outcome.

Anzuara Begum (38) lived in Kumariabari village of Kazipur sub-district in Sirajganj District. She has 2 daughters. Her husband is a day laborer and he is the only one earning member of the family. Most of the people of this village are very poor and illiterate. The Jamuna river flows around the village. In the rainy seasons, the village flooded by water. Most of the time flood destroys crops of the village. The land texture of the village is sandy. So life for the villagers is very difficult. Anzuara Begum could not provide proper food and clothes for her children. She has a small piece of land but could not cultivate as the land is sandy. She fights against poverty throughout the year because of flood and drought.

JRDP started a Functional Education Course for 8 months after completing a baseline survey at Kumariabari village in 2008. Anzuara Begum was selected for this course and she successfully completed it. Then she formed a savings group named Jui women's group along with other members in November 2008. They started savings activities including things such as group meetings, awareness sessions, income generation training etc. Their group savings is BDT: 62,842 and her personal savings is BDT: 2,417. She received training on sewing through

groups facilitated by JRDP project. After training she applied for a loan to purchase a sewing machine for sewing as self-employment. She got a loan BDT: 4,000 (\$70) and purchased a sewing machine. Alongside sewing work, she keeps some cloths for her own works and selling to others. Now her daily income is about BDT: 150 -200 which is a good amount at this stage. She paid her loan by income through some instalments year round.

Now she is living a happy life with her family. Now she is able to provide good food and clothes to her family members. Moreover, she is aware about primary health care, environmental and



social issues. Finally, she is thankful to Symbiosis Bangladesh.

Graham Moore – Project Director

## Christmas Gifts and Donations

This Christmas why not consider making a donation to one of our projects as an alternative to buying a traditional gift for family or friends? You'll be making a very positive difference to the lives and prospects of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, while avoiding the shopping hustle and bustle and queuing for a parking space too!

You can also make a general project donation if you prefer, or set up a child sponsorship at ABWU or SEDS.

We are happy to provide a gift certificate on request; please email us if you would like to arrange a gift.

A general donation will be used in supporting any of our projects needing funds at the time of your donation.

Here are some ideas for each of our project areas.



### **ABWU**

#### **Any donation towards:**

- ❖ The orphans' holiday fund
- ❖ Sewing supplies
- ❖ School text books

### **Symbiosis, Bangladesh**

- ❖ Writing materials and books for school \$15 per set
- ❖ Kitchen garden materials \$50
- ❖ Super Kris Kringle – sponsor a teacher for a year, \$1800, or \$150/month

### **SEDS**

- ❖ \$15 provides a fruit tree for the Low Carbon Farm orchards
- ❖ \$50 provides fish fingerlings for the full water tanks
- ❖ \$100 provides a bee hive to help pollinate crops

### **Sinangpad, Philippines**

Any donation towards helping communities make their village environments healthier through:

- ❖ Training villagers in community health development and facilitating their planning to create a healthier village
- ❖ Mentoring villagers implementing plans to make their village healthier
- ❖ In some cases, providing funding for materials necessary to enable villagers to construct simple infrastructure such as toilets and pig pens to reduce health risks, especially to children.

## ACFID Code of Conduct

The ACFID Code of Conduct is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice that aims to improve international development outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing transparency and accountability of signatory organisations. Partners in Aid is committed to the Code, of which we are a signatory and have been for many years.

If you feel Partners in Aid has breached the ACFID Code of conduct you can visit <http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints> to make a complaint directly to ACFID.



## Complaints Policy

All complaints should be addressed to the Board Chair and will be treated seriously, acknowledged promptly and resolved within 2 months.

## Vale Mary Bramley

Our regular readers may recall an article in our December newsletter about our long-term supporters, Mary and Len Bramley. Sadly, Mary passed away recently. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the family and thank them for their support over the years.

## Goodwill Wine

As we have noted in earlier newsletters, you can enjoy quality wine and support Partners in Aid projects at the same time. For every case of wine sold, a proportion goes directly to Partners in Aid, with no overhead costs.

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

## Membership

Annual Membership for 2016/17 is now due. Membership is only \$25 a year, and goes a long way in our administrative costs ensuring donated funds go to the projects not accounting and insurance costs!

Membership also entitles you to vote at our AGM, or nominate a proxy.

## Partners in Aid Donation Form



# Partners in Aid

### 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/self-defense training support)

\$

SEDS (stationery/health check-up/bee hives/fruit trees/fish fingerlings)

\$

Symbiosis Bangladesh (stationery/garden/sewing machine/women's group support)

\$

Sinangpad Healthy Village Project (toilets, sustainable farming, community health)

\$

### Child Sponsorship

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to sponsor a child at ABWU/SEDS (Cost is \$240 per child per year)

\_\_\_ children

x

\$240

=

\$

### Membership

I would like to begin/continue (please circle) to be a member of Partners in Aid

\$ 25

**Total amount enclosed** \$ (donations and child sponsorship)

If paying by EFT please email [admin@partnersinaid.org.au](mailto: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***