



ROSE NEWSLETTER

CHARITIES NEW ZEALAND

November 2015

Dear Friends,

This is Rose Charities NZ's 13th year of existence and once again it is a pleasure to bring you a snapshot view of our activities. We are proud to belong to an international network of "Roses" operating in 14 countries around the world with a central "hub" in Vancouver. From Afghanistan to Uganda, Madagascar to Ecuador, Rose projects include education and safer birthing practices for women, eye care, post-tsunami support for children, training in palliative care...the list is long and varied. To learn more see our website: rosecharities.org continues page 2



Three aspiring flautists aged 8-11 years from the Sistema Aotearoa programme. See Page 4



At the Rose Eye Centre in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Dr Muhammad Khalid from Hawkes Bay (centre, in blue) teaches the medical director Dr Hang Vra (right, in green).

Dr Khalid found Dr Vra and his wife Dr Natalie very hard working and keen to learn new things. "It's not an easy job to run a charitable work at this scale; well done Rose Charities and Dr Vra for both clinical and management skills." - see "Step by Step" page 3.

PROJECT IN SAMOA

We have an exciting new project coming up to provide ear, nose and throat treatments in Samoa, especially for children. Currently even simple ENT surgery is almost completely lacking. You will be hearing from us about it, probably about March next year.

FRIENDS OF ROSE

We need you! Our donors make our work possible.

Annual renewal: \$50 by Direct Credit: Bank Account Number: 02 0800 0623302 002

Please put your name and use reference code: **RC donate**

Please email our Treasurer Jane Midgley - JPMidgley@midgleys.co.nz
to notify her of your donation and give your address for a receipt.

(Donations specified for Cambodia or Nepal do NOT qualify for tax deductions under NZ Law We intend to increase our projects in New Zealand and the Pacific in the future. This work qualifies for a tax deduction.) **Charities Commission Number: CC11384**

Dear Friends continued....

We hope some idea of the diversity of Rose projects helps you to feel connected, even in a very small way, to actions reaching out to help some of the poorest people on the planet. Recent events in the world heighten the contrasts between our comfortable, peaceful lives and reality for the millions who are homeless and traumatised, making it all the more important for us to make good choices when we consider, as a country, a charity, or an individual, how to reach and help those in need. Sometimes it is good to be reminded that small steps can in fact make a big difference.

One of the bright examples for us is the Rose Eye Centre in Cambodia.

When I visited Phnom Penh in 2010 the wish list I brought home included a cupboard for brooms and mops and buckets so that blind people didn't trip over them, a swing door into an operating room so sterile hands didn't have to touch a door handle, and repairs to the roof so rain didn't interrupt the surgery!

Now that clinic is air conditioned with sterile surroundings; it is blessed with top-class equipment, up to \$300,000 worth from New Zealand; and about 200,000 thousand people have had sight restored through surgery or with glasses. The medical director, Dr Hang Vra, is a trained ophthalmologist and three other local Cambodian doctors are about to graduate as ophthalmologists. All thanks to your donations from New Zealand, with additional funds from Rose Canada.

About 20 kms out from Phnom Penh, on the main road to Siem Reap, a new eye clinic has been built, with a home for Dr Vra and his Ukrainian wife Natalie on the top floor. If ever a couple deserved a better home than the modest rooms where they have raised three sons, it is Vra and Natalie. You will see from Dr Rob Weatherhead's

report on Page 3 that they take it for granted that they work seven days a week. Rose Charities NZ and Canada have helped this couple build up the two Eye Centres, all without ONE DOLLAR of administration costs at our Rose end. Thanks to all you Friends of Rose (and with a lot of help from our Trustees, Ophthalmologist Dr David Sabiston, now retired, Optometrists John Veale and Mike Webber) our volunteer efforts, so small in the world of global giving, have led to many minor miracles.

I have been thinking a lot about how, why, when and where we choose to give to help strangers. It is a huge topic, a vital topic for our 21st century lives and one which will present us with tougher and more tangled challenges as our century unfolds. Civil war, fanaticism and climate change make an unholy brew and each of us has thorny choices if we care about being global citizens, let alone "good" global citizens, in the world our grandchildren will inherit.

Rose Charities NZ hopes to expand the projects we support, both on our doorstep in New Zealand and in our backyard in the Pacific. We know we are small so we must make choices accordingly but together, with all your donations combined, we can have greater impact than an individual donation might make.

Meantime, thank you dear Friends. Without YOU, we are nothing. If you want to be "A Friend of Rose" with a \$50 annual donation, the form is on Page 1.

– Trish Gribben, chairperson, Rose Charities NZ



The Trustees of Rose Charities New Zealand: From left: John Veale, Jane Midgley (Treasurer), Dr William Grut (also Rose Canada, Vancouver), Trish Gribben (chair), Pip Neville-Barton, Nicola Thomas and Mike Webber.

CAMBODIA “The most successful advanced training”– Mike Webber

Rose Charities NZ has recently sent two more Kiwi ophthalmologists to the Rose Eye Centre in Phnom Penh to work with the medical team headed by Dr Hang Vra. Dr Muhammad Khalid is from Hawkes Bay and Dr Rob Weatherhead is an Oculoplastic surgeon from Christchurch. They both worked at the two Rose Phnom Penh eye clinics in late June. Rose NZ Trustee Mike Webber says the advanced training undertaken this year has been the most successful yet. “I came away with a huge sense of satisfaction in what was achieved on this visit and also with the standard that the two clinics are now operating under the management of Doctors Vra and Natalie.”

“Step-by-Step”

by Rob Weatherhead - Oculoplastic Surgeon, Christchurch

A Monday morning clinic was well underway when we arrived at 8.30am. Natalie and Dan were busy at slit-lamps in an indoor area, with an overhead fan but no air conditioning. Outside but under cover were at least 40-50 people sitting on benches, waiting to be seen. Patients would turn up unbooked, with an accompanying person to look after them if they needed surgery. There were many diagnoses that day but the main causes of treatable visual loss were cataract, pterygia and glaucoma. 126 patients were seen in the morning and the afternoon was spent doing surgery on the cases diagnosed that morning. Then back to the hotel on the tuk tuk with Mike, for a much needed Angkor beer.

On arrival in Cambodia I had been met by Mike and Vra (the Cambodian ophthalmologist running the clinic) and taken to a small but comfortable hotel in Phnom Penh. After a brief sight-seeing trip an early night was called for, as the 32°C heat and humidity were draining.

I was picked up at 8.00 am the next morning (Sunday) and taken to Vra’s new private clinic in his newly built house 20km north of the city. He and his wife Natalie work weekends in this clinic to pay off his loans– “step-by-step”. Vra, a very competent and likeable doctor, is a 50-year old Cambodian ophthalmologist, trained in Moscow in medicine, and then taught ophthalmology by Dr Basant Sharma of Nepal. (Rose Charities NZ brought Basant to New Zealand for advanced skills training in 2008.) Dr Muhammad Khalid from Hawkes Bay had just spent a week with Vra up-skilling him on vitreo-retinal surgery.

Vra married a Ukrainian medical student called Natalie while in Moscow and they now have three boys. Natalie has spent the last 20 years in Cambodia and is fluent in Khmer. She is currently a third-year Resident in the ophthalmology teaching programme in Phnom Penh and was to be the focus for my oculoplastic teaching for the next week, although another third-year Resident, Dan, also became involved.

Sunday morning was spent at the “new” clinic, mostly seeing private patients followed by surgery in the afternoon. The private practice charges for cataract surgery are half the price of rival city practitioners.

Vra and Natalie work at the “new” clinic at weekends, and Monday to Friday at the “old” clinic. And so to Monday and the “old clinic” at Kian Klang (KK), 6km north of Phnom Penh. This is in an old school building and run frugally, with no “middle management” and minimal administration. It is marginal financially. Three of the residents from the training programme at Preah Ang Duong Hospital do regular sessions at KK; Natalie, Dan

and an older woman, Sathia. The coordination between KK and Preah Ang Duong appeared to be working very well.

Over the last decade Rose Charities NZ has sent the KK clinic equipment worth about \$NZ 300,000, both new and second-hand. But now Rose NZ is mostly responsible for paying the US\$5,000 per year, for each of the three resident doctors in training. There are 2 other senior ophthalmologists at the clinic doing cataract surgery only. The main source of funding for the ophthalmic surgery at the clinic is from ABC Tissue Vision, who pay US\$40.00 for each completed surgery for the “poor” patients.



Dr Rob Weatherhead of Christchurch teaches finer points of eye surgery to Dr Dan Hin at the Rose Eye Centre.

The days followed the same pattern. All the surgeries were done under local anaesthetic (LA) with local nerve blocks as appropriate. Patients were seldom on medication and their pain threshold for LA was unbelievable – just a twitching of the toes if a non-anesthetised area was encountered.

Natalie learned several new procedures. However, it quickly became apparent that formal teaching was not appropriate, and that the most useful way was to instruct/assist in surgical cases on the table after a pre-op discussion of the approach. This was quite a rapid process, as you only saw the patient that morning, and they were on the table in the afternoon allowing no time for exploring any possible new surgical procedure.

And “step-by-step”? It appears that there is no equivalent Cambodian translation of the word “gradual”, so everything was “step-by-step”.



NEPAL

A patient waits to go home from the Shri Badri Eye Centre near Lumbini in Nepal. Dr Basant Sharma, the founder and director of the eye centre, is well known to Rose Charities. The clinic is just one year old and fortunately is not in the area hit by the terrible earthquakes that rocked Nepal in May. More than 1000 surgeries have been performed in its first 12 months.

Thanks to many generous donors, Rose Charities NZ has provided the clinic with a generator and electricity back-

up system, absolutely crucial for eye surgery in a country where power runs extremely erratically and is off for hours, if not days, on end.

We have also provided funds for four hospital beds, a wheelchair, stretcher, two wooden beds, two trolleys, four benches, a computer and printer and other small items.

Rose Charities NZ is contributing \$1000 to the first-ever workshop for advanced ophthalmic training for local doctors.



PHILIPPINES: POST-TYPHOON SMILES

When Typhoon Ruby (Hagupit) battered Eastern Samar just before Christmas last year, Rose Charities NZ was able to help some nurses put their trauma-training to the test to offer relief aid. Rose Charities NZ sent \$600 ---enough to cover the nurses' transport, food and accommodation as they worked with victims of Typhoon Ruby in Dolores, Eastern Samar.

Rose Charities NZ first sent a Grief and Trauma / Palliative Care therapist, Liese Groot-Alberts, to work with doctors and nurses in the Philippines five years ago. Following Typhoon Ruby in late 2014, student nurses who had been taught by Liese and her colleague, Dr Sue Marsden, were keen to help in the devastated area. Trouble was they didn't have the money to support themselves, so Rose Charities NZ stepped in with \$600.

Mothers, many breastfeeding, and 100 children aged from 3-12 years old took part in recovery programmes.

"The feedback of the mothers was overwhelmingly positive and they felt they had learned several tools and techniques they can continue to use for recovery to health and new resilience," said Liese Groot-Alberts.

Another example of how a small donation can make a big difference.



SPECIALIST EYE SURGEONS

These three Cambodian doctors are in the last year of their post-graduate studies to become ophthalmologists. Thanks to our generous supporters, Rose Charities NZ has funded the two women, Dr Oun Sathia (left) and Dr Natalie Hang, wife of the medical director Dr Vra, for their training. Dr Dan Hin's fees have been met from clinic earnings. See "Step by Step" page 3

PROJECTS IN NEW ZEALAND

A ROSE FLUTE FOR SISTEMA



Rose Charities NZ has donated a quality flute to Sistema Aotearoa. The children in the South Auckland music programme that is changing lives start on plastic flutes and then, as they progress, the more able students change to a conventional metal flute. Rose Charities NZ has also donated two violins and a cello.

Woodwind, brass and percussion instruments were introduced to the four-year-old Sistema programme

in term four last year. The children have made such excellent progress that they appeared with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in a "Fairy Tales" concert on November 5, playing in Corigliano's Pied Piper Fantasy. On October 7 Sistema Aotearoa performed for the first time in its own concert at the Auckland Town Hall.

There are over 250 children in the programme, aged 6-12years. About 60 students played at the concert.

"Our students get their entire family involved in their music-making, brothers, sisters, cousins, Mums and Dads, Aunts and Uncles. Sistema is a really positive force in our Otago community," says the programme manager, Ros Giffney.

Read more about Sistema on the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra website:

www.apo.co.nz/sistema-aotearoa

Cashmere High School raises funds for ROSE

Students from Year 10 at Cashmere High School selected Rose Charities NZ for their fundraising efforts in 2014. A total of \$1257 was raised through a "work week" when students did house and garden chores, and cake and sweet stalls. The students chose for the funds to be donated to help young mothers and their babies.

Sturdy playground equipment has been provided at KINect in Mairehau, Christchurch, for the very young to play on.

"Our young mothers and babies love it," says KINect manager Cheryl Yusef. "We have toddlers here too so it will be well used. They have so much energy to burn."

(KINect is the agency that has taken over care of young mothers from Holly House when it closed in June this year.)

It offers services from two houses, one for teen mothers and one for "displaced young people" aged between 14 and 19.

BRAIN FOOD BEFORE SCHOOL

Children line up for a healthy breakfast before school. Rose Charities NZ contributes to Angelsight, a voluntary scheme started by a local mother which now operates in six South Auckland schools to provide breakfasts. It receives no government funding.



Other NZ Grants:

- Foundation for Youth Development for a mentoring programme.
- Auckland Refugee Family Trust for family reunification.
- Poonga Tamil Community Project for education support in Auckland