

# Ghar Sita Mutu House With A Heart

A home for abandoned children and training program for destitute women, in Kathmandu Nepal.

DECEMBER 2006

DEAR FRIENDS OF GHAR SITA MUTU,

I returned to Nepal in September for my second trip of the year. It was good to see that the army was no longer barricading the airport and the people looking happier and more relaxed than they have in a long while. The only problem I had was trying to fit my four very large duffle bags into a very small taxi. (Thanks to Virgin Airways and Gulf Air for again not charging me for excess luggage).

I surprised the children when they came home from school for they were not expecting me until the following week. About an hour after I arrived at the house there was a power outage - some things never change unfortunately but we entertained each other singing and dancing by candlelight, I was delighted that the smaller children were all speaking better English and they all said they are happy in their new school.

On my second day I slogged through the mud (monsoon still raging) to take the children to school but when we got there we were told that all the schools were closed. Still never ending strikes and protests here. This one was because the Maoists were holding a meeting and they wanted each school to



Our children coming home from school via the back gate.

send at least 50 students -easier to close the school than to refuse.

The children and I were happy that Noel Faulkner was able to return again this year. He was kept busy organizing repairs and renovations (and developing patience) when the monsoon finally ended. He also paid for the house to be painted inside and out - it is now very colourful and "happy" looking. Thanks Noel, for your love and on-going support.

## TRAINING PROGRAM

Jerome McDonald of Worldview (Chicago Public Radio) did a follow-up interview with me this past June and we received over \$7000 in donations. Several listeners donated to our MUTU GIFT program so in February a few lucky graduates of our sewing training will be given their own machines. Thanks to Jerome and those who donated money and offered help. (Photos and letters from the recipients will be sent to sponsors in March).

Rhada, one of last year's graduates, was offered the chance to teach six other women to make felt puppets, which she did quite successfully after first learning herself. The puppets are for sale and all proceeds will be invested in the training program. We also offered an extra class in crocheting small novelty items from the plastic bags that milk is packed in - time consuming but free of cost - and a good way to teach the benefits of recycling.



These puppets are made by the women of Ghar Sita Mutu and sell for \$25. Available at "A Repeat Performance" 156 First Ave., NY 10009, 212 529 0832.



CLOWNS WITHOUT BORDERS “...offers laughter to relieve the suffering of all persons, especially children, who live in areas of crisis including refugee camps, conflict zones and territories in situations of emergency.”

**CLOWNS WITHOUT BORDERS**

Marc Gold founder of 100 Friends contacted me after the Worldview interview and has been very helpful. He arranged for the Irish branch of Clowns without Borders to visit our centre, which they did at the beginning of October. We invited the children from two other orphanages nearby and were all set to have a show on our huge lawn when there was a sudden, furious downpour. We all crowded into our library quickly shoving the bookcases aside to make room for a stage. The children had never seen a show before and were really excited. Singing merrily the clowns came in and the children screamed with delight at their hilarious performance. Happily for our children the clowns stayed for dinner and played with them until they went to bed. Thank you Sam, Jonathon and Colm. Keep up the great work.



Learning to crochet.

**VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

My nephew Dan Bronson from England came to volunteer for six weeks in October bringing with him \$1000 he raised running a marathon, a huge bag of donated clothes and four lap tops - the start of our new computer lab. He gave lessons to our delighted kids, and helped me plan our new goat program, which we hope to start soon in the Eastern part of Nepal.

Dr. Branka Pravic arrived in September after holding a benefit party for us in Italy. She raised over 2000 Euros and plans to make the party an annual affair - many thanks to her and her generous friends.

Dr Cyndi Bennett from Colorado heard about us from her son in New York and came bearing a huge box of medical supplies as well as crayons, books and art supplies. She also plans to become more involved in the future.



Puppets made by the women of Ghar Sita Mutu.

Jenny Lumley who volunteered with us last year came to visit for a few days. The children were really pleased to see her again and she kindly donated money to help us buy two swing sets for our new playground, currently under construction.

Dr. Luis and Dr Marta from Spain made their annual visit to Nepal and gave all of our children and staff check ups. We are very grateful to them for their ongoing support and love.

Special thanks also to my assistants and volunteers in New York: Alexa Doering, Lisa Linhardt, Rafael Orlin, Desiree Quintero and Sharon Jane Smith, Debbie Leonard and Ethel Kriss.



Ran Charam and Dukhari Devi are among the families that can benefit from the goat program.

them live in mud huts and lease a small amount of land to farm. As there is so much work to do and little money, the children all have to help and do not get the opportunity to go to school. Some children do have some lessons with tutors that come to the villages but this is the exception rather than the rule.

Dan found a goat herder who will raise the goats and provide advice and help for the new owners, as well as a vet if problems occur. Goats normally have 2 kids, twice a year, so after the first female goat is handed on, the family can either keep the goats or sell them for extra money when needed, always having at least one goat in their possession.

A gift of \$50 will buy a goat and also contribute to the goat herder's salary of \$20 per month. A gift of a goat will provide long term help to a family who will start with one goat and end up with a herd. They can then be sold to raise money for school fees or tools and start to reduce poverty.

#### FUTURE PLANS

Birendra Singh, one of our board members who comes from Rajbiras (Eastern Terai) was talking to me about the poverty in his village and asked me if there was anything I could do to help. I had heard about programs where goats and cows are given to families on the condition that the first female born would be passed on to another family - and it seemed to me to be a simple yet effective way to help.

I asked Dan to go out there (a 12 hour bus ride from Kathmandu) and see if a goat program would be feasible, and to take names and photos of 12 families we could help this year.

Dan reports: The people of these villages are very poor but they are survivors; they know how to use what little they have and work very hard together, maintaining a strong village community. Most of



This year we were blessed with a generous donation in the name of Marcia Smithson, from Downers Grove, Illinois. Her son, Bill Andrews told us. " My mother was a children's librarian in her time, and lived very frugally. We think it's a fitting use of some of her savings to help nurture young lives". Over a hundred children enjoy our small library each week, this donation will be used to support our library and expand our book collection. A big thank you to Bill and Liz Andrews for their kindness.



Children in the village community wearing some clothes made and donated by the women of Ghar Sita Mutu.

#### PEACE

I am happy to report that according to the BBC news, "Nepal's multi-party government and Maoist rebels have just signed a disarmament accord aimed at decisively ending the 10-year-old civil war. The agreement was reached after extended meetings between the UN and government and Maoist representatives in Kathmandu. Under a landmark peace deal, signed last month, the rebels will join a transitional government.



Manu, Manisha and Mamata  
when they were abandoned five years ago.



Mamata, Mansiha and Manu in 2006.

After signing the peace agreement, the two sides formally signed a comprehensive peace agreement, paving the way for the formation of an interim government which will include Maoist leaders." Sounds good, let's hope it works.

#### KIDS WHO HELP

Another person who contacted me after the Chicago interview was 13-year-old Ian Iyengar, who organized a fundraiser on behalf of the children in our house. He developed a music program he calls Recycled Rhythm Workshops and is invited to schools and local childcare programs to sing and teach children about the importance of recycling.

Ian has a special place in his heart for homeless children. At the age of seven months he was living in an orphanage in India when he was adopted and came to live in the United States. "When I heard about Ghar Sita Mutu and that my parents were supporting the house, I wanted to do something too," said Ian. "If I can help raise some money so the kids have all that they need, that will make me happy." We thank Ian for his big heart and willingness to do for others.

Many thanks to all of you who have helped me support the children and women of Ghar sita Mutu. Best wishes for the New Year. Beverly



#### A LITTLE BACKGROUND

My name is Beverly Bronson. I own a small antique shop, A Repeat Performance, on First Avenue, between 9th and 10th Street in NYC. For seven years I've worked as a volunteer in Nepal, and six years ago I found two abandoned children, Krishna and Babu, ages two and five. After researching and exhausting all possibilities for finding them a loving home, I had no choice but to put them in boarding school. Safe but bleak. The school appointed me as their guardian and I went back to New York to try to raise money to establish a centre to house abandoned children and help destitute women.

With the help and generous support of Noel Faulkner and Dr. Mark Rodgers, who both made the long term commitment to help me raise the children and to help sustain the centre, I was able to return to Nepal with enough funds to rent a house. We opened Ghar Sita Mutu—House With a Heart in 2001 for Krishna and Babu and other children in similar circumstances.

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*Thank you for your ongoing interest and support. All donations are tax deductible and much appreciated. Every dollar goes directly to running and expanding the programs of Ghar Sita Mutu, House with a Heart.*

*Please make all checks payable to:  
The Candy Jernigan Foundation for the Arts (Our fiscal sponsor) Please note Ghar Sita Mutu on the check.*

- \$5 buys a pair of school shoes*
- \$10 buys a bed*
- \$20 buys two school uniforms*
- \$25 buys eyeglasses and an exam*
- \$30 will feed a child for one month*
- \$50 will buy a goat*
- \$100 buys a sewing machine.*