

# **GIFT OF HAPPINESS FOUNDATION (GoHF) PROJECT REPORTS FOR 2015 FIRST HALF REPORT**

## **JANUARY 2015**

### **Giving Happiness on Planet Garbage**

**Project Report – Mae Sot, Tak. 27-31 January, 2015. [Web Post/Slide Shows](#)**

**Purpose:** To distribute donated clothing, bedding, toys and other goods to migrant schools, institutions and disadvantaged communities in and around Mae Sot district of Tak province in northern Thailand.

**Project Leader:** Mr. Edward Albert Haworth. Director GoHF

**Volunteers:**

- Mr. Simon Balmer.
- Mr. Gary White.
- Khun Amarin Nissasoka.
- Mrs. Eh Thwa Bor
- Khun Kit Yongsuwan
- Khun Mae Yongsuwan

**Activity: Happy Charity's first project for 2015 – goes to the Dump!**



*What shall we do after school today then?*

Gift of Happiness Foundation (GoHF) has been serving the kids who live on the Garbage Dump near Mae Sot, Northern Thailand since 2005, and did so again in January 2015. This aid and show giving project in also helped the kids living at a residential migrant school near Mae Sot, and all pictures displayed were taken then. Children shown in this first section all live on the Garbage Dump near Mae Sot.

Some of the children are wearing uniforms that GoHF gave them three years ago. Most of the children are wearing clothing we gave them during our last visit in 2013.



*Gift of Happiness uniforms worn for the show.*



*Clothing given on every GoHF visit here.*



*Back to work as usual on the dump after the show.*



*Chattering as they head home after school. (Home?)*

This Gift of Happiness aid and show giving project supported 100 children and teachers at the **Sky Blue Migrant School** at the garbage dump. The Foundation also supported people living on the garbage dump located very close to the school, as well as 250 children, teachers and local community members at the Kwe Ka Baw high school, near Mae Sot.



*Every child received new towels, toys and more from Gift of Happiness Foundation.*



*Just a few of the 1,000 happy people in January 2015.*

**Gift of Happiness Foundation report: January 2015. Director/Founder, Edward Haworth.**  
**January collections, storage, sorting and logistics:**

Gift of Happiness Foundation collected five truckloads of goods. These were donated by:

- Park Plaza Hotel Sukhumvit, Bangkok;
- Six individual family homes in Bangkok; and
- Individuals who dropped off goods at DTC Travel Office and The Len Penn Music Academy in Bangkok.

All sorting, storage, loading and packing were done by volunteers and the Director at the Foundation warehouse in Bangkok, and onsite at 3 locations in Mae Sot, Tak. Transportation was provided and organized by the Director, along with volunteers Mr. Pong Puvacharoen and Mr. Amarin Nissasoka. Siam Motor World, Bangkok provided the hire of an extra truck.

Some goods sent from our British collaborators, the Giving Back Community Organisation in Manchester, UK were collected by arrangement from the warehouse of World Mega Logistics in Samut Prakarn near Bangkok. The import agency waved all charges for customs duty and storage costs and the Foundation thanked them with a Certificate of Appreciation given to Khun Paulie Charoenaksornkul at their head office in Bangkok.

**Table 1: Project Volunteers as at January 2015.**

<b>VOLUNTEERS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>NATIONALITY</b>
1. Mr. Edward Haworth	Projects leader	Manchester, UK/Expat Bangkok.
2. Khun Paulie Charoenaksornkul	Storage/logistics assistant	Thai national, Bangkok
3. Khun Pong Puvacharoen	Project transport planner	Thai national, Bangkok
4. Khun Amarin Nissasoka	Driver/Thai translator	Thai national, Bangkok
5. Khun Suksan Valaisri	Storeroom/sorting assistant	Thai national, Bangkok
6. Khun Kit Yongsuwan	Volunteer/liaison officer	Thai national, Mae Sot
7. Khun Mae Yongsuwan	Volunteer/liaison officer	Thai national, Mae Sot
8. Mr. Simon Balmer	Projects photographer	Middlesborough, UK/Hong Kong expat, Bangkok
9. Mr. Gary White	Projects report writer	Sydney, Australia/Expat Bangkok
10. Mr. Todd Gable	Field project volunteer	New York City, USA
11. Mrs. Eh Thwa Bor	Field project volunteer	Burmese national, Mae Sot
12. Mr. Aung Pay	Field project volunteer	Burmese national, Mae Sot

**Table 2: Project Beneficiaries, January 2015.**

<b>INSTITUTION/LOCALITY</b>	<b>AID GIVEN</b>
1. Mae Tao Clinic, Mae Sot. (200 patients + 100s outpatients)	Baby clothing, medical supplies, adult clothing.
2. Kwe Ka Baw Residential High School and surrounding community. (250 children + 320 adults)	Bedding, towels, warm clothes, educational supplies, toys, books, games and 15 large bags of adult clothing. One educational entertainment performance for all children, 6 teachers and some local adults.
3. Sky Blue Migrant School/Learning Centre and garbage dump community. (100 children + 190 adults)	Warm clothes, educational supplies, toys, books, games and 5 large bags of adult clothing. One educational entertainment performance for all of the children and 2 teachers.



adults)	teachers.
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### January 2015 projects completed:

During the first three weeks of January 2015, Gift of Happiness Foundation collected around 2.5 tons of clothing, toys, medical supplies, educational equipment, bedding, towels and uniforms. Most goods were donated in Bangkok and surrounding areas and some were purchased using donated funds. Then all goods were redistributed to poor people in Northern Thailand, as described in Table 2.

During the last week of January 2015, the Foundation produced one main field project giving aid to 350 children and 710 adults, plus an unknown number of outpatients at Mae Tao Clinic. This project was carried out at three locations in Mae Sot City and surrounding areas in Tak province, Thailand. The Foundation also gave free educational entertainment performances for all 350 children, teachers and some parents.

### January 2015 money matters:

Gift of Happiness Foundation received financial support from the Cyril Duncan Siam Children's Foundation in Dublin, Ireland, Opus Recruitment Ltd, Bangkok and individual friends of the Foundation. (Details to be provided in the Foundation's 2015 year-end audited accounts).

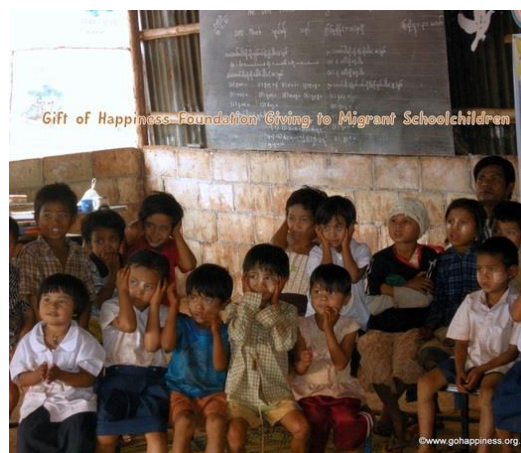
The Director paid the Foundation's warehouse/office rent, utility bills, truck lease, transport fuel and maintenance, plus hire costs for a second truck. The Director also paid the daily rate for hire of a second driver for 5 days, his food and accommodation, plus extra fuel costs incurred during some of the collections of goods in Bangkok, and fuel for the main project to Mae Sot.

### January 2015 report conclusion:

Gift of Happiness Foundation fulfilled its commitment to assist more than 1,000 needy people in Thailand during January 2015. We plan to keep our little charity moving onwards and upwards throughout 2015 and sincerely hope to receive a good level of assistance from friends of the Foundation to help us help the children and people we serve as much as possible.



*Kids who live on the dump surrounded by their own brand of Christmas presents!*



*GoHF giving to kids at very poor migrant Community schools every month!*

## FEBRUARY 2015

There were no up-country project trips in February as the Gift of Happiness Foundation grappled with a large dose of **unhappiness** due to the untimely and accidental death of one of its most stalwart supporters, our resident photographer Mr. Simon Balmer. More on this later, but we start with a record of some donation activities at the start of the month.



*Gift of Happiness Founder and Director, Eddie Haworth (AKA Clown Eckie)*

### **Activity: Bangkok Charity to resume normal operations soon.**

Early February 2015 started with business as usual at Gift of Happiness Foundation. The charity Clown performed for around 200 kids who were able to attend the annual Convoy For Kids Massive Day Out to a Bangkok Theme Park. We also collected over a ton of pasta and about two tons of clothing, educational supplies, toys and other used goods to give to the poor.

The big show at Siam Safari World was held for kids coming from The Foundation for the Welfare of the Crippled under the Royal Patronage of H.R.H. the Princess Mother, with quite a few more coming from the Klong Toey Presentation Slums Mission in Bangkok, run by Sister Joan Evans. There were also a couple of minivan loads of orphans and poor kids from north east Thailand, who were brought to enjoy this special day out by a generous Western expatriate who lives in Sisaket, in that part of Thailand.

Mid February the Gift of Happiness Clown Eckie performed three shows in a row for the little ones in year one at Harrow International School in Bangkok. Clown Eckie receives sponsorship for Gift of Happiness Foundation in return for his three shows every year at the Year One Fun Day and Sleep-over. He also performs his unique lecture and show program for the older drama students and has given his Circus Skill workshops at the annual Churchill House Camps located in northeast Thailand.

Later in February we collected the first donation of goods and coins collected by the little boys and girls who attend Bromsgrove International Early Years School in Bangkok. The school holds an annual "Ring of Friendship" event where all the children chip in a few coins to make patterns of flowers and hearts to be photographed and displayed at the school. After, the coins are donated to Gift of Happiness Foundation - this year it was around THB 12,000!

Gift of Happiness Foundation has postponed any further project tours in February 2015 due to bereavement suffered since the loss of our dear friend and resident volunteer Mr. Simon Balmer.



Meantime, we are hoping to resume normal operations with a visit to six schools near Mae Sot, North Thailand within the second week of March 2015. We have just over a ton of dried pasta and another couple of tons of clothing, toys and educational supplies to give more than 1,000 kids during that trip.

Below are pictures taken by Simon Balmer on his final project tour with Gift of Happiness Foundation.



The official notice from the Foundation of the passing of Simon Balmer follows, along with just two of many tributes sent in to the Foundation's website.

**5/02/2015. Sad News at Happiness Charity. Bangkok.**

**Written by Mr. Edward Haworth, Founder and Director at Gift of Happiness Foundation.**

[Web Post/Memorial Pages/Slide Shows](#)

It is with deep personal regret that I announce the sudden death of Mr. Simon Balmer on the evening of February 4th 2015. Simon died aged only 56 years, from injuries sustained following an accidental fall down stairs at his home in the Prakanong district of Bangkok, Thailand.

The accident happened at the Gift of Happiness charity shop/warehouse and home to Simon who lived and worked as the only full time volunteer at our charity.

I not only grieve at the passing of Simon as a dear friend and tremendous individual but also for the loss his family in the UK suffers.

In his role as professional photographer, Simon has been our most outstanding volunteer for the past three years and leaves us with an amazing collection of photographs and video footage that I will cherish and keep for the rest of my life.

RIP my good friend.



*Simon Mark Balmer.*

Funeral arrangements will be announced following Thailand Government procedures and family instruction. The charity shop will remain closed until further notice.



*Picture by Mr. Simon Balmer - 31/01/2015.*

## **TRIBUTES**

Two of the many tributes we received are reproduced below.

### **Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand**

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand is saddened to learn of the sudden death of Simon Balmer, a veteran sound engineer and broadcast technician who has worked in this region since the 1980s. Simon worked for many different filmmakers and broadcasters, notably for many years with the US network NBC, for Eurovision, and for APTN. He lived for many years in Hong Kong, before moving to Bangkok. He was known for his warm and generous demeanour, and his fine humour helped many journalists keep an even keel during the toughest assignments. Big Si was a fixture in recent years at the FCCT, and along with so many others we mourn his passing.

### **Gary White**

I only got to know Simon in the past year or so, but am keenly aware of his great contribution to the Foundation and its works, and his wonderful ability as a photographer - the many dozens of amazing photographs on this site are a testament to that. He was quiet and unassuming, but had a wry and acute sense of humour that enlivened many a Mae Sot evening, and was a constant presence on every Foundation project trip I joined. Simon's companionship on and contribution to those trips will be sorely missed, as will his constant efforts on behalf of the Foundation. My sincere sympathies go to Foundation Director Eddie Haworth on his loss, and to Simon's family in the UK.



## MARCH 2015

Once again there were no project trips up-country in March, 2015, due to continued recovery from the sudden passing of Foundation volunteer photographer, Simon Balmer, and administrative procedures necessitated by the accident and dealing with his estate. The aftermath of this tragic loss was further compounded by news of another unexpected and tragic accidental death, that of Mr. Geoffroy Van Innes, in Belgium. Jeffrey had been a steady supporter of the Foundation and participant in its activities and projects, but had of late suffered health problems for treatment of which he had returned to Belgium. There he died in yet another tragic falling accident.

Late in the month we and several supporters of the Foundation, plus friends and family of the two deceased persons participated in a memorial project and Buddhist religious service at Wat Sammakhan, in Ayuthaya. Details of that event follow.

### **Goodbye at Wat Sammakhan, to loved ones and old friends.**

**Event – Wat Sammakhan School/Temple, Ayuthaya province. 26 March, 2015.**

[Web Post/Memorial Pages/Slide Shows](#)

**Purpose:** To commemorate the lives of the late Simon Balmer, Geoffroy Van Innes, Jason O'Brien and relatives of Gale Bailey via a charity trip to the Wat Sammakhan School, long supported by the Gift of Happiness Foundation, a big buffoon clown show in their memory, and a short Buddhist memorial service at the adjacent temple of the same name.

**Activity:** Report of this trip provided by Gift of Happiness Foundation Director and Founder, Edward Haworth (AKA Clown Eckie).

### **Memorial Day for lost loved ones. 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2015.**

We came to pay our respects and celebrate the lives of Gift of Happiness volunteers and friends, Simon Balmer, Geoffroy Van Innis, Jason O'Brien and Gale Bailey's relatives.



Thank you for coming Gale Bailey MBE, Gary White, Amarin Nissasoka, Mark Erder, Luke Erder, Antoine Van Innis, Ben Calberg and the whole Belgium/Thai contingent. It was a fantastic day for the kids and a great way to say farewell to our loved ones so recently lost.



***Gift of Happiness Foundation produced a great day of giving in memory of recently lost members of the happiness team.***



We gave the kids a trampoline and loads of educational supplies, toys, T-shirts and more on 26/03/15. Following the sudden death of our resident volunteer, Simon Balmer, plus our past volunteer Geoffroy Van Innis and our Director's long lost dear friend, Jason O'Brien, we produced a memorial show and aid giving day in memory of all three on 26/03/15 at our school near Ayutthaya, north of Bangkok.

Members of their families, and friends, traveled from Bangkok on the morning of the big day. We visited Wat Sammakhan School and Temple located north of Ayutthaya. On arrival, those who were able to help were asked to construct a large trampoline and unload the rest of the happy truck loaded with goodies that we gave to the 102 children who attend the school.

Then there was an opportunity for friends to say a few words about our lost loved ones and hold a moment's silence with the kids and teachers. This was followed by the show, which lasted about 30 minutes. Then we all walked 100 meters to the nearby Temple for a traditional short Buddhist ceremony with several monks chanting and blessing the names of Simon, Geoffroy and Jason. We left

framed pictures of all three deceased (instead of tomb stones) at the temple, which is the traditional way of doing things in Thailand. After all this we departed the Temple and school to head back to Bangkok by early evening.



## APRIL 2015

April saw us at last get back into our stride after the very sad and distressing loss of two of our staunchest supporters in the previous months. We undertook our first major project up-country, in Mae Sot, late in April, but first laid the groundwork for that through various fund-raising activities and collection of donated goods from several valued contributors.

We first describe those fund-raising and collection activities, before proceeding on to a commemorative Clown show and then the project trip to Mae Sot.

First off was the brilliant Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel doing their bit again!

Early in April we collected another mega-load of essential goods from the Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel in downtown Bangkok. The great staff and management there have given our charity some fantastic support over the past few years and we have collected around 8 or 10 truck loads of bedding, towels, slippers, clothing, toiletries and even unclaimed luggage. Thank you to the fantastically helpful staff and Manager at Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel: Mr. Surachai Sakhayang (Tao) Bellman, Mr. Sitthisak Sanohwatee (Nui) Messenger, Mr. Pratchaya Artsongkham, Security Guard, Ms. Yanin Priwan (Mai) Receptionist, Ms. Panada Boonthaveesit (Lek) Secretary and General Manager Ms. Veronique Sirault. All these important goods collected in the last year or so have been given to some very appreciative people who are living in seriously harsh conditions mainly in the north of Thailand.



*Orphans receive clean, soft bedding and towels from Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel, Bangkok.*



Next up was more great support coming from the children at Charter International School in Bangkok. On 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Gift of Happiness Director Eddie Haworth collected some great donations of clothing, toys and school equipment from the children at this lovely school on the edge of the city. The teacher (Ms Louise) has started a new project to help Gift of Happiness in the future and before the school starts the main summer holidays in June we should be able to collect even more goodies.



*Thank you to the children and teachers at Charter International School, Bangkok!*

Then, on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>, we attended the Annual St. Georges Society Ball, where the society raised funds for our charity. This is a fantastic night of very British frivolity and mayhem in Bangkok!



The next day we were at the Bangkok St. Georges Society Booth on the back lawn of the (very colonial) British Club in downtown Bangkok. Yes, we had a great big amazing Car-Boot Sale of goodies for all of the family, with proceeds also going to help our little charity.

On the giving side, apart from the major project detailed below, we took our Happy Truck, complete with Happy Sleepy Cat, to the seaside resort town of Hua Hin in April, over the Lunar Eclipse weekend, to give a much appreciated happiness show and a truck load of goodies to just over 40 orphan kids from the nearby Baan Nokkamin and Mercy House. This aid and show-giving day was in memory of our dear departed friend, Gift of Happiness volunteer Geoffroy Van Innis (1974- 2015).



*Gift of Happiness Foundation Happy Truck  
(Sponsored by Clown Eckie)*



*Red nosed Geoffroy Van Innis as Gift of Happiness  
Clown Assistant, December 2013*

The big show, competition events and some donations were sponsored by Geoffroy's family from Belgium, who are trying to deal with their loss through meditation and studying Buddhist teachings here in Thailand. "Rest in peace with no more pain dear Geoffroy."

And so we come to the final event of the month, and its finale, the completion of our toilet and deep well project in Mae Sot.

## **Deep Well Project Supported by BCTFN** (British Community in Thailand Foundation for The Needy) **Bangkok.** **Project Report – Mae Sot District, Tak Province. 26-30<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.**

[Web Post/Slide Shows](#)

**Purpose:** To implement and construct a water pumping project at P' Ya Naung village in Mae Sot district, Tak province, northern Thailand, as well as distribute essential supplies of donated goods to the village, as well as the Mae Tao Clinic and other institutions in the Mae Sot area.

**Project Leader:** Mr. Edward Albert Haworth. Director GOHF

**Volunteers:**

- Khun Amarin Nissasoka.
- Khun Kit Yongsuwan
- Mr. Sawlarbartun Tun

### **Activity:**

Proud workmen and Gift of Happiness Foundation volunteers completed the construction of new toilets at P' Ya Naung village, in Mae Sot district of Tak province, in 2014.

This month we visited P' Ya Naung again, to give the kids new bedding and much more donated again by Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel Bangkok! This month's load went to the girls' and boys' dormitories (around 260 kids) where we built the new toilets last year. The village's name means "Buddha's Mountain" and it consists of little more than a group of remote jungle bamboo huts.



*These kids and around 200 more in the Village are finally going to benefit from this important project, so that they no longer have to cart water from a well uphill to the village.*

When we previously visited the village and built the six new toilets, we noted the lack of easily accessible water for the villagers, with children having to trek down to a water source and then cart heavy buckets back uphill to the village for use. Gift of Happiness Foundation was determined to



finish the water pumping project, started last year, by purchasing and installing a new, submersible water pump into the 7 metre deep well. Then we provided a new power supply to run the pump, plus a secondary pump that we installed, along with all the piping to reach a new header tank located 350 meters up the hill next to the new toilets that we built last year. The total cost of this project was THB 93,000, and it was supported by the BCTFN and the family of Khun Sopavadee Sankosik of the Len Penn Music Academy Bangkok.



Gift of Happiness planned this visit back to Mae Sot to also provide gifts of clothing, bedding, towels, shoes and other goods for around 450 children living in two orphanages near Mae Sot. We also gave around 80 kilos of adult clothing and a new freezer to Mae Tao Clinic in Mae Sot City.

The costs for transport and drivers' salaries etc were generously funded by a friend in memory of our resident volunteer, Simon Balmer (who died following a recent accident). Gift of Happiness Foundation also wishes to show great appreciation to our long term supporter of this and many other projects, the family of Khun Sopavadee Sankosik and the Len Penn Music Academy. The first truck was sponsored by Clown Eckie Entertainments. The second truck was supplied by Mr. Anukorn Puvacharoen of Jirakorn Co., Ltd. Research assistance was given by Mrs. Gale Bailey MBE and Mr. Raymond McLaughlin.

We employed a local (Mae Sot) workforce and local volunteers helped throughout this project. Gift of Happiness Foundation makes a point of buying goods and equipment from local suppliers wherever possible, and always engages local companies to complete any work.



Gift of Happiness Foundation built new toilets and now give them a new water delivery system.

It was also our sad duty on this trip, the first since the tragic death of Gift of Happiness volunteer, Mr. Simon Balmer, to acquaint the local Foundation assistants, as well as hotel staff, about his passing.



"Simon always had a joke with these guys every time we arrived here"

The charity paid it's usual monthly visit to Mae Tao Clinic to give them this month's donations of essential goods that helps keep the whole clinic functioning and providing medical care to thousands of people every month of the year. This month we gave them a new chest freezer for safe storage of important medical supplies and drugs, plus a couple of very useful air cleaning/filtering machines for the surgical rooms, a large donation of towels, bedding, slippers, adult clothing and even a load of used bags to hand out to the many out-patients attending the clinic every day.



GoHF gives to Mae Tao Clinic almost every month. This time it was a much-needed Freezer and other essentials.



Giving again to AGAPE Orphanage near Mae Sot.

The charity was also happy to give around 50 kilo's of top quality Italian Pasta (donated by **Eurofoodthai.com Bangkok**) to AGAPE Orphanage and around the same amount of pasta went to the boys and girls dormitories in the Village where the water pump project took place. We also gave a load of linen, towels and soft shoes for the children to use in their dormitories.





*New bedding and towels and Pasta for kids living in basic village dormitories*



*Installation of the new water pumping system.*



*Now they can have running water to bathe in.*



*Last minute shopping for the concrete water pump base.*



*Lots more electrical equipment needed to power the pumps.*



## MAY 2015

### **Happy Orphans Helped by Coronation Street Star, Giving Back Group and DHL Thailand!**

#### **Project Report – Mae Sot District, Tak Province, North Thailand. 17-23 May, 2015.**

[Web Posts/Slide Shows](#)

**Purpose:** To distribute over 500 donated uniforms, school bags, and tons of other clothing, goods and essential supplies, as well as provide entertainment shows, to 10 migrant schools and other institutions, plus the Mae Tao Clinic, in the Mae Sot district of Tak province, Thailand.

**Project Leader:** Mr. Edward Albert Haworth. Director GOHF

**Volunteers:**

- Mr. Matthew Hensman. (Giving it Back, Manchester. UK)
- Mr Qasim Akhtar. (Giving it Back, Manchester. UK)
- Ms. Tatyana Alimanova
- Khun Amarin Nissasoka.
- Khun Kit Yongsuwan.
- DHL, Thailand drivers.

**Activity:**

British ITV Coronation Street character, Qasim Akhtar (aka Zeedan Nazir) brought his own brand of Northern English generosity to poor children in North Thailand last May.



Gift of Happiness Foundation and its Manchester born Director, Eddie Haworth, were honored to have the presence and support of TV and movie actor, Qasim Akhtar, former character in the award winning TV comedy drama, Shameless, and now playing the part of Zeedan Nazir in the longest running TV series in the UK, Coronation Street, when it made its monthly trip to north Thailand in May 2015.

Qasim traveled half way across the planet with his "Bro", Matthew, to help give tons of goodies and joy to hundreds of orphans and poor kids during a six day aid and show giving tour to the remote Northern jungles and mountains of Thailand.

We also had fantastic sponsors for this project. Gift of Happiness Foundation was delighted to be joined by Mr. Matthew Hensman, Founder of the Giving it Back Community from Manchester, UK.

Matthew sent 10 large boxes of kids clothing and toys from Manchester and, through his newly formed charity organization, raised enough money to buy 500 new uniforms for poor kids in northern Thailand.

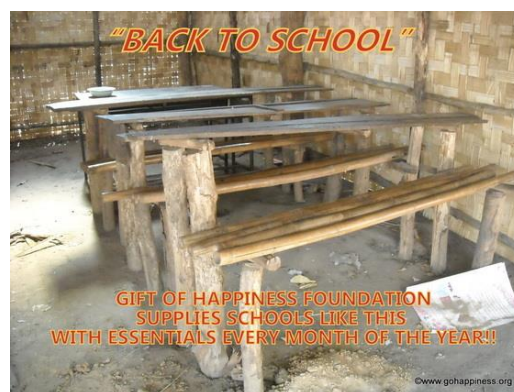
Other brilliant sponsors were Charter International School, Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel Bangkok, Len Penn Music Academy, Bromsgrove International Early Years School, and more uniforms from Thai Premium Apparel Co., Ltd, Bangkok.



DHL Thailand provided a massive 10 wheeled truck to take tons of essentials to hundreds of children during this 6 day aid and show giving project. Just part of this load was 600 new school bags and soft toys donated by Khun Toon Wera, Khun Suchat Samaboot and Miss Moa Svensson. In addition, we had 500+ tooth brushes sent from the USA by Mr. Steve Hunia, plus other toiletries and lots more items donated by many individuals and international schoolchildren in Bangkok and worldwide.

GoHF Founder and Director, Eddie Haworth, provided his own "Clown Eckie Happy Truck" and Khun Amarin Nissasoka drove a second vehicle provided by Jirakorn Co., Ltd, Bangkok. Other volunteers were Bangkok expat from Uzbekistan, Ms. Tatyana Alimanova and a Mae Sot resident helper Khun Kit.

**Report written by Gift of Happiness Founder and Director, Mr. Edward Haworth.**  
**THAILAND KIDS GO BACK TO SCHOOL IN STYLE - Gift of Happiness Foundation helps happy kids go back to school.**



Gift of Happiness Foundation gave new uniforms to 550 children in schools like this from 17/05/15 to 23/05/15. Although only a few weeks since our last visit at the end of April, GoHF eagerly returned to

Mae Sot district in Tak province to help orphans and children start the new school term at bamboo hut schools in remote areas around Mae Sot, in Tak Province in Northern Thailand.

Volunteers from the charity were joined by members of the Giving it Back Community, Manchester UK, who had already sent 10 large boxes full of clothing for the children. We were also delighted to welcome our brand new transport sponsors, DHL Thailand, who provided a 10 wheel truck to deliver all the amazing goods we had packed ready for their drivers to collect on the big starting day of this project tour. DHL are sponsors of an annual event that we participate in every year, the **Convoy for Kids**, run by our good friend and supporter Mr. David Mills of Bangkok, and we thank him for his help in arranging this great support from DHL.

We handed out several tons of essential goods including another 550 new uniforms for the most needy children and 450 new school bags for those children who currently use plastic carrier bags. We also gave around 3.5 tons of quality used clothing provided by **Giving it Back Community** and international schoolchildren in Bangkok.

Plus, we gave educational supplies and lots of fantastic toys to those schools where we gave our fun-filled clown shows, to an estimated total of 2,000 children located at 10 migrant schools and orphanages in the region.



During this month's visit to Mae Tao Clinic, we gave a new, modern office copy machine with enough ink/toner and paper supplies to last a year or so. Then we also gave them another 120 kilos of used adult clothing for the outpatients and some medical supplies for the Clinic.

"We couldn't fit all this into our transport a few weeks ago when we gave them a new freezer, air cleaners and lots more. But this time we have a great big 10 wheeler truck to take everything for us, thanks to DHL TH!"

"It's only because of the many friends of Gift of Happiness Foundation that we are able to keep doing these important monthly aid giving projects helping so many children in great need".

"Thank you all again!"



## JUNE 2015

### **Another 2,000 Kids Receive the Gift of Happiness – Children's Happy Charity Does Exactly What it Says on the Tin!**

**Project Report – Sangkhlaburi, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand. 15-19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015.**

[Web Posts/Slide Shows](#)

**Purpose:** To distribute 3 car loads of donated clothing, toys and other goods to institutions and schools in and around Sangkhlaburi town, plus perform Clown Eckie Happy Shows at multiple sites.

**Project Leader:** Mr. Edward Albert Haworth. Director GOHF

**Volunteers:**

- Mr. Antoine Van Innis.
- Mr. Ben Calberg.
- Mr. Luke Horton.
- Mr. Gary White.
- Khun Amarin Nissasoka.
- Khun Kit Yongsuwan.

**Activity:**



*Gift of Happiness Foundation - Giving Just What it Says on the Tin!*

This five day aid and show giving tour included visits to six migrant schools in communities close to the Thai Burma border, but within 50 kilometers of Sangkhlaburi, north Thailand. We also visited a safe house for abused women and children before we returned to Bangkok on Friday 19 June.

Whilst we did not have the exact number of children at each location until we arrive, we now know that almost **2,000 children** were served during this project. We gave a Clown Eckie “Gift of Happiness” performance at each location. At all locations visited, we also gave toys, clothing, educational supplies and ice cream for all the kids.



### Charter International School

With the help of International schoolchildren, expat families, a music academy, hotels and other friends, we really do give happiness in places where it's a rare commodity!

There were six people attending this project, five volunteers and one foundation employee. As usual, we used a truck sponsored by the Director to transport donations and some volunteers on this trip. We gave around 1.5 tons of toys, clothing, educational equipment, some medical supplies and a laptop computer. These goods were given to children who are living in very harsh conditions close to the borders of North Thailand and Burma.

All the goods were donated by the children of Charter International School, Len Penn Music Academy, Bangkok, Antoine Van Innis and Mr. Luke Horton, Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel, plus hundreds of items donated by many individuals and families in Bangkok and other cities worldwide. The tour itself and prior collections of goods was financed by volunteer and personal contributions, plus the Foundation Director's own resources.



*Good news for poor kids in Thailand!*

All the people we visit are living in very poor or desperately poor situations and we are always prepared to experience some sights that may be uncomfortable, but we are determined to keep doing this important work as often as possible.

This Gift of Happiness Foundation Project was dedicated to the memory of our dear friend and volunteer Geoffroy Van Innis, who passed away suddenly in March 2015.

The six people participating in the aid and show giving tour were:

Gift of Happiness Foundation founder and director, Eddie Haworth (aka Clown Eckie); Foundation Assistant, Khun Amarin Nissasoka; Project Contributor Mr. Antoine van Innis; Project Contributor Mr. Ben Calberg; Project Contributor Mr. Luke Horton; Project Treasurer, Mr. Gary White.

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**Independent report: Gift of Happiness Foundation aid and show giving project to Sangkhlaburi, Kanchanaburi, North Thailand – 15 to 19 June 2015. An impartial report by Gary White, former Chief Representative, Westpac Banking Corporation, Bangkok, former President, Australian Thai Chamber of Commerce, and a GoHF volunteer.**

The June 2015 Gift of Happiness project was to Sangkhlaburi district, in Kanchanaburi province, north west of Bangkok, where we had not been since March 2014. Five volunteers on this project were expatriates resident in Bangkok. Eddie Haworth and Luke Horton are British, Antoine Van Innis and Ben Calberg are Belgian, and Gary White is Australian. There was also one paid driver/translator Khun Amarin Nissasoka.

Antoine Van Innis is the brother of Geoffroy Van Innis, and Ben Calberg a close friend of Geoffroy, who recently passed away in a tragic accident in his home country of Belgium. Geoffroy had been a regular contributor to, helper of and participant in Gift of Happiness projects and this particular project trip was dedicated to his memory.



*Geoffroy Van Innis (Pictured in Sangkhlaburi 2014)*

Mr. Luke Horton is a recent recruit to the GoHF crew and dedicated a great deal of effort over some weeks to gathering donations of clothing and toys from his family, his children's school friends, and families in his community. The focus of this trip was to distribute those goods to needy children in the Sangkhlaburi area, as well as other goods donated by Charter International School, Antoine Van Innis, Len Penn Music Academy and Park Plaza Sukhumvit Hotel in Bangkok – plus, of course, great big dollops of happiness via Clown Eckie fun shows at schools and institutions in the area.



### Day 1: 15th June

All participants bar Luke, who had an early engagement and was to meet us on the road, met at the Gift of Happiness shop to load up the goods and prepare for the trip. Luke sent his car and driver whilst he himself was otherwise engaged, and we packed his car, and then the GoH Happy Van and Antoine's car. The 3 vehicles, packed to the brim, all set off by 10.30 for the trek to Sangkhlaburi.



*Gift of Happiness Foundation Director's own truck being put to good use again!*

After a long drive we were all there and checked into our accommodation at P Guest House by 6.30, where we were met by representatives from our local liaison, **One Sky Foundation**. Dinner was at a small and very local restaurant that serves a famous version of massaman curry, before we all turned in for the first day of happiness giving on Tuesday.

### Day 2: 16th June

An early start (in fact, they were all early starts!) saw us gathered at the local market by 8am for coffee and tasty local snacks. Then it was off to One Sky's office nearby to pick up some more goods and a generator, as our first call had no electricity and some power is needed for the Clown Eckie show.

I should state at the outset how well and ably we were assisted by Khun Andrew, Khun Un and Khun Off of the One Sky Foundation, who liaised with local schools and institutions to set the programme, chaperoned and guided us to each location, smoothed initial introductions where necessary, and generally facilitated the efficient conduct of all proceedings. They also arranged a local photographer, Khun Wanna, who accompanied us on Tuesday and Thursday (and who took some great pictures, was extremely accommodating to all requests for help, and spoke excellent English).

Once everyone was breakfasted and all was picked up and packed up, off we set for our first engagement, at Parai Noog Satellite School (a satellite of the larger Ban Huay Gop School nearby).



After turning off just before the River Kwai Christian Hospital we drove down an increasingly narrow road that soon turned to dirt and entered a quite remote area at the end of which was a gate proclaiming we had arrived at “Happy Home”. This was where Parai Noog was located, and what better site for the first of Clown Eckie’s happy shows. The school has 58 students and most of them were present for the show, which was greeted with the usual squeals of delight and laughter.

After leaving bags of toys, clothes and educational goods here, we had a quick noodle lunch at a local establishment back on the “main” road near the hospital, then returned to the side road for our afternoon visit to Ban Huay Gop School (Frog Creek). Another show here for the 190 plus children in attendance, plus half a dozen bags of clothing and toys, and some candy and biscuits courtesy of (I think) Antoine and Ben.

Then it was back to the guesthouse for a short rest before dinner at the Samprasob Hotel, in celebration of my 63rd birthday, which was that day. Andy from One Sky joined us and the guys got me a cake complete with birthday wishes and a candle – many thanks guys!



*The back side of the show!*

### **Day 3: 17th June**

After our usual breakfast stop at the town market we set off to a very large school in the Mon village section of Sangkhlaburi town, Wat Wangwiwekaram, near the temple of the same name. This school has over 1,000 students, all Ethnic Mon. The show could not be given to all, as there was nowhere big enough to hold everyone, but we did manage to entertain all the younger ones.

So several hundred enjoyed an hour of laughs and happiness, and again we left several bags of children’s clothes and toys to be distributed by the teachers after we left. Antoine and Ben again sponsored snacks for the kids and then it was off for a quick lunch back in the main part of town.

The afternoon saw us head out to Sam Chedi Sam Ong district (Three Pagodas Pass) and Ban Songkhalia School, a satellite of Sam Chedi Sam Ong School, located at the base of one of the many huge chunks of shrub covered rocks that dot the area and represent the last gasp of mountains that trail right down from Tibet and the Himalayas. Another show, more bags of toys and clothes, as well as ice creams courtesy of Antoine and Ben, who then unfortunately had to head back to Bangkok due to unavoidable work commitments.

The rest of us – Eddie, Amarin, Luke and I – headed back to the guesthouse for the evening. Luke helped One Sky's Manager, Andy, sort goods for the next day and the rest of us returned to Raan Aharn Massaman for more of their delicious fare.



#### **Day 4: 18th June**

Our last day in Sangkhlaburi started as usual with breakfast at the market, and then we headed back along the road to Thong Pha Phum and Kanchanaburi for a few dozen clicks before turning left into the hills and a very remote school called Ban Gong Mong Tha, which serves a small village community nestled in a valley amongst the hills. More dirt roads, but very picturesque getting there.

At the school we were greeted by Khun Joon, a trainee teacher from the village. He had gone to school there and then completed his higher education at the Kanchanaburi Rajabhat Institute, before returning to Gong Mong Tha as a trainee teacher.

He will become a fully qualified teacher next year and is a credit and inspiration to his community, coming back to help teach the local kids of his village. His English was excellent and he basically chaperoned our visit to this school of over 300 students. After the show we left more bags of clothes and toys and Luke hosted snacks from the school cooperative store for the kids present. It is planned to return to this lovely, well-managed school on a future GoH visit to Sangkhlaburi.





*Musical notes/patterns shaved into his hair at an ethnic Mon squatter village*



*Khun Joon, Ban Gong Mong Tha*

After lunch back in town we headed out along the River Kwai Christian Hospital Road again for two impromptu stops. The first was an orphanage way out on the road towards the refugee camps along the border, Suan Lek Lek Mor Lah Kha, with 37 children aged 2-5 years. There was no time for a show (perhaps on the next visit) but we left some bags of clothes and toys, including a beautifully crafted and fully-equipped doll's house given by Luke's daughter.

Next stop was back near the hospital, an ethnic Mon squatter village behind a temple – the village aptly being called Ban Mon Lang Wat (the Mon village behind the temple!) – where we left a few bags of clothes and plan to do a show at some future time. Then it was back to One Sky Foundation offices for the final show and donations of clothing and toys, to various van loads of children and their families brought in from remote, small institutions by One Sky. Luke again hosted ice creams for all and then we and the One Sky staff joined for a farewell dinner (once the One Sky people had provided dinner for all the children and families).



### **Day 5: 19th June**

The next day we set out early and returned to Bangkok, arriving safe and sound around mid-afternoon and thankfully beating the worst of the usual Friday evening peak hour traffic!

This completed yet another very rewarding and enjoyable GoH project. In all nearly 2,000 needy

children benefitted in some way from the goods distributed and were given a small taste of a kind of happiness they had never known before via the Clown Eckie fun shows.

Another great job done by the Gift of Happiness Foundation, Eddie Haworth (AKA, Clown Eckie) the volunteers who helped on the trip, and all those who donated goods, time and effort towards its successful conclusion.

Report written on 23 June, 2015 by: Mr. Gary White, Retired Banker; Past President and Honorary Member, AustCham.

