



## Twentieth Meeting

### FreeSchools World Literacy Australia

DATE commencing: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 TIME: 9 am  
DATE completion: Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2009 TIME: 9 pm

INTERNET VENUE: FreeSchools Literacy Australia email network  
[fswl-australia@googlegroups.com](mailto:fswl-australia@googlegroups.com)

### Minutes of the Meeting

1. Rollcall of members and others present and apologies.

There were 9 participants in attendance  
Robert Coenraads (President)  
Ian Esmore (Public Officer)  
Merindi Belarski (Treasurer)  
Betty Lyon (Committee Member)  
Melissa Alldis (Committee Member)  
Sue Tennant  
Linda Alcorn  
Judy Townsend  
Vern Verass

2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Nineteenth meeting were sent to each member of the committee and were accepted by the committee  
Moved by Ian Esmore and Seconded by Robert Coenraads

3. Reports from the Committee.

The Committee received the President's Report

#### PRESIDENTS REPORT

A formal welcome to you all for our 20th Monthly Meeting, Thank you all very much for your continued enthusiasm and support of our growing project. I would like to include here a message from our International President, Sue Tennant:

*"I just want to offer my congratulations Robert for being so detailed and consistent with the business of FreeSchools. Great job!*

*I also want to pass on my hearty thanks and admiration to Donna for her ongoing efforts, Melissa for her successful fundraiser, and Betty for organizing her teas last April 22nd and 23rd.*

*Big thanks to Delphine for getting donations and to Linda - the awesome dynamo, who never even got to see the FreeSchools in Thailand, but is raising money for us in yet another venture this weekend. I know there are others who have made major contributions of time and effort. Thank you all so much.*

*Every event depends on the unfailing support of volunteers. I want to thank all the local supporters, friends and family, who rally with time and energy to a cause that may be new to them. Thank you Board members who are headed up to Newcastle this weekend to help! Many thanks to our FreeSchools' angel Judy Townsend who also plans to be there. Thank you everyone for your sustained support. Gosh, how I wish I could be a part of it! "*

In accordance with the usual formality, could you please acknowledge yourselves as present for this meeting. I also attach the Minutes of the 19th meeting for your perusal and acceptance at this meeting. Thank you for your attendance at our 20th meeting.

Kind regards,  
Robert

Dr. Robert Coenraads  
President,  
FreeSchools World Literacy – Australia

#### 4. Progress in Thailand

#### 5. Progress in India

**Robert:** Please find the following letter from Sister Crescence in Bihar, India,

*Dear Robert,*

*Thank you ever so much for your beautiful letter, which is so gratifying and encouraging. You are right, it is really surprising to see the progress of our scholarship Children. It is not only their academic achievements that make us feel proud but also their intellectual maturity and capacity to think on a higher plane to accept that their mental growth is due to the scholarship-grant.*

*Yes we all should feel happy and proud of them. The credits goes not only to me but to you Robert and to all individual doners of scholarship program, please convey my personal thanks to each of them by name mentioned in your letter. Let us all thank the lord for blessing these children, physically intellectually & spiritually.*

*Thanks for letter for Sonal and Smridhi. This letter is handed over to them. They reciprocate their heartfelt thanks. You may hear from them in near future. My special congratulations to Francheska and Leonora, the two little ambassadors of "Free school" thanks to Frances & you.*

*Yours truly,*

*Sr. Crescence*

#### 6. General Business.

The following discussion took place during the meeting and is recorded here:

**Sue:** Dear Robert, Hope you and your family are doing well. So much is going on with FreeSchools right now that I'm feeling both optimistic and stressed as I'm still running the business at Silver Springs. We had no bookings for 4 months but now they are starting up again. Meanwhile, we did major maintenance, repairs and updating that took a lot of time away from FreeSchools! I'm attaching a recent budget for FreeSchools in Thailand (SEE APPENDIX 2). I'm expecting that FSWL-AU will assume partial responsibility. It totals \$28,800 Cnd for the year at an average operating cost of \$3200(Cnd)/school/year. Schools 3,4,5,6 and 7 are all new and it was my understanding that funds raised in Australia by Judy, Jo, Linda and some FSWL-AU volunteers would support new FreeSchools in Thailand. The conversion of \$3200 Cnd to AUD is \$3654.50. So we were not accurate in our estimate of a FreeSchool for \$3000. Still it's a modest amount for the great good that it accomplishes. These funds can be directly wired to the Mirror bank in Chiang Rai. Details are attached. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thanks for your help.

**Robert:**

Dear Sue and FreeSchools Committee of Management,

Just to confirm my plans according to Sue's instructions, and to summarize the funds presently in the FSWL Australian account:

**TOTAL:**

There is a grand total of **\$8,764.90** in the Australian bank account

**THAILAND:**

I have the received the following amounts into FSWL bank account earmarked for the Mirror Foundation, Thailand:

25/2/09	Judy Townsend	A\$4,703.30	Bateau Bay Afternoon Tea at Murry/Judy's Home
9/3/09	Judy Townsend	A\$ 870.00	deposited 9 March Bateau Bay
11/3/09	Jo Townsend	A\$ 650.00	chq deposited 11 Mar 2009 for Jo's Dinner Party
29/4/09	Whitebridge High School Linda Alcorn	A\$1,273.30	deposited 29 April 2008 Harmony Day organized by Linda Alcorn

A total of **A\$7,496.60** has been raised for the new schools project in northern Thailand. This is the results of an amazing effort by Judy and Jo Townsend and Linda Alcorn and their family, work colleagues and friends, specifically for the development of the new Thai Schools. I will wire these donations to Mirror in Chiang Rai next week

**INDIA:**

The following donations recently received and earmarked for continued support of the Indian Scholarship Program

27/3/09	Kathleen Swadling	A\$ 15.00	regular monthly donation
31/3/09	Interest 31 Mar 2009	A\$ 3.30	
16/4/09	Merindi Belarski	A\$ 15.00	regular monthly donation
27/4/09	Kathleen Swadling	A\$ 15.00	regular monthly donation
12/4/09	Melissa Aldis	A\$220.00	lingerie party fundraiser at Melissa's House

A total of **\$268.30** which will be sent to Sister Crescence later in the year.

**AFRICA:**

A total of **\$1,000** donated by Donna Cervantes remains specifically for use in Africa to kick-start a program on that continent in due course.

All incidental business expenses have been born by members of the Committee of Management

Thank you all so much for your continued support of FreeSchools World Literacy and for making all of this an emerging reality.

**Sue:** Dear Robert & FreeSchools Committee of Management,

Thank you so much for your careful stewardship of these funds. Heartfelt thanks to all who have made these funds possible. It is a terrific help to have the responsibility shared by so many caring

people. I should clarify that Huay Muang and Doipu Muen were missing from the list but they are being prepared to open soon. Thanks again,

## **FSWL Charitable Status**

## **FSWL Australian Website and Communications**

**Robert:** Dear Sue, I have been working on the Wikipedia entry for FreeSchools World Literacy, which I will shortly send you for review, and I was noticed that it was about this time last year when you reported;

*"Anu Amos announces her willingness to help incorporate FSWL- Asia. Starting in March of 2009 she has agreed to leave her job as principal of St. Thomas School and become full-time Co-ordinator of FSWL-Asia."*

I was wondering how the Amos family were progressing in their Divine Mission?

**Sue:** Anu did not give notice of leaving because I had not assured her that we could swing it all this year. She has an amazing job as principal of St. Thomas School for Girls in Delhi. Everyone I talk to has heard of this prestigious school.

I had dinner with Anu at her home, just before returning to Canada. While I had written them last November, I needed to communicate to both Ashish and Anu in person that Silver Springs had not sold as expected and consequently, I would not yet be able to provide full funding in 2009 for the Delhi, UP FreeSchools (we currently provide \$20,000/year). Neither would I be able to raise funds for a modest salary for an Executive Director for FreeSchools in Asia. They both readily understood as the economic downturn had had an adverse effect on ISPCCK and its business. They are no less committed to the mission of FreeSchools but understand that we must wait upon better times for our vision of coordinated expansion of FreeSchools throughout Asia to unfold. Meanwhile I invited Rev. Amos to visit us in Canada this May. I have no idea why but his visa application to visit Canada was denied. Also, I was unable to buy a bank draft for \$25,000 in Indian rupees for Sr. Crescence a month ago due to "International banking instability". The bank told me to try again in a few weeks. It seems Canada is being inconveniently cautious.

**Robert:** Thank you for that update. It appears that the economic downturn is having an effect right across a range of activities including our own charitable ones! It is best to remain cautious and, indeed, I am thankful to still have my own job! (in the resources sector, which was generally very badly hit by the downturn). I am sure that all will proceed as planned – all in its own good time! Thank you for your efforts and continued support for all of us down here in Australia.

**Robert** Dear Sue and Committee of Management, Please find attached a proposed Google Search Engine - Wikipedia entry for FreeSchools World Literacy (see APPENDIX). That is to say, it will be what people get to read about the FreeSchools charity as a background when they search online in the world's greatest and most comprehensive encyclopedia - Google. It must be a balance between an accurate comprehensive description, but not overwhelm the casual reader with too much detail. It would also provide a link to FreeSchools own website. Please read it carefully as all errors need to be found and further names and details need to be added, particularly for the other National Chapters of FreeSchools.

Sue, could you please run it past your Board for checking, revision and approval. Everything highlighted in BLUE is a link to another entry in Google - for example, the definition of CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION, or may link with an external website eg MIRROR FOUNDATION. Even your own names can link to another Google entry, eg for ROBERT COENRAADS. I will organize that it connects to the following entry

*Dr Robert R. Coenraads  
B.A.(Hons), M.Sc. Ph.D. FGAA, Dip DT. F.Aus.IMM*

*Dr. Robert Coenraads is a professional geoscientist and writer. He is author of over 30 scientific publications a number of popular books, including "Rocks and Fossils", "Natural Disasters" and "Geologica" which record his deep fascination with natural history, geologic time, and beautiful minerals and gemstones. He has led archaeology, natural history and geology field trips to various corners of the globe including the magnificent Olmec, Maya, and Aztec sites of Mexico, and the active volcanoes of the Pacific region.*

*Dr. Robert Coenraads established the Australian support network for the first school for underprivileged children at Motihari in Bihar State, India, and is currently President of FreeSchools World Literacy – Australia. During his 30-year exploration career, travel to numerous poor and remote regions of the globe have sparked a strong humanitarian interest. It is his firm belief that education for all children, not just a privileged few, is the key to solving all other problems such as overpopulation, hunger and poverty.*

I encourage each of you to write a similar styled Curriculum Vitae - simple, upbeat, brief and general like the above example (remember that Wikipedia is a highly public place). Otherwise I could create an extremely simple entry for you, for example.

*Melissa Alldis*

*Melissa Alldis joined the Committee of Management of FreeSchools World Literacy - Australia as an Ordinary Member in March 2009.*

You must, however, give your permission to have your name to be mentioned on Wikipedia in any way. Please get back to me with your comments and your own personal Wikipedia entries.

**Judy:** What a wonderful idea. Somebody has been busy. Just a few notes. It is Chiang Rai, not Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand (where we stayed with Paul and Mirror.) You refer to "camps" but I think it should say villages. I don't think there are any refugee camps serviced by FreeSchools. There is no red line coming up so maybe travelled is spelt traveled? It is traveller so I think it should be travelled. (Can you tell I am a teacher!) This is just a first glance. It is great for me because I learnt things about FreeSchools!

**Sue:** Is it not a great thing that Judy Townsend found it in her heart to support FreeSchools! You've made a great start and a model for others to follow. Thanks very much.

## **FSWL Newsletter and Publicity Materials**

**Betty:** I'm about to approach the Franklin Primary School and hope the children will want to become involved in fundraising for Free Schools in India and Thailand.

I have spoken to the Principal and she is interested to know what Free Schools is all about. I am not sure what methods for raising funds at schools are used by some of our members, however I have devised a project which I would like to submit to the Franklin Primary School and I am attaching this for you to read (SEE APPENDIX 1).

I would very much appreciate you looking at it and telling me what you think. Please make any amendments or changes or add any ideas of your own. It will all be very helpful.

Concerning recognition for the school children. Have you designed a certificate that would be suitable for this? If not, I'll have a go at a format and send to you. Once agreed I would be happy to have these printed and pay for any expenses incurred.

I am not sure of the methods others use for raising funds in schools and would appreciate any ideas that may fit in with what I am proposing to do. Robert, I would appreciate if it is not too much trouble that you email me back asap. I had promised the Principal of Franklin Primary that I would get back to her soon.

I am holding another morning tea in my home next Wednesday. Numbers will not be as many as my last teas for many reasons i.e. Have just finished an 8 week stint for the Victorian Bushfires and little Franklin is almost exhausted with fundraising. It is also getting very cold down here (latest temp. 20 - 11o) and people tend to huddle around their fires. I'll possibly leave my next

'teas to when it warms up and if I can concentrate on the schools. Here's crossing my fingers that Franklin Primary will take on Free Schools !

**Robert:** This is a fabulous concept and approach for inviting primary school classes to assist in our FreeSchools Project. Apart from Linda's Harmony Day fundraising at Whitebridge High School and Donna's efforts, we have not developed any standard approach for this kind of fundraising work. Your point-form document is ideal for rapidly and clearly explaining the FreeSchools concept to a busy school principal. I particularly like the way that you have displayed your visual scoreboard concept in the letter, which illustrates precisely how many children are being helped for a year by the funds raised. We can provide photographs of the children from our growing library of such material and some of their drawings too, and organize general responses from the FreeSchools or at least their supervisors. We can also get the primary class's own letters etc to the recipient FreeSchools (at this stage it is harder with language barriers etc, and far more time consuming to organize specific one to one correspondence).

I have been recently thinking about an appropriate FreeSchools World Literacy Special Recognition Certificate, as I am wanting to present something to Whitebridge High School in appreciation for their Harmon Day efforts – something of certificate quality with the School's name on it, and something colourful and pictorial (I was thinking of that photo of the FSWL children on the rickety wooden bridge holding the FSWL banner) - something that the School can frame and hang on the wall as a reminder of their student's thoughtful and kind efforts. Recognition Certificates for individual students in the classes in your project, Betty, might be smaller versions of this School's Recognition Certificate with a blank area for someone with a nice calligraphic writing style to fill in the individual student's name with permanent marker pen.

Please have a go at what you consider a suitable certificate wording, Betty, and perhaps we can ask Vern to take a professional look at it and for his assistance to include background photos etc.

For the "Expenses Incurred" point in your letter, it might be preferable to say, "FreeSchools will provide printed material and certificates for the children" although this will probably be taken for granted anyway. I have attached your letter here for any further comments by the other Board Members.

Thank you for offering to have the certificates professionally printed. This is important as the ink in home inkjet printers tends to fade and discolour quite quickly - perhaps we might also ask Merindi and Bernie to approach Pete Hogan of Hogan Printers to see if they can us help out once we get the final product. Kind regards and many thanks for your efforts.

**Judy:** I really love the idea of the FreeSchool reward certificates for schools - especially the big one for the whole school's participation. It is so much easier for me to approach a school again if I have sent them something in recognition of their first effort. I have several schools that I can approach up here and the certificate would be a huge boost for me. I would probably like one with a Thai and an Indian school pictured. Is that too expensive? It just shows that we really are World literacy. Ok - in my dreams I would like it to have 10 countries on it!! Jude

**Robert:** Hi Vern, I would like to have a chat with you to see what you think about the concept of these FreeSchools World Literacy Certificates of Thanks.

**Vern:** I would be delighted to develop a certificate design for FreeSchools. Yes, why don't you give me a call mob: 0408 851 827. I've thrown this certificate together for you. It's A4 landscape in size and the text can be edited to whatever you would like. What do you think?

**Robert:** Thank you very much for your kind, and most rapid, response to our discussions on providing donor schools and organizations with a special FSWL Certificate of Thanks. I will circulate this fabulous piece of design work to the FSWL Committee of Management for their comment and also call you personally to thank you. We can make all the revisions to the text, all at one time, when everybody's comments are back. With regard to Sue's and my signatures on the document, could those be inserted electronically for logistical reasons?

Logistically A4 landscape is a great size. I was having a look at my various certificates and some of them are of this size (framed with a cardboard border around them does make them look bigger) while others are larger. I suppose that the certificate could be printed onto any proportionally-equivalent larger size as need be? - (although you wouldn't want to try and post it anywhere, but rather hand present it to the organization). Again, thanks very much, Vern, for your support of FreeSchools.

**Judy:** Robert - if you make one for Whitebridge can you add on Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College that raised the \$750 dollars for us. I didn't even approach that school - they just read about it in the paper and went ahead and had a mufti day. All I had to do was take up a few photos and receive the cheque! Thanks Judy

**Robert:** Hi Sue, As you can see from the correspondence with Vern, he has been doing a wonderful job designing a certificate for the FreeSchools Committee of Management to present to the schools and donor organizations. Could you please send him a copy of your signature (or a nice looking signature that you are happy to see printed on a certificate) in digital form on the certificate as Vern describes below.

**Vern:** Glad you like it. Yes, if you send me scanned signatures I can just drop them in place. With the convenience of digital cameras, a photo of signatures would work also. At present it has no date, would it need to appear anywhere? Yes, I can imagine the certificate with a wide matt border in a larger frame as you described. Attached are a couple of samples of mounted photos we have produced for our clients. We could supply something similar for the FreeSchools certificate.

**Judy:** Wow! That is so wonderful. Obviously I would love the blank one so that I can distribute it to the schools that raised money for us. Jo is running a leadership day in a few weeks and it would be marvellous if the schools involved could be shown the certificate - which they earn AFTER they do some fundraising for FSWL. I only need 6 at the moment - but very happy to run off my own if that helps cost - or pay you from the next round of fundraising if you are getting them printed. Makes the charity look 1000% more professional and caring!! Super dooper. The leadership day involves a lot of schools with Yr9 High School kids working with Yr 6 primary students. Jo thought that their task would be to run a fundraising & information event back at their own school – and obviously we know what the charity must be. I have run off 30 DVDs ready for the day and we have a lovely library bag for each participant. Probably need 30 brochures as well. Linda has some wrist bands left over that I have to finish -(now where did I put them!) and I will add some photos as well. Now we just have to think of the leadership tasks.

**Robert:** I have the FSWL brochures ready, Judy. What is the address you would like them sent to?

**Ian:** Great job, thank you Vern

Feedback comment.

1. Possibly the 2 base signatories could be swapped sides. ie Robert on LHS with Australian reference and both to be digitally signed.
  2. Room for a DATE to be inserted
  3. In following with public outreach for all documentation to include ABN, office postal address, email plus website address.
  4. Awarded to area if "left blank" could be overprinted via desktop printer or written by hand in Caligraphy style. This would allow flexibility for other authorised members and reduce overall reliance on administrative efforts and costs.
  5. A4 size is great as frame costs for off the shelf are much reduced. However suggest the picture logo on 1/4 top of page is setback a bit more from LH and RH side of margin. Most A4 frames have a 6 - 10mm space and extra clearance will give balance to image in the frame. Larger size can still be accommodated and could be done by print enlargement combined with other decorative framing up to A3 size.
- hope the above helps.

**Robert:** Thanks for those highly practical comments, Ian, which I will pass on to Vern for him to put in the "job bag". Vern has all of our business details in his system as he included them our brochure.

I would like to add the following changes to the small text:

Change "thanks to ....." to "FreeSchools World Literacy would like to thank...."

The base signatories should become

Mrs. Sue Tennant  
International President  
FreeSchools World Literacy

Dr. Robert Coenraads  
Australian President  
FreeSchools World Literacy

The worlds "HARMONY DAY" are only really applicable for the Whitbridge High School certificate, so on the general certificate it could say

"FUNDRAISING EFFORTS FOR INDIA AND THAILAND FREESCHOOLS"

And thanks again to Vern for giving his time to this project.

**Betty:** I love the Certificate you printed Vern. I can use this as a sample to show when visiting schools. I note the letter 'h' has been left out of the word Freeschools under Sue and Robert - however I presume this is just a draft copy and that would be picked up. Robert, can you tell me if 'Australia' is going to be mentioned with Asia Regional Manager, which is printed under your name. I have been stressing that FreeSchools now has an Australian base and if this can be done it would be good for the schools here in Aussieland to see some mention of it printed with the other regions on the Certificate. I have sent off all the necessary info. together with our brochure to the Principal of the Franklin Primary School for her consideration and feedback and will notify you as soon as I hear anything.

**Robert:** Thank you so much for your program of afternoon teas, Betty. The \$257 received in donations may not seem like such a large amount to us here in Australia, but you can rest assured that such an amount is very significant when converted in the recipient country. For example the \$257 of our dollars represents a year's worth of FreeSchools education for some 14 students in Bihar, India's poorest state. Thanks for your compliments on Vern's work. I will give Vern all of the edits on the certificate text at once to save him spending too much of his time on it. Thanks for finding the missing "h" as such things are easily missed.

Sue is actually the overarching International President of FreeSchools World Literacy and I am the Australian President, so both of us signing the certificate gives it a good professional and global feel, plus personalizes it as an Australian charity. You can also point out that FreeSchools has had an Australian base since 2000 when there was just one free evening school in existence being run by Sister Crescence. There will eventually be presidents for each of the Asian countries such as Singapore in due course.

Further to that last email, we might use get Sue's latest per-student costings for Thailand and India to use in your letter, as they have gone up in the last two years. Also, in conjunction with the Principal's thoughts on the matter, the threshold level at which an individual class receives recognition certificates can be adjusted according to the age and size of the class etc.

**Betty:** Dear Sue. In Robert's latest email to me he mentioned there might be some different costing for students. I'm not too sure what he meant by this, but took it that it could mean that the cost of \$15 (India) and \$30 (Thailand) for a child to be educated may have increased. These costs are shown in the new Aust. brochure as well. I haven't been able to get back to him as I'm busy preparing for a morning and afternoon tea tomorrow. I was going to send off a letter to the Principal of Franklin School today and mention that there could be a slight increase on the figures that I have mentioned. Am I correct here Sue or have I got it wrong? I'll await your answer and hold off sending the letter until I hear from you. Many thanks.



**Sue:** Dear Betty, The major investment of FreeSchools is in the ongoing compensation, training and supervision of the teachers. The Australian dollar is not equal to the US dollar and the Canadian dollar is somewhere in between. So there's just no getting around it, differences in currency and language can only be approximate. So I don't worry about absolute accuracies.

\$15/child/year and \$1500/school/year for the Bihar schools are still good figures to work with. These 43 schools can have 100 students + and the older children are trained to teach the younger ones. But mostly we try to split them up and hire a new teacher. Last year I sent Sr. Crescence \$60,000 Cnd. and somehow she manages to make it all work. The "\$1500/year to adopt a school" went a long way to help raise this money. In Thailand and Delhi/Uttar Pradesh the cost of a FreeSchool is \$3000/year. The cost per child can't really be calculated as the number of students can range from 25 - 60 but regardless, the "overhead" (our cost) remains the same. I know it's complicated but I hope this helps you feel confident enough to move forward. Thank you so much for your efforts on behalf of these wonderful children! In great appreciation.

**Robert:** Hi Judy. Thanks very much for your compliments on Vern's design, which I will CC on to him. If you provide the full names of each of the schools that you want to present with the certificate, I am sure that Vern can easily insert them on the certificate using that lovely script he has chosen. He can thus prepare a PDF file for each of your schools (including a blank one for you to show to potential new schools) and send them to you electronically. They can then be easily printed at any size. As regards printing, you might like to see how much it will cost up there. It might not be much more than the cost of printing down here (at Hogan's Printer) and mailing them up to you there (considering that it will be necessary to use a reinforced envelope).

**Judy:** Thanks Robert, I will organise the list at school today. There were quite a number of schools that gave educational supplies (I posted my last box on Sat - never again!) - so perhaps it would be easier for me to get the blank one. I have a parent at school that does calligraphy and she can write the school's name on. One of our teacher's also does it as well so we have it covered. Obviously we don't need the mention of Harmony Day and someone has already pointed out the two FreeSchools at the bottom under the signatures are missing a letter! Can't remember as I sit here and type if they come already signed by you and Sue. This will be so wonderful for us dealing with schools - it gives proper recognition of their efforts and as I send them off to the schools I can tell them that the Huay Muang School is up and running and maybe some schools might get back to me to organise a fundraiser. It is a wonderful reason to be in contact with the schools again.

**Robert:** Yes, If you have a calligraphy parent, blank certificates in both the "school name" field and in the "in appreciation of" field would be ideal for your purposes.

**Judy:** I suppose you noticed that above FreeSchools World literacy recognition certificate - the little FreeSchools is missing a "c". it says FreeShools! I love it and can't wait for the final draft. I will print them out at school. Thinking of having a clothing swap night - not sure how to do it yet - but it is in the pipeline. Have asked Paul to see if Jaddad can get us some photos of the new little schools. It will make fundraising a lot easier.  
Warm regards as ever

**Vern:** Are you happy with this version now? If you want a Certificate with a specific school name on it I can do that for you. If you send me a scan of your signature and Sue's, I can add that too.

To have the certificate individually framed with a matt border and sent to you will cost \$77.

**Robert:** Dear Sue, We have our Special Recognition Certificate in near-to-final form now (see attached). It can be easily modified for use by every national chapter of FSWL.

Could you please run it past your Board and send your electronic signature to Vern for inclusion on the Certificate.

**Sue:** We think this is great! Thanks so much for sharing. Please find my signature attached.

### **FSWL Fundraiser Events**

**Melissa:** Thankyou Sue! It is an honour and a privilege to be able to contribute. I believe that those of us that are lucky enough to have the ability to give, should do so. The funds are due to be deposited next week. I have just been waiting on a cheque before I go to the bank to deposit the funds.

**Melissa:** Just letting you know that Intimo finally told me that they couldn't provide a cheque for Freeschools because it wasn't a tax-deductible charity. I have deposited the \$220 raised from the my friends donations but will be unable to add the extra \$140 I was expecting from Intimo. Keep up the good work.

**Robert:** Thank you so much for your efforts, and your friends should be proud to know that their donations will support approximately 12 poor children for a year's worth of free education in Indian FreeSchools.

It is a pity about our non-Charitable Status at the present time, and this is the first example of us being caught out in not being able to receive a donation. The Australian Government takes very seriously the matter of people going around and asking other people for donation money, and so there are a lot of hoops to jump through to prove that an organization is merit worthy to be awarded charitable Status in this country. Our Public Officer, Ian Esmore, is currently working on our FSWL-Australia application and has provided the government with records of our first annual accounts and records of our first annual general meeting. We are now up to 20 official monthly meetings, so I am confident that our becoming an official charity is not too far away now.

In the meantime, I have kept records of all of our donors to date, and will issue each with an official tax receipt when we are awarded charitable status.

**Betty:** The morning and afternoon teas were a success although numbers were down, and having it inside my home there is not a lot of room. However I will be posting a cheque to you for \$257.00. A small amount I know but not when we think it doesn't take much to save a young life in India. I will get back to you as soon as I have more information about the Schools. Ray and I are off for a bit of relaxation for a week and when we get back, hopefully I should have some word about Franklin Primary School.

**Merindi:** Just a quick note to see if you're planning on going to Linda's afternoon tea on 3rd May? Delphine is in Perth at the moment, and I have a couple of gifts for the fundraiser - chocolates and a tea-set. I don't know if we're going to be able to make it, and I was hoping you were going so you could bring the gifts (and brochures, business cards, etc). I'm not even sure where she's having it, or what time. Let me know what you think.

**Robert:** I'm quite happy to go up and show support at Linda's afternoon tea this Sunday. Linda has not said anything to me about it either with regards to any details, apart from the official letter of authority. So I had assumed that it was just for a group of her local friends. Are you and Bernie going to go?

**Sue:** Dear Linda, I've heard from Judy and Robert that you are having an afternoon tea on behalf of FreeSchools this weekend. That's so amazing! I want to send all my best wishes for a great success. I wish I could be there to help. I wanted you to know that you are in my thoughts and how much we all appreciate your efforts. Big hug, Sue

**Linda:** Sorry that I didn't send you an official invite! Yes the afternoon tea is Sunday but I thought it was too far for you to come and I'm happy to talk about FreeSchools after talking on assembly about it anyway.

Please tell Merindi that both Judy and I intend to hold another one each in the coming months and that her kind donation won't go astray... perhaps it could be used at Judy's one? Maybe I'll see you there? Some lovely people have donated art work and a ceramic water purifier so we are hopeful of raising a bit. I'll let you know how it goes... enjoy your family on Sunday! I appreciate that you were willing to come!

**Robert:** Hi Linda, I hope that everyone enjoyed their FreeSchools afternoon tea that you organized. Thank you very much for your thoughts and efforts. The weather on the day was fine and I did enjoy it with my family at the zoo before leaving on a week's field trip to Inverell, NSW, from which I have just returned.

**Linda:** Hi Robert! Again, thanks for your offer to come all the way to Newcastle for the afternoon tea. I hope you had a good weekend. The sun came out at the right time and the afternoon was a huge success with loads of lucky dips, raffles and silent auctions. Masses of tea was drank! Friends gave Tarot and Crystal readings with people waiting till dark to have them.

I was hoping for \$1,000. Within a few dollars we raised... \$1,000! Loved the afternoon too! I'm having a dinner party in June and another afternoon tea at my lovely friend Annes again in Spring... Jude is having another tea in Winter. I'm aiming to raise funds for a school for 2 years or 2 schools for one year.

**Robert:** Thanks for that report on a fabulous afternoon, and next time I plan to come up with the family and perhaps make a full day of it in the Newcastle area, as we rarely get up that way. I'm glad that you achieved your personal goal of \$1,000, which is an inconceivably large amount of money when converted into Indian Rupee or Thai Baht, and represents an inconceivable impact on the lives of the FreeSchools students. Did you take any photos of the afternoon's activities? You can deposit those donations directly into the FreeSchools account at any Westpac Bank:

Bank: Westpac  
Account: FreeSchools World Literacy  
BSB: 032-196  
Account Number: 26-6690

**Linda:** Yes I took some photos but this computer is unbelievably slow and I can't access Hotmail at school so it will need to wait a bit sorry. I house sit and the next house has wireless so it will be much quicker... I go there on the 4th June. I'll try to remember to send you some pics. Thanks for the info. I hope your field trip went well and if you are ever in Newcastle theres always cake and coffee.. where ever I am! I'll bank the money this week!

## 7. Correspondence with Supporters and Donors

**Judy:** I have just had a lovely conversation with Tony James who is involved in the fashion industry and wanting to have a fashion parade up here on the Central Coast. He asked if we would like to become involved as his chosen charity but he needs to know about the charitable status of FreeSchools World Literacy. I thought it would be best for you to write to him and let him know where we are up to.

We had the most wonderful afternoon tea yesterday in Newcastle and nobody requested a tax receipt - but perhaps it would be different as this would be more of a business venture. It would be marvelous exposure for FreeSchools as I would be able to attend and perhaps speak, show a DVD or perhaps a Powerpoint display of photos. People were great yesterday and there is

another teacher (just retiring next week) who is off volunteering for three weeks in Chiang Rai. It was great to be able to send some gifts with her to take to Bann Apa - our most favourite village!

I have included Tony's email address as a CC. It is a huge job for you getting this charitable status but hopefully all this interest will help hurry it along a bit.

Robert: A letter sent to Tony James

Dear Tony,

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in FreeSchools World Literacy as a result of your conversations with Judy Townsend, who is one of our devoted volunteer workers living on the Central Coast, and highly dedicated to raising funds for the building of new schools in the destitute border regions of northern Thailand.*

*We pride ourselves on ensuring that 100% of our donor's funds make it directly to the support of the FreeSchools students. These donations are principally used to employ teachers and sometimes provide a simple meal for the poor students as the situation necessitates. In northern Thailand, where Judy has recently worked, this use of funds also even includes the construction of classroom facilities.*

*We have currently achieved charitable status in Canada and are currently working towards achieving it here in Australia so that Australian donors can by properly rewarded for their generosity by being able to claim their donations as a tax deduction. I believe that we are not that far off that goal at present.*

*I would like the opportunity to discuss the goals and mission of FreeSchools in more detail with you and how we might serve you as your charity of choice. If you so desire, you could email me your phone details and an appropriate time when it would be convenient to call you.*

Kind regards,  
Dr Robert Coenraads  
President  
FreeSchools World Literacy - Australia

**Sue:** Hi Robert and Judy, This is exciting and may have huge potential! I send my good luck charm for the best possible outcome.

Just wanted to clarify that we do not use funds for building schools in Thailand -materials, labor costs are organized by donors and volunteers supporting the Mirror Foundation. Also when FSWL-AU is established as a registered charity you will have unavoidable costs - banking fees (for currency conversion, money transfers, credit card fees and checking), Internet, data base (etapestry)\* in addition to filing, bookkeeping and auditing fees. This is the cost of running a charitable organization. It will be more realistic to say that 90% of funds raised go to the field and even that will be a challenge.

\* etapestry - I wanted to get rid of this because it's so difficult for our current treasurer in Canada. But Robert Burns, the president of FSWL-USA has said we should have a common data base serving the global community and I know he's right. More on that later. Love and appreciation for everyone's efforts.

**Tony James:** Thanks for your advice, Robert. I am keen to support Free Schools in its endeavours in Thailand. I am some way from finalising The Fashion Parade. The current Economic situation is creating demands not previously anticipated. My telephone number is 43 971347. Please feel free to contact me.

**Robert:** Thanks Tony, I think that we are all feeling the effects of the economic situation! Thanks very much for your support and I'll be in contact.

## 8. Set date and time for COM meeting. Close meeting

Meetings of the Committee of FSWL Australia will be held on the first Friday of each month.

The next official meeting of the FSWL Committee of Management will be from Friday 5<sup>th</sup> of June to Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2009.

I would like to thank the Committee of Management for all of its efforts

END OF MINUTES

## APPENDIX REPORTS

### **The FSWL Committee - Australian Contact Details**

ROBERT COENRAADS President of FSWL Australia  
8 Trigalana Place, Frenchs Forest, NSW 2086,  
coenraads01@optusnet.com.au  
(02) 9451 8496

BEN BOWLER Vice President of FSWL Australia  
58 Lisbeth Ave, Donvale, Vic 3111  
ben.bowler@bigpond.com  
0403 023 432

IAN ESMORE Public Officer of FSWL Australia  
Daylesford Design Studio, PO Box 335, Daylesford, Vic 3460  
daylesforddesign@bigpond.com  
(03) 5348 1077

DELPHINE SWADLING Secretary of FSWL Australia  
44 Dodds St, Redhead, NSW 2290  
Delphine@mumnubhampers.com.au  
Mobiile: 0438443834. Home: (02) 49449550

MERINDI BELARSKI Treasurer of FSWL Australia  
Unit 7,165-167 Herring Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113  
belarski@bigpond.com  
Mobile: 044 898 3393

MELLISA ALLDIS  
10 / 14 Campbell Pde, Manly Vale, NSW 2093  
melissaalldis@spos.com.au  
Mobile: 0418 465 320

DONNA CERVANTES Committee Member of FSWL Australia  
26 Verney Street, Kings Beach, Caloundra, 4551  
windmilldc@yahoo.com  
Mobile 0416865263, Home (07)54931201

BETTY LYON Committee Member of FSWL Australia  
65 Old Road, Franklin, TAS 7113  
bettyjl65@gmail.com (03) 6266 3554

KATHLEEN SWADLING Committee Member of FSWL Australia  
7 Walsh Street, Narrabeen NSW 2101  
swadling@bigpond.net.au  
(02) 9913 7893

BETTY LYON Committee Member of FSWL Australia  
65 Old Road, Franklin TAS 7113  
bettyjl65@gmail.com (03) 6266 3554

## APPENDIX 1

### FREE SCHOOLS WORLD LITERACY (AUST)

#### FUND RAISING PROJECT FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN INDIA AND THAILAND













**Objective:** To get primary school children from Franklin involved in helping to improve educational & life-skills opportunities for disadvantaged children, especially girls, in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries.

**Method:** Have all children in a class (or number of classes) undertake a specific “fund raising” program.

Literacy can stop exploitation. For just \$15/year in Bihar, India and \$30/year in Thailand, you can save a child's life.

The following is an example of how schools can raise monies for the above purpose. However, the school may prefer to set up their own fund-raising programs.

**Recognition and Incentive:** The class achievement will be recognised by displaying a visual ‘scoreboard’ in the classroom showing both the amount of money progressively raised and represented by suitable icons or images of the number of children this money value has helped.

e.g. \$15 =  or   
\$30 =   or    
\$45 =    or    etc

At the end of each School Term, a Free Schools representative will visit the participating school involved in this project and speak about the progress being made by the recipient

group(s), and to encourage the children to continue their efforts of helping children in another country.

**Teaching Program:** Subject to information being made available by the Free Schools organisation, it is envisaged that the class teacher(s) may be able to link this in with the local school's existing social, history, geography, or culture, health & hygiene type subjects. This would then further establish the connection between the Tasmanian children and those receiving the help and the country in which they live.

**Fund Raising Activities:** Would be developed by the children, their class teacher and possibly the Parents & Friends group at the school. Additionally, if the class group raised sufficient funds to provide for say, 20 children, all members of the class would be awarded a special recognition certificate. The design & style of this is yet to be developed.

**Response from the Recipient Children:** It would be fantastic if the recipient children or someone representing them from their village, town or country could send drawings done by the children (or photographs) to the Franklin School class. This would provide further reinforcement to the children of Franklin in the value that they receive in helping others.

**Expenses incurred:** Any authorised expenses involved will be met by the Australian Free Schools organisation.

## APPENDIX 2

Wikipedia entry – FreeSchools World Literacy

FreeSchools World Literacy is a [charitable organization](#) that is primarily concerned with the advancement of education. FreeSchools World Literacy had its beginnings with the opening of a free evening school for desperately poor children, mostly girls, in Bihar, India in 1995. Its stated goal is "to tackle the underlying causes of disadvantage through education." Today FreeSchools has 74 schools in India and Thailand, which are administered by 90 teachers (2007).

Contents

1 Mission

2 History

3 Organizational Structure

4 Funding

5 Activities

6 Works

7 References

8 External Links

## Mission

The FreeSchools World Literacy mission is to provide free education in order to break the cycle of ignorance and poverty that leaves millions in hopeless despair. The organization provides free literacy programs; teacher employment and training; income-producing skills, health education; food and clothing; and is documenting changes in the wellbeing of the community as a result of its programs. By providing ongoing funds and scholarships for the existing and planned new schools, FreeSchools World Literacy hopes to replicate its model hundreds of times throughout India, Thailand and other poor countries of the world.

## History

The FreeSchools concept was first hatched in 1995 during discussions between Mr. [Mark Bloomfield](#) and [Sister Mary Crescence](#) in Bihar State, India, during a time when Mark was involved in various charity projects in India.

The first free school was started at St Mary's Convent School in the small town of Motihari, in Bihar State, India. Here, teaching of some of the town's poor children took place in the school's empty classrooms after normal school hours. Free classes began at 4:00 pm and ran for about 2 hours each evening of the week, teaching the children the basics of reading, writing, health and hygiene and manual skills such as needlework. These lessons provided the children with the skills to enable them to survive and support themselves in their community. The students were mainly girls who, particularly in this region, are one of the largest disadvantaged and voiceless groups. At the time there were about 100 students and 3 teachers. The cost efficiency was startling - a year's education was being provided for each child for under US\$15.

Sister Crescence became Mark Bloomfield's contact in India, and was responsible for organizing the students and teachers, and managing the donations from Mark's family in England to run the school.

In 2000, after attending a book fair in New Dehli, Dr. [Robert Coenraads](#) accompanied Mark Bloomfield on a visit to the Motihari evening school to observe some of the classes. During this time Mark and Robert also discussed with Sister Crescence the concept of setting up a scholarship fund to enable poor, but promising, students to be able to attend regular day school and therefore possibly go on to university. Providing such an opportunity of higher education would enable these gifted students to contribute skills to their society in the future in a far greater way - as nurses, doctors, teachers and other professionals. Hence a cycle of uplift through education for the poor is initiated.

On returning to Australia, Robert Coenraads began to raise funding in earnest in order to continue the support of the Indian school. These donations helped Sister Crescence to expand to two schools later in 2000. The scholarships program also began that same year with the selection of a small number of very promising students by Sister Crescence.



These students included [Ashish Kumar Majhi](#), [Sonal Kumari](#), [Samridhi Kumari](#) and [Prasant D'cruze](#).

In 2005 support for the Indian schools took a great leap forward with the involvement of Mrs. [Sue Tennant](#) of Canada who, after meeting with Mark Bloomfield, pledged to expand the free school program in both Thailand and India. FreeSchools World Literacy was incorporated as a charitable organization in Canada in May 2005. This greatly expanded the free school program being administered by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Bihar, India. Thanks to funds raised in Canada during 2005 and 2006, enrolment in India exceeded one thousand students.

In March 2005, dedicated volunteer, Mark Bloomfield introduced the FreeSchools program into Chiang Mai, Thailand to service the northern hill tribes and Burmese refugee camps. Since then eleven new free schools have opened and enrolment has grown to about 100 students in each of these schools, providing employment to dozens of female teachers.

Sue Tennant has been visiting the Indian and Thai Schools on an annual basis since 2005, variously accompanied by [Mark Bloomfield](#), [Saskia Raevouri](#), [Dr John Lange](#), and more recently with [Judy Townsend](#) and [Joanna Townsend](#) in Thailand. In Bihar, India, Saskia Raevouri was inspired to begin her "dormitory project" together with Sr. Crescence, that today houses and educates up to 30 girls of promise from the villages, giving them more advanced domestic training as well as English, computer and communications skills etc. to qualify them for higher paying jobs. [Dr. John Lange](#) intends to establish more "health camps" and a health care program to compliment FreeSchools. Sue Tennant also established a partnership in Delhi with [Rev. Ashish Amos](#) and [ISPCK](#) to support two more FreeSchools and four Women's Empowerment Centres in an impoverished Muslim sector of south Delhi. These schools provide education in English, Hindi and Urdu and hire Muslim teachers. Today, these ISPCK managed FreeSchools south of Delhi and also in Uttar Pradesh number 14 and educate approximately 700, predominantly Muslim, children.

In July 2006, a steering committee was established in Australia with the purpose of establishing FreeSchools World Literacy as a legal charity in Australia. In September 2008, FreeSchools World Literacy was incorporated in Australia – the first step in becoming a registered charity - with Dr. Robert Coenraads elected president of the FreeSchools Committee of Management.

In March 2007, [Ben Bowler](#), volunteer and Vice-President of the Australian chapter of FreeSchools World Literacy traveled to Thailand with [Jildou Brower](#) to take over the role of Field Coordinator from Mark Bloomfield. There, Ben and Jildou teamed up with [Paul Garrioch](#) of the experienced Thailand-based charitable organization, [The Mirror Group](#), to develop a partnership that would run the FreeSchools and scholarship program thereby ensuring long term sustainability of the schools.

In October-November 2007, Sue Tennant, joined forces with Rev. [Ashish Amos](#) the General Secretary of the [Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge](#) (ISPCK) resulting in their ISPCK schools becoming ISPCK FreeSchools. Mrs. [Anu Amos](#), as principal of [St. Thomas School](#), volunteered to assist with the incorporation of FreeSchools World Literacy in India. Both Sr. Crescence and Rev. Amos individually share with Sue Tennant their belief that the goal and mission of FreeSchools World Literacy is Divine.

In February 2009, Reporter [Joanna Townsend](#) for Australia's Channel 9 News presented a Sunday morning news segment, titled, "[One Village at a Time](#)" on the amazing Hill Tribe kids attending FreeSchools near Fang in northern Thailand. <sup>[1]</sup> Achieving mainstream publicity for the FreeSchools in Thailand has been a great step forward in increasing public awareness of our mission and goals for the poor children of this world.

The future is going to see FreeSchools World Literacy volunteers expanding into other poor countries of the world where education for the poor is desperately needed, There will be a continuing trend of growth of the organization's base of regular supporting sponsors, and an increasing public awareness through public presentations and special fund raising events.

#### Organizational structure

FreeSchools World Literacy operates as a federation of interdependent national offices, each overseen by their own boards or committees of management. A common mission statement and shared core values bind the partnership offices and members together. Each national partner abides by common policies and standards. FreeSchool World Literacy has national offices – located in Australia, Canada and the USA, that coordinate the operations of the organization. A detailed breakdown of the global structure of FreeSchools World Literacy is as follows:

#### International

An international board of directors oversees FreeSchools World Literacy. The International President is Mrs. Sue Tennant and the members of the Board are xxxxx. The full board meets xxx times a year to appoint senior officers, approve strategic plans and budgets, and determine international policy.

The national breakdown of FreeSchools World Literacy is as follows

#### Australia:

The Australian President is Dr Robert Coenraads and the members of the Committee of Management are Ben Bowler (Vice President), Merindi Belarski (Treasurer), Delphine Swadling (Secretary), Ian Esmore (Public Officer), Betty Lyon (Committee Member), Kathleen Swadling (Committee Member), Donna Cervantes (Committee Member), and Melissa Alldis (Committee Member). The first official meeting of FSWL-Australia was held on the 5th – 7th June 2007 and on the 16th July FreeSchools World Literacy was incorporated in Victoria for the purpose of becoming a registered charity organization.

The Committee of Management holds electronic monthly meetings to discuss fundraising and other matters.

#### Canada:

The Canadian and International President is Mrs. Sue Tennant and the members of the Committee of Management are xxx (Vice President), xxx (Treasurer), xxx (Secretary), xxx (Public Officer), xxx (Committee Member), xxx (Committee Member), xxx (Committee Member), and xxx (Committee Member). The first official meeting of FSWL-Canada was held on the xxx and on the 16th July FreeSchools World Literacy was registered as a charity organization in Canada. The Committee of Management holds meetings xxxxxx

#### United States:

The United States President is Mr. Robert Burns and the members of the Committee of Management are xxx (Vice President), xxx (Treasurer), xxx (Secretary), xxx (Public Officer), xxx (Committee Member), xxx (Committee Member), xxx (Committee Member), and xxx (Committee Member). The first official meeting of FSWL-Canada was held on the xxx and on the 16th July FreeSchools World Literacy was registered as a charity organization in Canada. The Committee of Management holds meetings xxxxxx

#### Funding

Since its inception in 2000, FreeSchools World Literacy has sent a total of US\$xxxxx in donations to India and Thailand (to June 2009).

#### Activities

The FreeSchools model is simple, elegant and highly cost effective. Existing private or public schools, offered for use by FreeSchools World Literacy, are refilled with impoverished children in the late afternoon during normal closing hours and retired female teachers are hired to teach an “essentials only” syllabus. Priority but not exclusivity is given to girls and there is no proselytizing or religious discrimination. The students agree to teach their siblings what they learn each day. Reading, writing, arithmetic, health protection, crafts, income generating skills and civics are taught for two hours each afternoon in otherwise empty classrooms. Sometimes nutritious meals and a uniform are also provided free of charge. The cost efficiency is startling - a year’s education for one child for approximately US\$15.

#### References

#### Notes

1. ^ Townsend, Joanna "One Village at a Time – Fang, Northern Thailand", Channel Nine News © 2008 Channel Nine.

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/video.aspx?videoid=2346c93a-d59b-40af-a220-363c86067563>

^ [1]

FreeSchools World Literacy Australian Business Number 13 233 167 644, Australian Business Register, Australian Taxation Office, of the Australian Government, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

[edit]External links

FreeSchools World Literacy Web site [www.freeschools.org](http://www.freeschools.org)