



Yangon 12th-16th December 2011

Yangon is changing so fast.....

This time, after just 10 months, the downtown area looks fresher with new shops and restaurants and, alas, much more traffic.

My young friend Nyein Chan, who was once again going to accompany me to buy supplies for the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf, came to the hotel with the pick-up truck I had hired.

We set off for a local wholesale market but found that as it was Sunday the dry goods stalls were closed



Nyein Chan, with the white shoulder bag, the driver and the boys who helped load the supplies into the pick-up

We drove out to the suburbs and

found small wholesale shops where we bought sacks of rice and lentils, potatoes, onions, garlic and large cans of oil.

Once again Nyein Chan was our "bank," checking the quality, bargaining for the best prices and getting some local boys to help load the pick-up.

Friendly smiling ladies, one puffing a large cheroot, and a man selling slices of watermelon, who was reading the teachings of Buddha, all seemed to enjoy the scene.



We then went to a wholesale

stationery shop to buy school supplies where, once again, Nyein Chan bargained with the Indian owners for the best prices.

We went on to the Mary Chapman School and I left the supplies and our donation for the school's upkeep with Daw Margaret, the headmistress.

And then I some time spent around the school saying hello to the children and the teachers



In the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf
with Nyein Chan, Daw Margaret and
Maurizio

The children were in the classrooms with their teachers





Boys and girls in the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf

There are some 300 deaf and dumb children in the school

Many of the children are from Yangon and so are day pupils, but others come from other regions and are boarders. Some are from so far away that they only get back to their families for the holidays.

They use their own sign language and can also lip read, but in Burmese of course.

Many of the teachers are young and some of them have attended the school themselves, as it has a training facility for teachers for the deaf.

In the classrooms I asked the teachers about the curriculum



And I visited the rooms where the girls sew and make handcrafts



It was time to return to Sister Mary and the Hospice for the Aged

which is in a leafy suburb of the city behind a high wall. More than 140 old folk are looked after by 30 sisters who belong to the order of the Little Sisters for the Poor.

I sat down with Sister Mary and talked about the maintenance, the upkeep and the running costs.

I left her our donation and promised to try to raise funds to help with the upkeep of the large old building and the constant problem of having enough money to feed and care for the old people.

One old man was watering the plants



**Many of the old people were seated
in the hall waiting.....**

for the young musicians of the Gitameit School who had come to give a Christmas concert.

Gitameit is a small private school where the pupils learn composition and how to play instruments.

They played classical and popular music and many of the elderly, who were wearing Christmas hats, joined in, tapping their feet and smiling.





LinkforAid was one of the sponsors of the concert together with Asian Trails and Le Planteur Restaurant



GITAMEIT MUSIC CENTER
EVERGREEN CONCERT
AT HOME FOR THE AGE KANDAWGALAY
Monday 12 Dec 2011 at 08:30am
No. 539, Thein Phyu Road, Kandawgalay
Mingala Taung Nyunt Tsp

SPONSORED BY

 **asian trails**



 **LINKFORAID**
charity organization

With Sister Glory and Sister Mary, Nyein Chan, Felix and Lucia Eppisser of Le Planteur, Elvire Kuenzle and Maurizio, Sandar and Maytoo from Asian Trails



The next day it was Santa's turn bringing the old people Christmas cheer, with a kind word, a smile and a small treat for each one of them.



The best fun was in the ladies' wards as they love to dance and sing....



The total age of these three ladies is
303.....



Many of the old people are quite self-sufficient but others are in wheelchairs or are bed-ridden.



See you next year.....!



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Special thanks to

Armando Muccifora and Thai Airways Rome for their generosity, and for always making sure my travels are so much smoother than silk.

Studio Tamburelli Quintavalle for their generous support.

Felix and Lucia Eppisser at Le Planteur and the Gitameit School of Music... it is really special to do things like this together!

All our Asian Trails friends, in particular Maurizio, Nyein Chan and Sandar, who are so involved in helping the Mary Chapman School, the Kandawgalay Hospice for the Aged and, of course, LinkforAid

This is a true story!
Why don't you share it with your friends?

It is a story about real people. Old and young people who live with tremendous dignity despite many hardships.

Their serene and cheerful acceptance of what life has given them is a lesson for each and every one of us. Please pass it on.....

It is a lesson for life!

See our site www.linkforaid.org

At present the site is under construction. It will soon be complete and also in English.

We will also be using Twitter and Facebook to keep our Association in the public arena.

And we will stay in touch with you, our faithful supporters and donators, to keep you up to date on LinkforAid's projects and activities.