

Ghar Sita Mutu - House With Heart

A home for abandoned children, a training program for destitute women, and a support program for needy families in Kathmandu, Nepal

December 2012

Greetings, friends!

I am often asked how I feel being mummy to so many children. Very lucky is usually my first response, followed quickly by Very tired.

We have a baby and younger children in the House once again. Abhaya, abandoned as a newborn, is now 14 months old and queen of the castle. Her feet rarely touch the ground as her doting sisters and brothers carry her everywhere. She does crawl but at present there seems no reason for her to walk—it appears that it is much easier for her to see and control what's going on when being carried about.

Ashmita, at 2 1/2 and her 4-year-old sister, Ashika, come in at a close second in the loved and indulged children category. They also get a lot of help and attention from their older siblings. The sisters joined our family in May after their mother begged me to take them in. It was an upsetting time for all concerned, especially for their mother, Sita, who just wanted the best for her little girls. The girls took care of each other in those first bewildering days. They were frightened by all of us, especially me; they were confused by the toys and beds and by the abundance of food. After many an accident, we put them in Abhaya's diapers which fit them because they were so undernourished. It was



Baby Abhaya with her older GSM sisters Sujita and Maya.

heartwarming and wrenching to see Ashika feed Ashmita and to watch them comfort each other at night. Now they call me Mummy and are well-adjusted into the House, but my heart often aches for their real mum.

The bigger children are very helpful and think nothing of cooking (for 30!) when the cook is absent, and they are always ready to help with cleaning and other chores. Benita and Kamala are now both enrolled in college. Benita is studying journalism, and we were very to pleased to hear that Kamala was recently accepted into law school.

Krishna and Maya (who now wants to be called Nimesha) have started class 11; this is what Nepalis call Plus One, followed by Plus Two. Plus One is the equivalent of a junior in high school except students change schools, and it is structured a bit more like college. Krishna is studying computer graphics and Maya is studying accounting. Of late, she has taken to the idea of being a nurse so she will sit for the entrance exam next year.



Students in our Children's Learning Centre receive a free education and help with some basic needs. Here the children have gathered to go on a shopping trip for a new set of clothes.

School in Need of Repairs

I am disappointed in the new school our children attend. The planned and promised renovation projects have not been completed. The classrooms are very depressing with crumbling brick walls, bare light bulbs, small and crowded benches, and worst of all, no door or window



We are looking for a sponsor to fund repairs at the local school.

panes to keep out the cold weather. It is as cold as New York in December through February in Kathmandu and there is, of course, no heat in school or at home. Brrrrr! I hope to find a school or volunteer organization to adopt this school and help them fix it up. Any takers?



Thank you to Xiangting Cai for donating the ping pong table. The children have become big fans of this sport and patiently wait their turn to play.

Future Plans

Just recently, I was asked if I could help rescue 17 children from an orphanage that has been closed down by the government. Regrettably, I had to say no. As you might imagine, it is very hard to turn away children who need a home, but our House is full to capacity and we will not be able to take any more kids until we build another house. We have room on our land for another large building that could house our older children, returning family members, volunteers, and staff. It could also accommodate a clinic for visiting doctors. As always, funding—not need—dictates how much we can do and we simply do not have the money for expansion at this time.

Mother-Child Wellness Centre

Khun Bai, a trained nurse and community health worker from Thailand, recently offered to volunteer at our new Mother-Child Wellness Centre which is inspired



The children loved their NYC t-shirts they received from Beverly upon her most recent return to the GSM House.

by the life of Laxmi Magar and whose story is told below. We are not yet in full swing with the Centre but we can offer advice to new mothers and financial help to cover medical costs for those who cannot afford to see a doctor.

Many Need Help

In May a desperate mother tried to give me her daughter – Laxmi Magar – an 11-month old who was the size of a 3-month-old. The woman had found the newborn baby on the street and kept her. When she brought the baby to me, she was clearly very sick so we took the baby to a hospital where she was diagnosed with severe malnutrition and a hole in her heart. She was admitted to a nutrition centre for a month and I am pleased to report that Laxmi has improved greatly, and the doctors believe her heart will heal itself. We hope that GSM's new Mother-Child Wellness program will help other mothers learn how to take better care of their children, thus reducing the infant mortality rate in Nepal.



Welcome to Saru Auntie, the newest member of our staff at the House. Here she prepares the blessings for Dashain, an important festival celebrated throughout Nepal.



The women in our Training Program have been busy making crafts including this custom scarf. Thanks to new GSM friend Rui Ma, pictured fourth from left, for her help.

In addition to being asked what it is like to be Mummy to so many, I am also asked what it is like to live in Kathmandu where there is so much need. The simple answer is it's not easy.

I am often overwhelmed by the vast numbers of women and children who are in dire need. There's the old disabled woman who was thrown out of her room by her son and who now sleeps under a bush near our House. There is the young nine-year-old girl I saw trying to walk with a bundle on her head while dragging two small boys behind her. The youngest, around 2 years old, had lost his shorts which were wrapped around his ankles, exposing his little bare bottom to the cold night air. I stopped to help pull up his pants and to find out if they had a mother. Yes, they did and they were on their way home. The littlest had no shoes, and his sister's were

held together with a string. I bought them new shoes and sent them on their way.

We are not able to help everyone, but I look forward to helping even more people next year thanks to your generosity. It's people like you who provide our children with the real chance to achieve goals that would have been impossible without your help. Kamala's dream of attending law school would never have happened without our donor's generosity. I am so grateful to our gracious donors and our passionate and creative volunteers.

Wishing you all a bright new year!



Girls collecting rubbish on the street in hopes of finding something they can sell.

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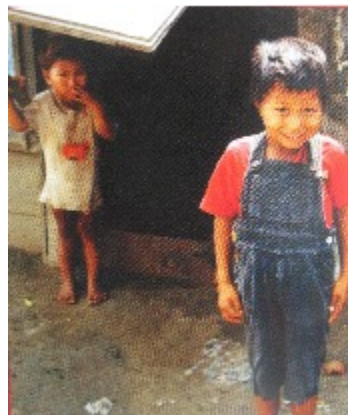
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Thank you!

*For more information,
call Beverly at 212-529-0832.*

A LITTLE BACKGROUND



Babu & Krishna, ages 2 & 5

My name is Beverly Bronson. I own a small antique shop called A Repeat Performance in New York City. In 1999 while working as a volunteer in Nepal, I found two abandoned children named Babu and Krishna, ages two and five. After searching for a loving home for them I had no choice but to put them in boarding school. Safe but bleak. The school appointed me as guardian and I went back to New York with plans to raise money to establish a centre to house abandoned children and help destitute women.

I returned to Nepal later that year with enough funds to rent a house. We opened Ghar Sita Mutu - House with a Heart in 2001 and have been expanding our outreach to the community every year. We moved into our own home in 2004. I split my time between New York and Nepal.