

ASIAN VOICES

AN INITIATIVE OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (ADC) OF SCI

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APM NEWS

The ADS has decided that we will have a virtual Asian Platform Meeting this year. The tentative dates are the weekends of the Last Week of July or the First Week of August. Please send in your suggestions for the agenda to adc-secretariat@sci.ngo
More shortly!

Another Beginning...

by
Abinash, Edward and Billy (ADS)



Service Civil International is celebrating its 100th year as an international movement this year. The ADS thought that what better than this reason could we give ourselves to reignite the spark of the Asian Voices.

This issue of the newsletter is solely dedicated to our founder- Piere Ceresole, the man who founded this global peace loving family.

The ADS is thankful to Wilbert, Pat, Nurul and Rita for volunteering to be on the editorial team.

We hope that the efforts of the ADS to relaunch the Asian Voices will be successful for many years to come.

For suggestions and feedback write to us at adc-secretariat@sci.ngo



The International Executive Committee of SCI

FOREWORD

By Goska Tur (International President)

Dear Readers,

With utmost pleasure I invite you to explore the world of Service Civil International in the Asia-Pacific region, presented in the new edition of the Asian Voices. In these challenging times, it is truly comforting to see the extent of actions taken by SCI Branches and Groups over the world as a response to COVID-19 outbreak!

Every day, I receive heart-uplifting reports from our SCI members, who act in a number of ways: from food distribution to the elderly and needy, through awareness campaigns on health issues, to online inspiration and learning opportunities they create in the times of a lockdown.

The International Executive Committee of SCI would like to thank you for these actions! We recognise and appreciate the amount of effort you need to invest in this support, especially while remembering that these acts of kindness are performed on the top of your daily personal and work-related worries that have hit us together with the consequences of the pandemic. In the IEC, we are also busy with navigating the SCI ship through the stormy waters.

Since the beginning of March we have been in crisis management mode, as the COVID-19 impact on our organisation can be seen on all levels: the international and even local exchanges will be impossible or hindered this year,

Many project which included transnational mobilities are postponed and might need to be cancelled, a number of Actions for Peace needed to be cancelled or transformed into an online format, the international budget needs to be rewritten, and the expected support from the private and institutional donors will likely decrease in the face of the current economic crisis. One could never imagine a more difficult anniversary year for an organisation!

Having said that, we shall not lose our hope and the zeal to act! Proactivity and innovation should become our second name. In each of our Branches and Groups, Let's encourage thinking out of the box, designing new ways of operating, and trying out new tools for peace building.

I am confident that together we will withstand the storm!

With peace,

GARDEN GARDENING—A FESTIVAL FOR WOMEN AND KIDS ORGANISED BY GARDEN GATHERING COMMITTEE AND SCI-HONG KONG CHINA

BY PAT, HUANG PIK LAM

This was a three-day overnight camping festival for women and children taking place in natural surroundings at Sai Yuen Farm on Cheung Chau Island in Hong Kong. The theme was Mother Earth appreciation and women empowerment. The festival was organized by Garden Gathering Committee in collaboration with SCI-Hong Kong China.

We were blessed to have our Hong Kong local volunteers and our international SCI volunteers Monica, Orawan, Irina and Susan to help with the logistic arrangements of the festival. They came all the way from Portugal, Thailand, Russia and Norway. They spent a valuable week with us in Hong Kong and met with over 300 ladies and children for the festival. Together with the local SCI volunteers, we did a fabulous job in preparing meals, helping at the reception and organizing activities at the kid's village. All our small contribution was very much appreciated and valued.

From the beginning of time, women gathered, danced, sung, meditated and shared skills of ceremony and natural healing. Women from Hong Kong came together for the fifth gathering, each of like-mind and heart, to honour these ways which nurture humanity and restores balance within our relationships with Mother Earth.

The sixth garden gathering will be held 12-15 Nov 2020. We warmly invite you to volunteer with us, please apply through SCI-Hong Kong.

For more information, please visit <https://www.thegardengathering.com/>





INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

By Sowmyadeep SCI India (West Bengal)



The International Women's Day was observed with lot of enthusiasm and joy. About 360 women attended the event. We (the West Bengal group of SCI) observe this day every year with our members and well-wishers but this year we informed other organizations also. They said we did not know that such a unique organization exists who are committed to peace and social justice. Dr. (Prof.) Ratna Munshi, a researcher on Veda & Jarathustrian values and Dr. Achala Dutta, who is a Pediatrician spoke on the occasion. Sometimes the women self-group leaders also shared their views from audience both the speakers interacted with audience. Mrs. Shoma Chakraborty, our N.C. member also shared the staged.



Dr. Munshi said that the audience might have some ideas regarding the movement led by women to achieve equal rights in society, so she would not discuss about the history of this significant day. She said having data or information will not serve the purpose. The women have to be courageous; they have to be aware of their rights and social responsibilities, not only taking responsibilities of home and raising children but also providing their daughters equal possibilities of education and encourage them to participate in the social actions. Mothers should teach them not to fear and be open to receive the lessons from nature and day to day life. The parents should inculcate good qualities in their children which would make honest, generous, and sympathetic and lover of truth and freedom. There is no doubt that physical fitness is a big issue, but mental strength in more important. She requested the mothers not to impose conventional customs and rules on their daughters and thus, limit their mental growth. The parents should support them and provide them with suitable environment the need to realize their potential and they will make their life themselves. As women we must say that ours is a generation of equality with men on earth. During interactive session Mrs. Keya Mukherji asked how a mother should raise her daughter so that the daughter can become an empowered citizen. In reply Dr. Munshi advised "the girl should be kept away from fear, nobody should make her afraid from anything. If she asks any question one try to explain not avoid. She should be introduced to right values. Only a value oriented person will have courage to face the adversity.





The mother was excited and happy to have the possibility of learning Martial Art and enquired about the same we were happy to see the enthusiasm among the women. Many of them felt it necessary to learn for the present generation who will be go out for their professional work in future as it not only increase strength but also offer confidence to a person.

The lively performances of the adolescent girls staged Martial Art and Dance

The SCI West Bengal group members were very happy with the success of the event and are already looking forward to reach more people next year to spread our organization's philosophy and the spirit of Pierre Ceresole forward to create a peaceful world and a perfectly gender balanced Society and we will also try our best to increase participation of women in social actions.





1. Can you please introduce yourself? (personal, professional, SCI Branch, Country etc)

Hola! Yo soy Mayrina. I work full time as a humanitarian officer in Indonesia and it's been 3 (three) years I become a volunteer for IVP Indonesia too as an add-interim Coordinator.

2. What motivated you to volunteer? What attracted you to SCI?

Being a volunteer is not new at all for me. Since I was in a college, I liked to take part to do something for community voluntarily. To be frank, in 2015 I didn't know anything about SCI. At that time, I was looking for a 'transportation' to do volunteerism abroad and I found IVP Indonesia. From IVP Indonesia, I started to know SCI and did research about it a little bit because of my curiosity.

3. What did you think SCI was before intending to join the movement? Did your perception change after joining?

Personally, for almost 100 years, SCI has given a lot of positive contribution and effort to make this world keep healthy'. SCI offers opportunity in various scope and dedicate itself in promoting peace and solidarity and support sustainable development through projects and volunteers. It consistency to make the world better copied by 43 (forty three) branches (CMIW) and groups from all over the world and created movement and good impact both for world and inhabitants coexistence.

4. Can you share your first volunteering experience with SCI?

It was in 2017. I picked Iceland to be my first volunteering and participated in 2 different workcamps. First workcamp, I helped a sport event committee called 'Landsmót 50+' held by the Icelandic Youth Association (UMFÍ) for senior over 50 years old. Second workcamp still in Iceland, I worked in the Botanical garden.





5. Why SCI and no other NGOs?

I explained in point no. 2

6. What have you learnt from SCI?

I learn that we could contribute in many ways and it will impact the environment, people and the society as a whole. In SCI, I met people from different culture and social background and the main values from SCI which I underlined are solidarity, tolerance and respect.

7. Where do you see yourself as a volunteer in the coming years?

I don't want to stop giving my contribution. World needs us and there is a plenty of work to do together in unity.

8. What do you do outside volunteering? (Professional life)

In my professional life, I am a humanitarian officer in an UN organization. As a full-time staff, I work directly with communities of concern and more focus in child protection and prevention and response to SGBV (Sexual and Gender Based Violence) cases as well as livelihood concern. I enjoy it because this job is my call.

9. What are your hobbies?

Traveling and doing sports. I can't live without it. Ha. Ha. There must always be balance in everything and anything you do. In one side, it is good to connect with people. Moreover, in my work right now, I am often reminded that I work for a particular group and dealing with community. But in the other side, most of the time, I become a listener and indirectly feel their pain, grief, loss and anger. Somehow, it gives an impact on me mentally and physically. My hobbies help me to cope with it and relieve my stress. I preferably choose to do traveling and sports alone. I called it me time. Whenever I do my hobby, I truly enjoy and become hooked and bring me to a very personal way to appreciate myself.

10. What do you think of SCI in Asia? Where do you see SCI in the next 100 years?

As far as I know, SCI Asia established in 1951 whereas there was a group who initiate to organise workcamps in helping 1 (one) conflict area between India and Pakistan. SCI has grown widely in Asia since then. I hope in the next 100 years, SCI still contribute building a peace among us and not only have 43 (forty three) branches but will be 195 (one hundred and ninety five) branches or similar to the total country which exist in this world (as per 2020 data in google).

11. Can you share any overseas volunteering experience?

Yup. It happened just last year, in 2019. This time, I became a volunteer in a local organization named Agrupació Naturalista i ecologista de la Garrotxa at Olot, Spain. The tasks were focused in bioconstruction (like walls of dry stone, arrangement paths and gardening) and work in the garden of Mas Pujou. One thing that I will not forget from the workcamp is now I have a skill to construct a stone wall without cement!

12. What is the biggest challenge of your life? How do you overcome it?

Embarking on a master degree whilst working full time can be extremely challenging for me. It needs a strong commitment, good management and strategy with the demand of academic studies and my full-time job load. It's been a dilemma for me since 5 (five) years ago on how to provide enough time and energy to do 2 (two) heavy activities at the same time. I know, based on my capacity, I need to sacrifice and focus in 1 (one) thing to obtain good result. Therefore, in the last 5 (five) years, I try to overcome it by picking my job over master degree. On the other hand, I set a deadline in the next 2 (two) years, while preparing my mental and doing an observation to choose the right master program and quit my permanent job.

Interviewed through E-Mail by Abinash Ganesh

Asian International Working Group (AIWG)

2020 SCI TEAM

Sooriya

(Contact person of AIWG and member, 2020 Team)

This year we started with lots energy, enthusiasm ;much expectation to do better than last year, Rita Shii spent time reading and correcting all the Asian workcamps, we also approved few LTV projects, started fresh talk with potential SCI seeds, we also put lots of effort to re-engage SCI-NP with promoting the workcamp, and also started camp uploading in-time campaign with rest of Asia, then the COVID-19 news also became more and more important and today we can clearly feel global uncertainty has hit our expectations hard. SCI Volunteer placement has been temporally suspended and we see these days very few new camps been uploaded to OPS, at the moment most workcamps published are in Europe, then the second most are in Asia (about 130 camps) among them about 6 workcamps from SCI Branches. It's less likely that this year we will reach our exchange expectation, so would like to invite Asian branches and partners to start thinking of alternatives, the virus fear should not stop us volunteering, maybe this year we should think of more local Camps try to engage locals, don't only wait for international volunteer, we should try not to cancel the Camps due to no International participation (depend on each country restrictions of course) hope our local situation will improve in few months, also can we do "Virtual" work camps ?, very short camps/ weekend camps etc, Will leave it open to your creative ideas and initiatives and also don't forget to share those best practice with the rest, maybe there is something others can learn/copy from. Maybe it's also time going back to the roots, such as that each local volunteer bring some food items to share, Rice, coconut, fruits, vegetables, nuts and greens etc what's locally available. This way we can still do mini local camps with no waiting for funds.

It seems that after 100 years we are here to experience bit similar kind of difficulties that Pierre Ceresole and the rest of the volunteers team may have faced in 1920, maybe this a test for us after 100 years! Anyway since 2008 informally been preparing & dreaming to reach this year 2020 "the big year", in 2016 we established 2020TEAM at the moment we as international team stay in touch very regularly, mainly via Skype and since this year once a month, we also had an annual physical meeting but this year we will do it virtually on 18 th of April. We will use this meeting to make important decisions and plans adapting to new reality. Main happenings along the way are among SCI Veterans meetings (in Belgium & Sri Lanka) was a great success 100 anniversary book publication was a great success (words about deeds) 100 action for peace (we are still collecting worldwide actions) now maybe virtual actions too!

100 stories (project by SCI France and still collecting volunteer stories)

Bike tour (in Europe)

Vision seminar

SCI virtual museum (we collect pictures of SCI voting instruments & T-shirts represent past events)

ICM in France, back to the roots after 100 years are the big expectations among many other. The path to France will not be an easy one under current circumstances but will also not stop preparations, will adapt to changes and still many months left for positive changes!, wish to invite you all to become more active these days even from home and join historical return to France.

We have 3 Asian members in 2020

Team (Stephen, Wilbert & myself) If you wish you can also reach us via

100anniversary@sci.ngo , 2020SCI@gmail.com

All the best and happy

Anniversary

Committed Action For Relief & Education (CARE) & Service Civil International (SCI) Certificate Distribution Program & Women's Day Program Rally on Women's Rights & Awareness on Corona Virus

The 45 students of the "Social Work / Paraprofessional certificate course" – a joint initiative of Committed Action for Relief and Education (CARE) and SCI- India-Maharashtra Group and a local NGO, walked down the streets and squares of a slum at Dahisar in Mumbai to advocate for women's rights on Sunday 8th March. The slum name Ganpat Patil Khadi where CARE has started its 49th Batch of Certificate course in Social work. This slum area is in the CRZ area and has not got any basic facilities being a illegal slum. However hundreds of thousand families lives here in the entire stench. During this program we reach more than 5000 families. During rally people ask question and we gave answers of the all their question.

The function and rally was organised on the women's day 8th March 2020. The students and volunteers spoke out about the issues and sufferings that women generally face

in these areas. It was a great lesson and opportunity to exhibit volunteerism which SCI- I- Maharashtra Group joined and supported. There were posters with sayings supporting women's rights and awareness on Corona (that time Corona was not entered in India) .SCI – Maharashtra group has taken active participation and we aged to take action in near future.

The students were exposed to SCI values and mission and exercise to come up with local issues. We empowered the students of the course with come with definite intervention on base of SCI international values and action plan.

The Student group is now very active in the wake of CORONA in India and sharing ideas and actions on our groups, individual efforts taken by our students such as distributing masks, food grains to the needy and poor people around especially in slum areas during nationwide lockdown period.

SCI -Maharashtra is very proud to be associated with CARE organisation for its social work courses who has come out and now supporting various part of Mumbai they have been living. It's true that we stand united with great faith and hope for Peace and International Understanding!

For More details please contact

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PENANG 'PEACE RUN 2020' CELEBRATING 100 YEARS (1920-2020)

By Mr.Athimulam Arjunan DJN,PKT,PJK,PK,PPA



VOLUNTEERING FOR PEACE AND TO CREATE TRUE PEACE ON EARTH

Give yourself the gift of peace by knowing that you are always on the true path, and living your life purpose!

HUMANITY AND PEACE

We all have different meanings and definitions of peace and we attach meanings to it according to how it manifests within our reality. Through life lessons and challenges, we believe that peace comes only when we have a happy job, more money, a loving partner or answers to all your questions. But true PEACE is beyond that. True peace is what we seek within ourselves, not without, hidden within the simplest of details of our life journey and its lessons...the fact that you are perfect beyond your unprecedented perception.

Seek peace within your heart, for that is where you will find it. For a start, let us come together through 'peace run 2020' to connect and share the yearning for peace in the hearts of all humanity.

For the past 30 years, SCI Penang Chapter has been successfully organizing a RUN known as PEACE RUN. The First Peace Run was launched in July, 1989 at the Taman Perbandaran (Youth Park) Penang. During each Peace Run, approximately 1500-2000 runners have participated. Free Food, T-Shirts, Goodie bags and Refreshments are provided for the "Special Children (who are physically handicapped, mentally challenged, visually impaired, hearing and speech impaired) and Orphans". After the run, a concert known as "Peace Concert" will be performed by various special schools.

The Peace run comes in two categories, 7km for able bodied participants and 1.5km for disable (OKU) participants. All participants are entitled for Lucky Draws other events include a Medical Camp by Hospitals which provides free medical test for all participants. The PEACE RUN is on the Calendar of Events of the Penang Municipal Council (MBPP). SCI/MBPP (Penang Peace Run 2020) this year is jointly organized by: Service Civil International Malaysia, Penang Chapter (SCI), Majlis Bandaraya Pulau Pinang (MBPP), Jabatan Belia dan Sukan (KBS) and Technical Support by Persatuan Olahraga Amatir Pulau Pinang (PAAA), Penang State Government and the support of all sponsors and well wishes.

The Run alike every year is thrown open by the Guest of Honour, The Excellency Governor of Penang or the Honourable Chief Minister of Penang with other VVIP;s and invited guest. In order to sustain the event we also bring together competitive able runners, they will compete in 7 categories accordingly. The top 5 winners of each categories will receive winner trophy and medals.

Objectives of 'PEACE RUN 2020'

To inculcate awareness of the importance of being healthy, to create a bond between able and disable participants, as well as, for the general public to understand the needs and wants of the under- privileged during current chaos.



100 years of International Voluntary Service 2020 celebrations in Australia



The theme for our celebration is Raising Peace where we will highlight successful stories, campaigns and actions for peace by ordinary and extraordinary people. Two connected events in Sydney in September will be followed by a 7-10 day workcamp.

Coronavirus may mean that our events may not be able to take place at the proposed time. However we have made the decision to continue planning and to hold the events later in the year or even next year if necessary. We have modified our plans to suit our capacities.

IVP is pleased to be working in cooperation with two other peace organisations, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom NSW (WILPF), who also celebrate 100 years in 2020, and Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN). We are expecting several other high profile organisations to come on board as collaborators.

The first event will begin on Sunday 20th September in Sydney. An exhibition showcasing successful peace initiatives will be on display for two weeks. The grand opening of this exhibition will be a Peace Fair where a long list of peace organisations will be invited to contribute. There will be stalls, speakers, performers, films and other attractions. This will be combined with a celebration and reunion for IVP and WILPF members

The second event will be on International Day of Peace, Monday 21st September. It will take place in the centre of the city of Sydney in a busy pedestrian area. There will be high profile speakers, noisy performers and colourful displays. We expect many peace, environment and sustainability organisation to be involved, as well as indigenous activists and other IVS organisations whose work is related to peace. Both of these events will be present an opportunity to raise the profile of PEACE and to

network and share among like-minded people and organisations.

Plans for a children's art competition are on hold for the moment. We are also looking into the possibility of a virtual exhibition together with Architects for Peace.

Rita is the main organiser and the contact person for the events in Sydney (rita.warleigh@gmail.com). The workcamp is being organised by Stephen Horn (twynamhorn5@gmail.com) and will be at a rural property 200 km from Sydney on the theme of heritage restoration.

It is hoped that SCI and NVDA branches and groups in Asia-Pacific will send representatives for these events.

Volunteering and Exchanges- A Challenge for the Asian Branches

By Abinash Ganesh

"The joyful happy, free collaboration of men working and living for each other - that is the true miracle which can bring about all other specific miracles."- Pierre Ceresole.

This quote of the great man who sowed the seeds of peace and volunteering a hundred years ago holds good even to the present day. In the changing world and fast moving lifestyle, we have forgotten being happy, joyful and free. Our lives today is at the click of a button or the movement of the cursor. Keeping in mind the fast moving life of this generation, we will even stop thinking of each other let alone working and living for each other. The essence of creating this miracle of being happy, free and joyful working for each other that in turn gives us many unexpected miracles is very necessary. Service Civil International through its global family is striving hard amongst the current day challenges to keep this miracle happening.

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Raising concerns of the way in which the work camps that were the jewel of the Asian region of SCI have kept diminishing is quite alarming. It becomes very necessary for the present day youth to understand that volunteering is not just about creating social media clutter, rather it is a sense of brotherhood, a sense of understanding each other to be better human beings, to learn from each other and to co-exist in a similar environment.

THE END OF AEEP

Earlier, the branches of SCI in Asia could easily find sponsors from the European branches for the exchange programmes. A minimum of 2 volunteers or more from each Asian branch would visit either one or a couple of SCI work camps in 2 countries in Europe over a period of 2 to 3 months. The volunteers would return to their home branch with full of enriched knowledge and experience that they would share for a lifetime. But, today finding sponsors has become a challenge to the hosting branches and hence the Asia Europe Exchange Programme (AEEP) has shut shop.

The situation has deliberated the Asian branches to talk amongst themselves of a solution with exchanges. The Asian Platform Meetings that happen twice every year have echoed the need for a few Inter-Asian regional exchanges every year. In

branches like India-Nepal-Bangladesh-Sri Lanka where travel is not expensive and can also happen by road should coordinate more work camps and volunteer exchanges amongst themselves. This would keep the momentum going.

FUNDS

The Asian branches can manage to raise only limited funds from the International Budget. When there was a steady flow of European and Western Volunteers into Asia for camps, the camp fee collected would form the base of financial stability of the Asian branches. Not only did the branches run camps successfully, the camp fees would also support the basic administration and office running expenses of the branches. Today, there is a need to venture into the world outside SCI seeking funds. The Asian Development Secretariat (ADS) has to dive into arenas of writing projects for Grants of different governmental schemes. The need of the hour is also to seek projects and funds of International Bodies such as SAARC, ASEAN, AALCO and others.

ORTHODOX VS CONTEMPORARY

SCI in Asia has always maintained its distance from being marketing and Public Relations friendly unlike other organizations and this also may be a reason for other organizations to think of competing with SCI in terms of organizing work camps and volunteer exchanges. There are many NGOs that have started partnering with SCI in Asia and the statistics show that these partners are doing quite well than the SCI Branches. We will have to find a way to adapt to the trend without plucking from our roots of "Deeds, not words".



Covid-19 Relief Work by SCI Bangladesh in pictures

By Bachchu



SCI Bangladesh distributed food and essential vegetables and groceries to the deserving homes that had no earnings due to a nationwide lockdown as a precaution against Corona Virus. Members of the Netrakona and Rajoir units were involved.

Poem by Mohinee

A Tribute to Ginette

A woman full of life, strength and power.
 Who fights back any obstacles thrown to her.
 Who dedicates her life to service- uplifting to downtrodden
 Infusing verve in the under privileged.
 And ensuring to bring the best out of any human she treads past.
 Warmth and elegance define her personality.
 A pillar of love, and amazing force to reckon with.
 A young spirited woman, admired for her generosity, graces the life of man
 amongst of us.

Hommage to Lin San Keow

By Ayle

Aka Ginette SVI is still grieving the recent loss of one of its highest emblematic figure in the person of its last year's President, Lin San Keow Thondoo (born Lin Yew Fai) best known as Ginee, Gin or Lin for short. Benefiting from the UNESCO travel grant in 1979, Ginee spent one year visiting SCI branches in Europe and a good number of Work Camp Organisations in Africa. Young and devoted, she was to pursue her career as a teacher both in Seychelles and Zimbabwe where her services were needed. Her home was a real adobe for friends and visitors. In 1981 she was delegated to attend the ICM where SVI successfully acceded to branch status. Years later when attending surgery in Switzerland for a health problem she took service at WIPO, a United Nation Agency. Accompanied by her husband and two daughters, she settled down in Geneva. There, the whole family continued to keep strong ties with the movement. A born organizer and fine animature, her generosity and hospitality were providential to all she met on her way. Due her different skill, she was chosen as president for the Mauritian Association of Geneva. In this position she catered for parents needing medical and provided support until their return to Mauritius. SCI Switzerland could also turn to her whenever help was required to accommodate volunteers or for cooking excellence. Both her husband 'Dada' and her two daughters 'Meelan and Sabrina' have been participating in many different SCI activities both abroad and in Mauritius. They should be proud of her and we do have a special thought for them. Ginee, our (Lin), for sure leaves behind an important legacy of a well accomplished mission for all of us to appreciate. May her enthusiasm and strong Asian Voice and smile continue to entertain SCI.?



79th ICM, December 2019, Held at Bennekom, Netherlands

BY MEDHA RADHA

Brief on the seminar

For my first participation, I am pleased with the good organisation and conduct of the seminar. Being recognised as a member of such a formidable association makes me more enthusiastic and motivated.

What impressed me most?

The amazing people I met. Joyful but focused.

The evening workshops and group discussions, sharing of common goals, objectives and ideas. A place to hear and be heard. Focus-based meeting ran in a very professional way by the president and all the members of the IS International with the contribution of all the branches.

I am touched beyond words for this incredible experience. I am glad about the fact that efficient work is carried out in view of a more peaceful mother earth. Till we meet again. With lots of love.



On with the Show (Goulburn Show 2020 Workcamp, 29 th February – 13 th March) By David Hessey – IVP Volunteer, Australia



The seven volunteers had all arrived by Saturday evening; Mesu from Fiji, Cecile from Belgium, Nghia (Sam) from Vietnam, Su-jin (Ellie) from South Korea, Alisa and Ksenia from Russia and myself from Australia. We settled into our new temporary accommodation, a small building on the site of the Goulburn Showgrounds. We set up a female dorm and a male dorm, general lounge and eating area, makeshift kitchen and separate bathrooms. The Goulburn Show Society had generously provided beds and bedding. The local IVP office provided cooking equipment and food.

Sunday provided an opportunity for fellow volunteers to get to know each other and familiarise themselves with the local surrounds. Our camp coordinator, Rita, lead formal group introductions in which we all expressed our fears and expectations for the camp. We discussed the dynamics of group living and created a roster for cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping and a rotating team leader for each day. With sunset approaching, we took a drive to the edge of town to spot the local wild kangaroos.

The advantage of this workcamp is that the IVP volunteers work together with the Goulburn Show Society volunteers. Collectively we contribute to setting up the showground during the week prior to the show event, then assist in dismantling and cleaning up following the busy weekend of the show.

First day was busy. Gloves, goggles and face masks on – it's time to clean inside the chicken shed! We moved various furniture out of the way, Cecile painted the floor to mark exactly where all bird cages were to be placed, then Alisa and Mesu helped direct the forklift operator to rearrange the vast number of cages.

After lunch we laid long rolls of industrial carpet to cover the whole floor of the huge basketball stadiums, then taped all edges neatly together to hold in place. One area will house the Cat Show. We unloaded and cleaned about 25 tables in preparation for the feline. The trolleys kept coming, and we prepared tables and benches for the flower and produce displays in the next hall.

Over the next few days we worked together with various local volunteers, including groups from the local high school and even some inmates from the local gaol. Morning tea and lunch was provided, prepared by volunteers of course! To be honest, I had not previously thought much about the preparations required to host an agricultural show. This was just one week of hectic work, but in fact the show committee works all year.

Jacki, the Goulburn Show Society President, and Craig, the forklift king, provided plenty of work for us. It was to be one of the most physically demanding weeks of work I had done in a long time. If it wasn't heavy fencing or lifting hay, it was hanging large quilts, artwork or cleaning. I loved it! Not sure it was everyone's idea of a fun week but guaranteed we learnt a great deal about various aspects of an agricultural show.

IVP had a stand at the show, see photos, which was staffed by various volunteers over the course of the weekend. Volunteers had plenty of time to enjoy the show; watching piglet racing, riding the show attractions, watching the horse events, patting various farm animals and meeting loads of locals. It was a great weekend for all.

For two and a half days following the show, we worked cleaning and returning all tables and equipment to their resting place. Shovelling soiled hay from goats wasn't everyone's idea of decent work, but it had to be done. Together we cleaned and packed away a weekend's worth of excitement.

On the final Wednesday, local man Peter, took us to Canberra for the day. We explored the museum, parliament house, local shops and the art gallery. That evening we were invited to a local farm, where we enjoyed a delicious meal, meeting a variety of farm animals and celebrating a great workcamp.

A few volunteers had booked transport for early departure on the final day of the camp, so we started cleaning and packing late Wednesday night and completed it by early Thursday. By early afternoon it was over for another year, and I hope to return in 2021 for another enjoyable experience.

How can we celebrate our 50th Earth Day during a Lockdown?

By Stephen Nah

In the past it had always been a wonderful opportunity to bring the various people and communities together to commemorate Earth Day and appreciate Mother Earth, as part of our SCI activities to build a Culture of Peace.

We planted hundreds of trees with flower and fruits. We helped build and promote Organic Farming and Garden. We did River Cleaning, Animal Husbandry, play with animals, had exhibitions, organised talks and forums, promote Recycling, made posters, had games to increase sensitives and awareness to build a more Sustainable Environments and many more and we had fun. But this year we are in the midst of a global Covid19 pandemic and Malaysia like most of the countries are imposing a Lockdown, mass gatherings is banned and people are restricted in their own home.

So what can we do?

We decided to carry on and take positive actions. 1st we asked members and friends to share Photos with us what they can do from their home - example - recycle, reuse material for games and art for children, to do home gardening, practice yoga, go vegetarian, do more readings on Suitability's etc.

2nd to encourage children to participate in an Earth Day colouring Competition. 3rd to response to a call to support the Zoo and its over 5000 animals badly affected with Zero Gate collection, for this... We initiated a campaign - amongst our members and friends - to Share a Meal with our Long Staying Residents* (□□□) at the Zoo. We just donate the cost of a normal day's meal - instead, for the LSR at the Zoo. Within a short period of 10 days via emails and Facebook, we managed to get over 60 people to donate more than Rm 6000 for it. More on the 1st and 2nd initiatives in the next update.

Meanwhile one of our partners is organising a lively Earth Week - entitled celebrating Earth Week- the 21st Century Imperatives - with Webniar jam session, Earthly Art Contest, Performance - Earthly Day Jam, Film Screenings, Social Media Campaign...



Covid-19 Relief Work by SCI Nepal

By Raju Bajiko

Greetings from sci Nepal.....!

On the critical situation of Corona Virus- Covid 19 Pandemic situation, 15 volunteers of SCI Nepal working with Bhaktapur Municipality in associate and support with local authorities from 10th April by identifying and collecting the data of homeless, needy, disable, orphan, old aged, street children and people who falls under the poverty line. We distributed rice, dal, bitten rice, cooking oil, salt, soap, mask, hand sanitizer and other highly necessity items to 2668 (Two thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Eight) households in Bhaktapur on 12th April 2020. The distribution activity was coordinated by SCI Nepal General Secretary Hari Krishna Prajapati, Rajan Chitrakar and Raju Bajiko. During the lockdown also we coordinate and volunteering with local police and local government to keep people inside the home to maintain social distances.



News From the International Secretariat

**By Chantal Doran
(International Coordinator)**

As was the case with most of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected SCI and its work in unprecedented ways. The majority of offices are currently working from home and many local projects and international workcamps had to be cancelled or postponed with no clear date. SCI quickly started discussing on which measures to take as an immediate response, how we had to change our work to adapt to this new reality and still continue our work towards peace.

In early March, SCI decided to freeze its placements from the 21st of March until the 20th of April, later extended to the 7th of May. We used this time to understand how we may still organize our activities, communicating with local partners and with each other to log needs and find opportunities for collaboration.

As SCI we actively promote a culture of peace and focus on solidarity, something the world needs now more than ever. That is why, after careful consideration and extensive dialogue within the Movement, we have decided to re-open workcamp placements, starting on 8th May 2020, employing measures that ensure the principle of "do no harm". Branches are working on alternative workcamps, including local workcamps, virtual workcamps, or a combination of the two and we will keep discussing measure needed to be able to work with local communities and towards our vision for peace.

The International Secretariat has worked hard to facilitate a continuous conversation within the movement, organizing InnovAction sessions geared towards creative thinking, weekly Tuesday conference calls focused on discussing measures, and creating a communication plan that is suitable for this COVID-19 period. We will continue to support the movement in its work and are always available to discuss ideas or answer questions.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude towards everyone who are working with solidarity, kindness and peace in mind. We are aware that these are trying times and fully believe that now more than ever we will need the spark and energy volunteering can bring.

As always, we hope that you, your loved ones and your communities stay safe, kind and healthy.

With lots of solidarity and support.