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CWC NEWS

CWC 2017: Off to a good start!

The next - the second - CWC ride has now been launched and I am so happy that the response and initial take up is very positive.

We have already 18 confirmed riders and a few verbal confirmations. I am very confident that we will reach our target participation of 25 riders. There will be many familiar faces riding with us and also some new ones.

I have often been asked, if there is a cheaper way to run the tour. Well, there maybe is, but as the organiser of this tour my ultimate priority is to ensure the comfort and especially the safety of all participants. And there is no short-cut for safety!

The one thing all participants of CWC and other charity rides such as TTOH and The ING Ride have in common is their passion for cycling and the desire to make a positive difference to the lives of less fortunate people and especially children. Going cycling in Thailand or elsewhere just for fun and to drink a few beers in the evening is not what a charity ride is all about. We want to do more!

All participants not only take on a rather strong mental and physical challenge, not only sacrifice annual leave and family time, but also have the expenses of travel, accommodation and the tour itself to pay for out of their own pockets. For all this and more, I thank all participants dearly from the bottom of my heart.

The organisers and the participants of this ride will do all they can to make the ride a wonderful, ever-lasting experience, but only YOU, the supporters and friends of CWC can make it successful! We need your support, your prayers and your donations to make the difference we want to make to the lives and especially the future of young children. As for the CWC 2016 ride, we have chosen Effective Aid International (www.effectiveaid.org) as the beneficiary for the 2017 ride.

For now, GOD Bless and safe cycling, always...

Reiner

Our Appeal to you:



Cyclists With Compassion (CWC) is a group of like-minded cycling enthusiasts and was started with the goal to make a difference to underprivileged children in Asia by raising money for better education, which in turn will bring hope for a better, brighter future.

CWC plans and organises long-distance cycling tours to parts of Asia, raising awareness about the needs of children in these areas. By raising money from corporate sponsors as well as donations from friends and family donated in recognition of our mental and physical efforts, we hope to contribute our little part of making their world a little better, a little brighter!

In February 2017 cyclists from around the world will be cycling 700 km in North Thailand in 6 days, starting in Chiang Rai and finishing at the Baan Fah Sighy Children Home app. 100 km south of Chiang Mai. Baan Fah Sighy was established more than 13 years ago by Australian Phil Hohnen and his Thai wife Wanida and has developed into an "oasis of love" for many abandoned and orphaned children who call it home and know it's founders as "Mum & Dad".

The Baan Fah Sighy Children Home is supported by Effective Aid International (EAI), our chosen beneficiary of the ride. For 15 years EAI (www.effectiveaid.org) has been changing the future for displaced, orphaned and abandoned children both in Northern Thailand and Myanmar. For EAI quality education is the single most effective weapon that can be used today, to erase poverty in the future - so education is their key focus. During these past years, EAI has provided more than 13,000 individual years of schooling to children in refugee camps, displaced peoples' villages and children's homes. EAI has employed, trained and empowered hundreds of refugees as teachers in their schools and have provided love, food, safety and shelter to abandoned and orphaned children.

Our ambitious plans can only become reality with the help and support from private and corporate sponsors and I would like to ask your kind support by becoming a sponsor of the CWC ride 2017. There is no minimum donation; no matter how big or small, your contribution matters and will be very much appreciated.

You can donate directly to EAI, using the "[Donate](#)" feature on www.effectiveaid.org/cyclists-with-compassion. On the payment page you will also have the possibility to name the cyclist, in whose honour you donate. Australian-based sponsors will be issued with a tax-deductible receipt. For other payment methods and for Corporate Sponsorship, please contact contact4cwc@gmail.com.

Thank you on behalf of all cyclists and organisers of the CWC 2017 ride and the many, many children benefitting from your generosity!

Introducing:

Phil Hohnen, the "Dad" for the children of Baan Fah Sighy!

Our inaugural charity ride in February this year from Bangkok to Chiang Mai was full of extraordinary experiences, but to many, if not all of us the indisputable highlight of CWC 2016 was the visit to the Baan Fah Sighy Children home and to meet the wonderful founders of this oasis of love, Australian Phil Hohnen and his Thai wife Wanida.



Phil, who turned 70 just a few months ago, led anything but an ordinary life. He was a Senior Government Geologist by age 30. In the late 70's he mined Queensland boulder opals in the original underground mines opened in the late 19th Century and abandoned in the 1904 drought.

He cut the gems and marketed them in the USA, where he even appeared on TV [1982]. He returned to mining in '87/88 as a consultant and equal partner to another long-term famous miner, but fell on hard times when his best gems - worth millions of \$\$\$\$ - were stolen.

Phil survived as a professional car restorer, a trade he taught himself so successfully that a car he restored won car shows 5 years running. He also ran a rustic-style furniture factory - again, self-trained - which helped Phil to start a business as an antiques dealer.

But the ever humble Phil considers all this achievements trivial. And perhaps he is right, because compared to what Phil and Wanida created with Baan Fah Sighy, anybody's achievements pale. In the last 14 years and under great sacrifices, they built an orphanage, a kindergarten and a school from scorched earth; they raised and educated 29 children - 26 abandoned as babies - as their own. Phil and Wanida gave them food, shelter, a home, love, hope and ... a future. We are living

in a time, when so much is motivated by material objectives and when love, heart, compassion and kindness are no longer the four points of the compass that guide our actions. Meeting Phil and Wanida and seeing their heroic and never ending determination to make the world a better place for the children in their care does not only give hope to the children. It gives hope to all of us that the world perhaps can still be saved.



CWC spoke to Phil to find out more about him, Baan Fah Sighy and the everyday challenges.

CWC: What inspired you to start the orphanage?

Phil: I finished Bible College in 1997, and decided during my studies as a mature Christian that I would put my training to good use. I went on a short missions trip to Papua New Guinea with Pastor Ian Aitchison, then Missions Director at a large Gold Coast church. On my return I decided that there was a great need for help in developing countries. After busying myself in my business for another year and then building a sports car from scratch, I decided to get serious: after 3 days' fasting and praying near Binna Burra in the mountains I asked Pastor Ian for help to establish contacts as a missionary to build an orphanage in Thailand. The Biblical parable of the talents scared me too; what had I done for others in my life up till then? Fortunately I found a soul-mate in Wanida.

CWC: What are the challenges you faced and continue to face in your work with the orphanage?

Phil: The challenges I face are the difficulty in working with people who have so little understanding of my western mindset, and work ethic, of obtaining visas to allow me to stay here to look after their kids, and

having no real friends or fellowship with like-minded English-speaking people, or people with similar views and faith. Yes the internet helps, but I'm a 'people person' and like face-to-face time. Health issues are also a major concern: I suffered from cancer 12 years ago and after the operation the doctor told me that I had TB in my lymph glands. My worn out hip continues to limit me severely, but that hopefully will soon be replaced, thanks to the generosity of friends.

CWC: How do you keep yourself motivated in spite of the challenges

The kids keep me motivated: I love them all so much. Also visits from CWC, Australian school groups and other interested parties keeps me going, though, like King David, I have to stir myself up regularly as this is not as easy as it looks, either for Wanida or for me.

CWC: . What is your hope for the future of the children and the orphanage?

Phil: I have a passion for eschatology and believe we are living at the end of this age. I want all the children to be saved and to model themselves on Wanida's selfless life. Each of us has a different calling and I want the kids to achieve the maximum they can in the short time left to is all. Ultimately I want them all to feel loved and happy with their lives, not abandoned children with no hope.

Financial backing is our greatest challenge: if we have enough funding, we can keep going and overcome the problems we face daily. We run a very cost-effective ministry, and report to the Australian Government through Global Development Group 6-monthly. We still need to attract new sponsors, because I have been here full-time for 16 years and my friends back in Australia are now nearly all retired and of limited means.

Thank you for your vital support both in prayer, visits and finances.

