



THE ROTARY CLUB OF SURFERS SUNRISE MATAFAA VILLAGE SCHOOL PROJECT

Providing a Pre-School, Toilet Block and Playground to
a tsunami devastated Village in Samoa

RAWCS (Rotary Australia World Community Service) Project No.: 78- 2009-10



Introduction

At a fireside chat organised by the president Darrell Brown to introduce new members to Rotary one of our new members became filled-up with enthusiasm with the work of Rotary.

Darrell had invited his good Rotary friends, Ian & Heather Yarker (Past District Governors), to assist and they presented details of Rotary District Projects. One of which was our own club's school project in Thailand. As this new member's interest was in assisting children, shortly after the meeting he offered his donation of \$50,000 to purchase materials to build a new school classroom in tsunami ravaged Samoa. Always wanting to remain anonymous he assisted further in providing funds to provide a toilet block & playground equipment.

With an established design from the Thailand Project by our own member Des La Rance and the work team at our Rotary Wheelchair Shed where we manufacture wheelchairs for children in third world countries, the club was confident that they could meet the requirement to make a success of the project.

Christine Carberry a Rotarian of the Rotary Club of Lane Cove had been working in the Pacific since 1994 with AFAP (The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Limited) and had in-country partners in most Pacific Island Nations. Christine contacted the CEO, Fiu Mataese Elisara of O le Siosiomaga Society Inc, who is a long time partner of AFAP in Samoa.) Pacific

Fiu agreed to be the contact point for the project given those areas outside Apia do not have internet access. Fiu consulted with the CEO of the Ministry of Education, the National Disaster Management Committee and identified the Village of Matafaa which needed a school. By mid-January 2010 Fiu had arranged for the necessary letters of support from the village and the applicable Ministries.

Christine approached her own Club (Rotary Club of Lane Cove) and asked them to contribute to the project, which they did with a cheque for \$5,000. She also approached her District who has been raising of funds for those affected by the tsunami in Samoa and they donated \$10,000.

With the funds now in place, the site confirmed at Matafaa Village and approved by National Disaster Management Office and the Ministry of Education in Samoa, the Surfers Sunrise Club was extremely confident the Project would be a success. This Project was then registered as a RAWCS project.





Because advice that the shipping container had to be purchased the team decided to fit out the container as a toilet block. Subsequently, school desks, chairs, and a play ground were included. Our anonymous donor also added some more funds to cover these items making his total donation \$62,000. It is important to note that he worked diligently at our shed in the manufacture of the school and later on site in Samoa for the erection of the School.

Surfers Sunrise also included 5 wheelchairs in the container in the knowledge these would be of assistance in Samoa.

By the end of January 2010, the date was confirmed as August for the construction.

Fiu and Christine kept the village informed of the progress of the manufacture and gathered more technical information as needed between January and the completion of the prefabricated until the container was packed and sent to Samoa.





Manufacturing

The prefabrication of the school building was carried out by Rotarians and volunteers at the “Wheelchair Shed”. This is the manufacturing facility used by the club to manufacture wheelchairs for the disadvantaged in third world countries (approx. 5,800 to date).

The manufacturing of the school was rather unique. Des La Rance designed the school on his computer using the cad programme used by builders and such. He then transcribed the drawings to the manufacturing process. The workers (Rotarians & Volunteers) at the shed are incredibly enthusiastic but they are not necessarily fully qualified tradesmen. Des developed jigs that allowed ease of manufacture and thus involved all of the workers. As each part was manufactured it was painted with several coats so that only a finishing coat was needed after construction. The majority of materials were new timber. Some steel supports were used for the base of the water tanks. Obviously it was a mammoth task in sourcing all the materials, including doors, windows, louvres, lighting, power distribution, brackets and all the necessary tools for use in construction, power tools, ladders and miscellaneous items (screws, nails, nuts and bolts.), as we knew that these would not be available in a remote village. It was intended that the 40 foot container would be converted into a toilet/shower facility. Special steel cutting was required to create cavity for doors and windows in the toilet facility. All fittings, toilets, plumbing supplies, conduits, hand basins, pumps were all acquired. As the container would be used for this purpose, the container itself went through a renovation, six days spent on cleaning and painting. More importantly, all of this equipment had to be packed into the forty foot container.

Des La Rance was the designer, project manager and supervised all the bill of quantity on the project.





Shipping

Several quotes were obtained from shipping agents to forward the container to Apia. These ranged from \$10,000 to \$12,000 and were well above the amount allocated for transport in the budget. A volunteer, Bill Fallon, made contact with Rotarian Maraea Slade, who is also an assistant Governor in Samoa, and explained the problem to her. She suggested we contact Reynald Slade in Loganholme and explain what we required. A quote was then received for \$7,600 plus road freight (including the purchase of the container). To even make it more difficult, we needed a “high top” container so it could be used for the toilet/shower facility. The shipping company had a special rate for goods being delivered to victims of the Tsunami, and the container containing the school building was treated this way. When the container was offloaded in Apia and fumigated it was released without any imposition of import duty thanks to Maraea Slade and the Rotary Club of Apia. The container was then taken to the village along the narrow road with some tight twisting turns. On several occasions, trees had to be removed to enable the truck to navigate some precarious parts of the road with the truck driver displaying great skill. The container was delivered on site three days before the advance party was to arrive. The villagers then set about to unload the building materials, which was a mammoth task considering there was torrential rain falling during this process.



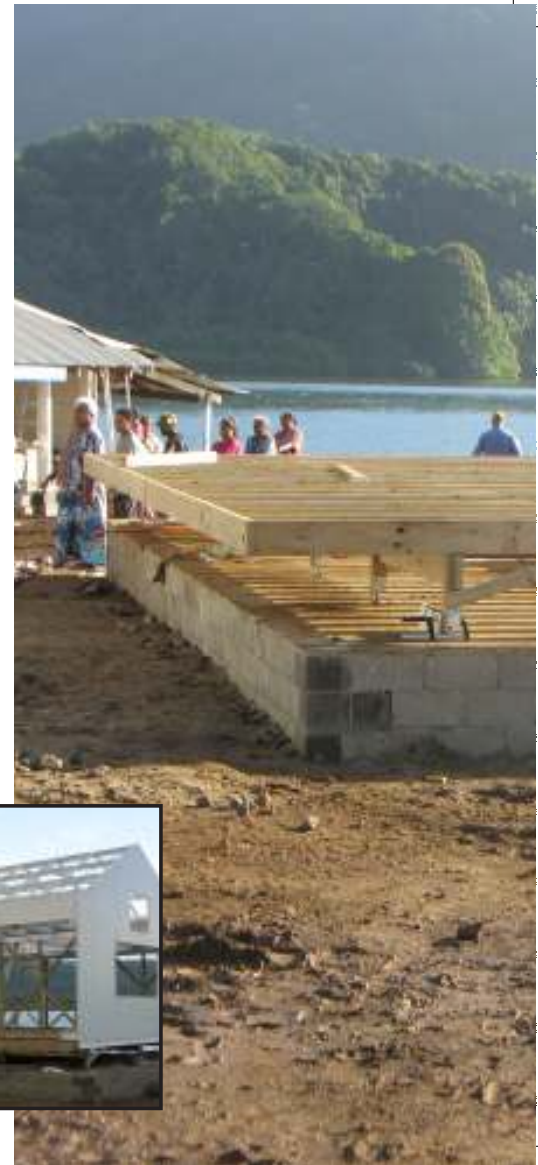


Erection

With the container on site and unpacked an advance party of 5 members of Surfers Sunrise Rotary along with a volunteer arrived to begin the erection of the school building. Another party of Rotarians and volunteers were to arrive a week later to undertake the final fit out. The first group began to assemble the floor joists and framing utilising the volunteer manpower of the village. These volunteers were explained the various building techniques being used and were taught the use of unfamiliar tools. They displayed boundless enthusiasm in their willingness to learn and to be involved in all aspects of the project. This enabled the school frame to be erected and the roof on by the time the second group arrived. This willingness to be involved continued during the final fit out, painting and cleaning of the school building and the converting of the container into an ablution block. Two rain water tanks, along with the appropriate guttering, were supplied to supply water for the showers and toilets. This block consisted of two toilets and a shower for the females and one toilet and shower for the males. There was also 3 hand basins in each of the toilet areas.

The whole volunteer group was made to feel very welcome with the village hospitality outstanding. A midday meal, as well as snacks and drinks, was provided each day with all the families in the village contributing from their meagre resources. The groups travel and accommodation was at their own cost.

Des La Rance was the site supervisor for the construction of the school, toilet/shower facility and playground.









Handover and Official Opening.

The school and toilet/shower was basically completed in the two weeks allocated. There were some areas needing minor work to complete and several villagers were instructed on how to complete these tasks. The appropriate tools and some funds were left to enable this to be satisfactorily completed

On the day of the official opening and handover, almost all the villagers were in attendance to witness the ceremonial cutting of the ribbon placed across the school door. This was performed by the wife of the head of the Presbyterian Church in Samoa. Also in attendance, were all the volunteer workers, representation of the local Rotary Club and the Australian High Commissioner for Samoa' Mr Matt Anderson. The chiefs of the village expressed their gratitude to the volunteers for all their efforts in building the school in spite of sometimes bad weather. They were very thankful to have a school building for the young people to begin their schooling years, overcoming a significant disadvantage for them. After the formalities were completed the children of the village and their teachers gave a presentation of singing and dancing which was well received by the appreciative audience.

Many volunteers expressed deep satisfaction coupled with a sense of achievement as the school was handed over and the children began to use the play area. All the trials with the weather and occasional illness were forgotten. It was a sobering moment when it was realised what can be achieved with the efforts of a small number of people committed to helping those less fortunate.

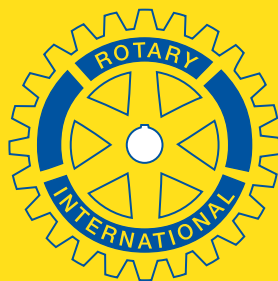


Acknowledgements

- AFAP (The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Limited).
- Fiu Mataese Elisara O le Siosiomaga Society Inc. Samoa
- FSPI (Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International).
- Rotary Club of Lane Cove.
- Rotary District 9680 (Northern Sydney).
- RAWCS (Rotary Australia World Community Service)
- Tuifaasisina Maraea Slade,
Regional Assistant District Governor Rotary District 9920 - Pacific Island Clubs.
- Matafaa Village Community.
- Volunteers and Rotarians Rotary Club of Surfers Sunrise Wheelchair Shed for Manufacture.
- Construction Crew consisting of Rotarians and Volunteers

Neil Thurlow	Des La Rance	Laurie Roberts	Tony Thompson
Mario Farlie	Daryl Sanderson	Mark Hickey	Geoff Croad
Geoff Smith	Gerald East	Jacque Hickey	Keith Lutz
Rick Old	Heather Yarker	Christine Carberry	Mitchell Sanderson
Bill Fallon	Ian Yarker	Dr Michael Ho	

- Anonymous Donor Rotary Club of Surfers Sunrise



The Rotary Club of Surfers Sunrise meets for breakfast every
Wednesday morning at 7:00am at the Southport Yacht Club -
Macarthur Parade, Main Beach, Qld Australia 4217

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