



### PHILIPPINES: May 7 - 22, 2003: 5,000 Bedkits

BY DOUG CUNNINGHAM  
COBOURG ONTARIO

I am writing this on the plane heading east into the sunrise. We are on our way home, having completed the distribution of 5,000 bedkits in the Philippines. Billie Kemp, Marianne Chapell, Irene Harrison, and I are heading home happy. We, through your donations, have been able to add a few small frames, contributing to the overall big picture, the epic, continuing saga. Many years ago, Murray and Margaret Dryden, through foresight, hindsight, and all things in between, started this epic. The storyboard in Mr. Dryden's continuing saga, dictated that children, while devastated through circumstances not of their own making, still have a right to the basic comforts of life.

Children all over the world go to sleep in various states of hunger and squalor. SCAW has distributed bedkits to children in many countries (31 to-date), most of which are termed "developing" or "third world" countries. Another apt description is "the have and have-nots". In fact, many of people who "have", have done so at the expense of the "have-nots". Mr. Dryden, who had personally been a "have-not" in the 30's (Depression Years), had decided to do something positive for other "have-nots". In fact, his efforts have succeeded over the years to help hundreds of thousands of "have-not" children.

You, the donors, and the volunteers doing the leg work and raising the funds, have helped thousands of children; and Murray's saga continues to increase, one frame at a time. His dream picture epic will be one million frames long. Think of it—one million children having been helped to ease life's challenges.

I have just come in possession of a book\* by

Mr. Dryden, "For the Love of His Children". In it, he tells of the early years of SCAW. I have, for the past two weeks, been working with a man, Dr. Juan (Ito) Torres, who has been part of that picture for many years. Mr. Torres is this year's International

#### 2003 PHILIPPINES BEDKIT

- 1 plastic mat
- 1 blanket
- 1 sheet
- 1 pillow
- 1 pillow case
- 1 mosquito net
- 4 pair of shorts
- 4 T-shirts
- 1 sweater
- 1 hat
- 1 raincoat
- 1 towel & face cloth
- 1 pair thongs (shoes)
- 1 cotton bag
- 1 handkerchief
- 1 lunch box
- 1 soap case
- 1 plastic container
- 1 large cup (dipper)
- 2 tooth brushes
- 1 school bag containing pens,  
pencils, notebooks, pencil sharpener,  
and more
- 1 plastic bag for carrying the bedkit

President of Kiwanis. Even though he has had a very busy year, he still insists on personally directing SCAW in the Philippines. He, and his energetic committee of Jess, Boyet, Boy, Rolly and Romy, has just made another distribution in their country, the Philippines, a reality.

There are dedicated people in Uganda, India, Honduras, Tanzania, Bangladesh and

Sri Lanka, to name a few, who dedicate themselves to being part of Murray's saga.

With the help of you, the donors all over the world, plus volunteers who give so freely of their time, this picture will never end, but be a sequel for many years to come.

[\* Editor's Note: Murray's book "For the Love of His Children" – A few copies are currently available from the SCAW office \$10.]

BY BILLIE KEMP  
BOWMANVILLE, ONTARIO

How delighted I was to receive a phone call from my sister, Marianne, while I was away on holiday, to say that we had been asked to go to the Philippines in May. I immediately recalled the great memories of our first SCAW experience, four years ago, and I couldn't wait for May 7<sup>th</sup> to arrive.

Two weeks in the Philippines – what an experience! What a team! What a privilege and honour to be a small part of a wonderful organization!

I'd like to tell you about an important group – the thoughtful, compassionate overseas volunteers – the Kiwanis Club, under the coordination of Dr. Ito Torres. Because Dr. Torres is the current President of Kiwanis International, Jess, Boyet, Romy, Vicente (a Boy) and others assisted with many of the responsibilities. I must not forget Vincent, a young college grad who tirelessly helped pull labels (an act of setting them up for the photos).

Although there was a core team, several local Kiwanis Clubs were involved.

(continued on page 2)

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(Philippines by Billie Kemp, Bowmanville, Ontario, continued from page 1)

In talking with many of them, I learned that they need to know three or four months in advance of the distribution how much money they will get, so they can determine the exact number of bedkits they need to produce, based on each bedkit providing \$30 Canadian worth of items. Of course, all of this ultimately depends on the generosity of you, the donors.

They also decide what needs to be in the bedkits. They know their needs better than we Canadians do. This year, over 30 items, plus some school supplies, were included, thanks to the astute negotiating of the Treasurer, Rolly, who gave us a detailed account of the expenditures. Imagine all that for \$30 Canadian – what value!

After the items are made, many through cottage industries, the rest are factory made, they have to be assembled and stored in a secure, central location, which is often owned and donated by a Kiwanian. We were fortunate to witness some of this in progress.

I think their most challenging task is choosing the ‘neediest’ of the needy children when there are so many. This is often done with the help of local schools. They also choose the venues for each distribution, which could be a school, public building, or park – some place that will provide shelter from both rain and/or hot sun. It was HOT! The children often travel a long distance, and many times the compassionate club provided food and cold drinks for the dear little children. They also made sure we travelling volunteers had cold bottles of water or juice on hand.

We overseas travelling volunteers were helped, on distribution days, by local persons from various groups: the Ladies Circle, Knights of Columbus, young people of a parish, day care workers, etc. They assisted with registration because each child had to have proof that they were selected. They helped dress the children in their new T-shirt and shorts, part of their bedkit. They also helped with arranging the children in order, and they were better than we were at keeping the little ones at ease, and encouraging their smiles during the picture taking.

During our conversations with these

workers, they expressed their gratitude for the generosity of the donors, and were glad to be able to assist SCAW in any way they could. Thanks to the many volunteers there, the flow of the distributions went well.

At the beginning of each distribution, there was an Opening Ceremony that included an invocation and the singing of both National Anthems. Tears kept welling up as I listened to the many voices, young and old, proudly sing for us. We four Canadians were glad to be joined by many of the Kiwanians who now know “O Canada”.



It truly has been a wonderful two weeks in the Philippines. I want to thank them all, especially Dr. Torre and his family for the kind hospitality

and generosity. They introduced us to many Filipino foods and customs, and gave us a greater appreciation of life in the Philippines.

One of the things I appreciated was being able to sit up front by our careful driver, Tony, as he maneuvered in and around and up and down the congested roads filled with tricycles, jeeps, cars, buses and trucks.

We had a great Canadian Team: our ‘flexible’, patient leader, Doug Cunningham; a new friend, Irene Harrison; and again sharing these experiences with my sister, Marianne Chappelle, made it all special.

None of this would be possible without you, the generous donors, and the efficient, untiring administration volunteers, and the Drydens’ dream.

Thank you again for letting me have this wonderful experience.

I’m reminded of a quote I heard from a member of the 20/30 Club in Colombia: “A person is never so tall as when she/he stoops to help a child”.

### **BY MARIANNE CHAPPELL BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO**

For a second time, I am grateful to SCAW for allowing me to be part of a team; along with my dear sister, Billie Kemp, Irene Harrison, and this time led by Doug Cunningham on the May 2003 distribution in the Philippines.

As we entered the first site area, I saw the huge banner (each site had a colourful banner), and memories of my first visit flooded back over me: the smiling faces of hundreds of children sitting or standing, wearing their bright coloured T-shirts and shorts, numbers on strings around their necks, all waiting for the Canadians to arrive.

The children waited patiently while a location was chosen for the photo shoots, we laid out the three bedkits, arranged the numerous useful items, and then began the opening ceremonies. What National pride young and old had as they placed hands over their hearts while they sang their National Anthem. We thank the members of Filipino Kiwanis Club for joining us, the Canadians, in singing “O Canada”.

As the distributions progressed, it was such fun to play with the children, watch their shy behaviour, enjoy their fish-shaped and flowered thongs, admire their hair, and converse in some English. As I admired one sweet little girl’s pony tail, I turned my grey-haired head around and mimed putting mine up in the same fashion. Giggles erupted. It was a joyous sound!

To have this privilege of actually handing the bedkits you donors generously provide to children is so rewarding. Each time a dear little child took the back of my hand and pressed it to his forehead as a blessing, saying “*Salomat Po*” (Thank You), I was truly humbled. It is hard to express the mixed emotions that we experienced on so many occasions. Always I ask myself that unanswerable question, “Why do we Canadians have so much, and so many people so little?”

On this trip, we saw some new-to-us parts of the country as we travelled farther North, and then farther South. We learned much from Dr. Ito Torres about this unique country, especially the history, culture, customs, its geography, politics, schooling, agriculture, crafts, family life and respect for elders. He told us that very few Filipinos allow their elderly parents to go into retirement homes. They look after them in their homes, the children then growing up with an extended family.

In spite of the new overhead trains that recently started to operate in the city, traffic is dense, day and night. It is a miracle that

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there are so few traffic accidents.

I remembered the beauty of the countryside, bougainvillea trailing over fences, coconut trees swaying in the breeze by the sea, banana and mango trees laden with fruit, the lush green fields of rice, and always the children. I also recall fine handwork, wooden crafts, the poverty of squatters' homes perched on a narrow strip of land by the road, often made of bamboo, tin, cardboard or whatever, sometimes with a drop of many feet on the other side, and certainly no room for matching recliners in front of a large screen TV set.

A big thank you goes to all the Filipino people who were so well organized, and who helped with the distributions. It was an honour working with all of you, and together we did make a difference; and together, along with generous donors, we can keep the Dryden dream alive.

## BY IRENE HARRISON MILTON, ONTARIO

### *Mabuhay Pilipas* - A Land of Contrasts

It is midnight when we reach our hotel, leaving the crowds of the Manila airport behind, to seek refuge and hopefully a good night's sleep after our 22 hour journey. The bellboy immediately turns on the TV, a practice that is repeated wherever we find new accommodation. It is then I notice a peculiarity of language that delights me throughout our entire two-week stay. It is called "*tagalese*" – a mixture of one of fifty-two Filipino dialects, and the liberal sprinkling of English words, phrases and even complete sentences. Whether it's used on a newscast, a weather report, a church sermon or an interview, one can hear the blend of two languages flowing and seemingly natural to use. Evidently, I later learn, it is much easier, more precise and concise to express certain concepts, feelings and technical data through English, and so the infusion of the language is liberal and widespread in Filipino dialects.

This becomes my introduction to this land of contrast, symbolically representing the complexity of the Philippines – the

mixture of old, very traditional, and the modern ways, greatly influenced by the American military presence throughout the last century until their departure in 1992. Whether in the food, the shops, the vehicles, the landscape or the lifestyle, old and new are uniquely juxtapositioned to give the Philippines a flavour of its own.

We delight in the many taste sensations offered us during our stay, from stuffed yam leaves to *halo-halo* – a version of our sundae. Each district we visit usually has a specialty and we are overfed with a variety of dishes—flavourful, distinctive preparations. At the beginning, our hosts include Big Macs on the menu, in the event we have less adventurous palates. However, I think they must have been pleasantly surprised to find that in most cases, the hamburgers remained untouched, and soon they were noticeably absent.



McDonalds appear everywhere in the cities, along with very large KFC franchises. Indeed, in the super-malls, there is every conceivable American franchise present—the American influence is most present in this venue. But in the countryside, we see the traditional fruit and vegetable stands, the open-air markets, and vendors grilling their delicacies on the streets.

Streets in the city teem with vehicles and people, jostling aggressively for limited space, but both pressing forward confident that they will make it unscathed. Amongst the modern vehicles, usually Japanese in origin, stand out the vehicles peculiar to the Philippines. First are the 'jeepneys', fashioned like old, U.S. military jeeps, shaped in the style of the 50's, and assailing the visual senses with blasts of riotous colours and graphic designs and sayings. And then there are the 'tricycles', equipped with a sidecar, and used as taxis. They are built for a couple of passengers; however, I witnessed as many as eight at one time somehow managing to get a lift. Smaller, they nevertheless compete for the limited road space with confidence and daring. In the country, we occasionally see a different mode of transportation. The water buffalo or *karibo*, used to plough the fields,

is also sometimes conscripted to pull a cart or even mounted.

Contrasts in the landscape abound, offering opportunities for the most eager camera bug, from the hustle and bustle of the crowds, to the pollution and the squalor of the slums, to the more leisurely pace in the country. More contrasts—the Spanish influence of colonial days in the north, the luscious green tropical forests of the south, the winding roads through the mountains, the shores of the coastline, each offer a different perspective of life in the Philippines. I'll remember the terraced rice fields, the fish farms, the contrast of brightly coloured vacation homes with the humble squatters' homes, the trees laden with fruits, the many magnificent churches which testify to the religious spirit of the people, and the abundance of colour from the bougainvillea that drape themselves elegantly over walls.

But most of all, I shall remember the genuine warmth and generosity of the people of the Philippines. Their traditional values have not been tempered by American influence, and their customs flourish and their values sustain them. They exhibit '*bahala na*' – a stoic attitude, a belief in fate and fortune which leads them to live for the day, to make the most of what they have, and to cherish friendship and comradeship which is more precious than material wealth. "*Utang na loob*" refers to a 'debt of gratitude', a pressing obligation to repay favours and has a determining influence on social, economic and political life. We certainly see this in practice at each distribution, their appreciation of our visit with bedkits for their children. And I was honoured at one particular site, to have the children take my hand and place it on their foreheads, a sign of thanks and respect called "*mano*".

The children were like all children everywhere—anxious and uncertain at first at what was to unfold during a distribution. Obediently, following instructions in silence and sometimes bewilderment when their photos were taken, they inevitably burst into smiles when handed their bedkits, a package worth \$30 Canadian. When minimum wage would result in a parent's take home pay of no more than \$95 U.S. a month, bedkit donors can be assured that their gifts have made a substantial difference in the lives of these children.

(continued on page 4)

(Philippines, by Irene Harrison, Milton, Ontario, continued from page 3)

A land of contrasts the Philippines may be, but the country shares an unfortunate similarity to many places around the world. It houses an abundance of children that live in abject poverty with little chance of improvement. The bedkits that donors give offer them perhaps a temporary respite, but your generosity will always be remembered, and may I pass on to you their sincere expressions of thanks – “*salamat po*”. And I received the greatest gift of all—witnessing the joy, seeing the broad smile of a child, and accepting the appreciative nod of a parent over and over again. I am filled with joy and cherished memories. Thank you, all donors, for warming my heart and the hearts of these 5,000 children. *Salamat po!*

### ALPHA & OMEGA

Several of you have inquired about the Alpha & Omega sign used in all of our “In Memory” photos. While it has always been used significantly by Christians, Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last – therefore “the beginning and the end”!

When Margaret Dryden was in hospital at the end of her life, Murray derived comfort by seeing “new life” – the babies in the hospital nursery. Thus, the idea of using Alpha & Omega was chosen for SCAW photos, to connect all our “In Memory” of those whose lives have ended, with a child for whom life is just beginning.

**NEXT SCHEDULED**  
**DISTRIBUTION TRIPS**

**JULY, 2003 -**  
**HONDURAS - 4,000 BEDKITS**  
**SEPTEMBER, 2003 -**  
**TANZANIA - 4,000 BEDKITS**

### EXCERPTS FROM DONOR LETTERS

**Hello**, my name is Zoryana. This year I celebrate my 10<sup>th</sup> birthday and my sister her 8<sup>th</sup>. In lieu of gifts at each of our parties we collected money to provide bedkits. Please write Happy Birthday Bohdahna from your friends on one, and Happy Birthday Zoryana from your friends on the other. We would like them to go to girls our age. We will be sharing our photos with all our friends and family.



[Addressed directly to Mr. Dryden] **My** name is Andrew. I’m 15 and I’ve decided once again that it’s time to make a donation to your fantastic organization. So far, I’ve purchased three bedkits ... one for a young girl in Thailand in 1995; one for a young boy in Thailand in 2000, and one for another young boy in Thailand in 2001. I have their pictures framed above my desk and I can see them even as I write this letter. I’d like very much to send another to a young boy or girl who needs it, so I’ve enclosed a cheque for \$30 (which my father has written for me, since sending cash in the mail can be a little risky). I hope my donation can help you achieve SCAW’s goal and I wish you the best of luck with your noble and honourable cause. Sincerely.

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Northumberland Rotary Sunrise Club tells us that they honoured Mrs. Barbara Winfield of Port Hope, Ontario with a Paul Harris Fellowship. That is the highest award available through Rotary International, and is presented to citizens who have displayed unselfish and tireless acts of volunteerism within their community. They go on to tell us of many acts of improving her community performed by this gracious lady who is almost completely paralyzed from Multiple Sclerosis, then add ... when presenting her award, they offered to make a contribution to a charity of her choice. She chose SCAW and Northumberland Rotary kindly enclosed a cheque in the amount of \$1,000.

We also congratulate Barbara Winfield, and thank her on behalf of the many children who will receive and share in her gift.

### SCAW WEB SITE

Have you ever checked out SCAW’s Web Site. You reach it by typing – [www.scaw.org](http://www.scaw.org)

We’ve been very proud of it since it’s inception a few years ago. However, keep watching, as it’s currently under renovation. Our newly renovated site will feature information (for the first time) in a choice of English or French. It will have many extra ‘links’, lots of photographs, and even copies of our newsletters. So if you just get the one pertaining to your individual gift, you can go to our site and read all of them. Also, there will be donor forms and information leaflets that you can print directly. Another new link will be to inform everyone of the business end of running the property at 28 Pinehurst, and of the expenses and challenges involved.

Of course, we’re always happy to hear directly from you, our donors, in person, by phone, by e-mail and last but not least, by regular post.

**THANK YOU**  
**for your**  
**contribution to this**  
**Philippines trip**

**Black’s Photography** for photofinishing

**Champion Photochemistry Limited** for continuously funding film and photofinishing costs since 1986.

**Konica Canada Inc.** for donating film

**The Printing House (Russ Cosman)**  
**5120 Dundas Street West Etobicoke, Ontario** for the printing of this newsletter

**Kay Kelly,**  
**Harry Keating and Maurice Kowanetz** for publishing this newsletter

**Donors and Volunteers!**