

## Meet Equal Health Volunteer - Barbara

**Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.....**

***Helen Kellar (1880-1968)***



My first impressions of India after leaving Chennai airport was that I had stepped back in time. It was hot and humid despite being a late winter evening, people were dressed differently to what we were used to and the Tamil language that we were hearing was foreign. Although I have travelled a great deal, it was one of the few times in my life that I had felt truly far from home. I could not believe that after much preparation and anticipation I had finally arrived in India! I remember being very

excited and realised that my long time dream of partaking in international aid work was about to begin.....

No doubt working with the children in the orphanages was the highlight of being in India. The day after arriving in Chennai, we travelled to a girl's orphanage. You could see the excitement in the eyes of the girls as the buses drove up the dusty path of the Kyatha Girl's Home. The expressions on their faces spoke volumes and the smiles were infectious; something that will stay with me forever. The girls showered us with leis of flowers and were getting restless as they were waiting for the formalities of the greetings to end. Equal Health had arrived. They want to play – they had new friends, there were no language barriers when it came to having a game of volley ball and jump rope, which were in full swing in a matter of minutes.

India is not an easy place to describe. It is a place that needs to be lived and experienced. India and the aid work with Equal Health at times can confront you as well challenge your western sensibilities and sensitivities.

The journey that I was involved in was beyond a doubt a trip of a life time and words cannot express what I truly experienced, saw and felt during this time. Although at times I was presented with many obstacles and extremes



***A life changing appointment***



during my stay in India, India was unquestionably the most amazing country that I have visited in my life. Participating in the aid work realised one of my dreams in life and more importantly it was a privilege and an honour to be allowed to be a very small part of the lives of our Indian partners. I do know that we did make a difference. It took me sometime after my return home to comprehend the impact that the aid work has had on me as a human being.

My final diary entry in India before returning home was I have not bid India farewell.....12 months later, I once again returned to India, this time to be a team leader.

**Volunteer - Barbara**

A large, abstract blue graphic on the left side of the page, consisting of overlapping curved shapes in various shades of blue, from light to dark.

*A life changing appointment*