

ALL EARS



EARS inc.

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No. 3

April 2005

We have had a really busy year and hope that this year finally we will get regular newsletters happening.

In this edition:

- What's been happening
- The Bartlett's in Papua New Guinea.
- India expands its service
- Where's the Dominican Republic anyhow?
- Membership news
- Volunteers wanted

What's been happening?

EARS Inc. has continued to grow rapidly, with many countries requesting assistance. As we have expanded it has become impossible for only one or two people to oversee all the projects. Therefore we now have designated country co-ordinators, who graciously volunteered at our EARS training day. One of their roles is to supply updates and information for our newsletters.

The Bartlett's in Papua New Guinea

Rebecca Bartlett

Peter and I, with daughters Jessica and Brianna returned to Australia in April after spending six months on a project funded by the Aus-aid Community Development Scheme. This project was with the Morobe Special Education Resource Centre in Lae, Papua New Guinea.

Peter and I with assistance from Ian and Lois Grant co-ordinated and delivered training in audiometry, earmould making, paediatric testing (VROA), hearing aid fitting and organizational management. Speech pathologist Tamara Jolly visited for three weeks in November 2004 to run basic speech pathology training for the teaching staff.

During our time in Lae, four new clinical staff were recruited and trained. The facilities improved and more equipment was obtained so that the new Hearing & Speech clinic was opened on the 5th of April 2005. The four enthusiastic, young men brought on board to the MSERC staff are now responsible for the ongoing running of the clinic. There are plans to establish Rural Outposts from this base.

The next step is to put together a follow-up plan for further clinical development as well as training for further staff, including support staff.

Did you know?.....

- The EARS Inc website at www.earsinc.org is up and running thanks to our volunteers.
- EARS is keen to receive second hand hearing aids (Behind The Ear and Body aids) which are still in good working order, so that they can be refitted overseas. We also take hearing aids that appear dead but have useful parts (so as long as the dog nibbled it and didn't eat it - we'll take it).
- Donations of second hand equipment (audiometers, tympanometers, insertion gain machines, ultrasonic cleaners, otoscopes etc.) in good working order is also most highly valued and appreciated.

India Clinic Branches Out to Other areas.

Rebecca Bartlett

The clinic in Kakinada India was established in 1999. Four full time pastors run the clinic 3 days a month. They test hearing and take impressions for hearing aids. Results are then sent to EARS in Australia via email. Recommendations are then made re: any medical advice, intervention etc that is required. Hearing aids are then calibrated specifically by a volunteer audiologist in Australia and they are sent over with others travelling to India. The most recent delivery was in January consisting of 25 Behind The Ear hearing aids. The pastors are really enjoying the satisfaction of helping so many with hearing difficulties.

They have recently started taking things further afield and every 3 months are running audiology camps in other parts of the country. During the most recent one 146 people were tested with 74 requiring hearing aids. This has seen a significant increase in demand and as such second hand Behind The Ear aids are urgently needed. Please send any hearing aids to EARS.

Where is the Dominican Republic ?

Donna Carkeet



Area-48,442 sq km
Population-8,716,000
Capital-Santo Domingo
Languages-Spanish
Literacy-85%
Life Expectancy-69
Currency-Dominican peso
GDP Per Capita- US\$6,300
Economy - Industry:
 tourism, sugar processing,
 ferronickel and gold mining,
 textiles.

One of the most common questions asked about our project in the Dominican Republic is not about the numbers of patients we have helped or if the clinic is managing despite the economic problems of the country. The most common question is simply where is it? It is on the same island as Haiti, near Cuba in the Caribbean.

Our project there began in 2001 after a meeting between two men of vision, David Pither and Willy Hunter. When they met we should have known something was going to happen. This was not to be a small once off visit.

David went to the Dominican in 2001 and began training two young men, Joel and Edison. When I first heard of the Dominican Republic I had never been overseas with EARS before. However after my first discussion with David about this project I knew that I was to be involved. I went there in 2002 for about six months in total and was there again twice in 2004.

Our project in the DR has three main parts:

1. Clinic at Dr Elias Santana Hospital in Los Alcarrizos: The pizzeria next door to the hospital has this year been acquired by the hospital as the location for us to develop a clinic. The space has been renovated to allow us two rooms and a waiting room. In future this building will be able to have several offices, three sound proof booths and a VROA facility.



2. University training program: This is now written and is currently undergoing the process of approval by the ministry for education in the Dominican. We obviously had many discussions in regard to how to proceed with a course in this country. A partnership with a local University was seen as the best way. We have written both a two year audiometric technicians course and a four year audiology bachelors degree.

I will be coordinating the course and teaching on it. In order to do this as well as overseeing the training of the students, I will be moving to the Dominican Republic for at least four years. This is a

real step of faith for me as I am not entirely sure where the funding for this project will come from. Please pray for me as I plan and prepare for this adventure that I feel so ill-equipped for in many ways. Volunteer guest lecturers from countries including Australia, NZ, USA and the UK have been recruited, however more volunteers are needed.

3. Ear mould laboratory and hearing aid manufacturing: The hospital agreed to employ another team member to focus on earmoulds. Miguel joined our team and already he is an asset. David Pither trained him in November to make shells for ITE's and assemble the hearing aids. Miguel was on a very steep learning curve but did fantastically well, considering hiccups with all the equipment etc.



Joel and Edison continue to amaze me with their resourcefulness and their ability to quickly grasp and put into practice what they learn. At present they are equipped for audiometry, tympanometry (with a manual tympanometer), insertion gain (until the probe mic broke) and hearing aid test box measurements (except now that probe cord is also broken).

We have a real need for reliable equipment especially once the University course begins. We have completed the process of filing a project submission such that contributions to this project are now tax deductible. Tax deductible donations should be made out to EARS Inc overseas aid fund.



Volunteers Wanted... **Find a job that's right for you!**

Administration/ Promotion

This is our biggest area of need within Australia. We need to be able to communicate better and in order to do that we need volunteers.

We are still blessed to have Jim Bambery assisting us. But there is a need for someone who can assist with some of the tasks such as editing a regular newsletter and assisting with record keeping and assistance in consolidating our membership details.

Hearing Aid Technicians

With all circuit board components now sourced and purchased for the production of around 200 solar powered body level hearing aid, we require volunteers with soldering skills to solder 'insert by hand' components in to the circuit board.

We also require technicians willing to travel and teach in many of our current projects. So if you are planning a holiday abroad, why not volunteer a week or two in another country? It is a great way to get to know another culture.

Solicitor

The EARS Inc constitution needs to be fully reviewed by an appropriately qualified legal representative; with any amendments from previous board meetings and AGM's officially adopted, written up and presented.

Project Officer

To comply with Commonwealth Government

overseas aid guidelines, as part of the wider group of Christian organisations known as Co-Aid, we need to submit project planning proposals for each separate site that EARS Inc volunteers support. If you know what a log frame is or if you have experience in project proposal, then maybe this is just the retirement project or hobby you were after!! We have only got one project through the process so far, but this was definitely slowed down by our inexperience and lack of time.

Audiologists/Audiometrists

As usual there are dozens of locations requiring an Audiologist or Audiometrist to support them in their hearing clinic or mould making facility. Further on-site training is vital, to ensure the skills of those already trained are maintained and improved upon. This is particularly important when diagnosing hearing loss in children.

Those listed below are just some of the opportunities available at this time.

- India - this project requires another training visit in order to ascertain that standards are being maintained.
- Dominican Republic - there is a need for guest lecturers for the audiometry course there. There will be ongoing opportunities for supervision and training as well as specialized lecturers.
- Papua New Guinea - ongoing training and project support for those trained this year in Lae. Further opportunities may also become available in Port Moresby and Madang.
- A few Pacific Islands near Australia such as the Solomon Islands, Kiribas & Vanuatu have also requested assistance and opportunities may be available this year.
- There are also opportunities in Africa.

To register interest as a volunteer please contact Judith Francis on 07 5502 9540 or at j.r.francis@bigpond.com.

Next edition:

- The Bali trip
- New's from the AGM
- Progress of the hearing aid
- The Dominican Republic update
- Membership news
- Volunteers wanted

EARS Inc – Membership

MY DETAILS:

Title: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode _____

Ph: () _____

Fax: () _____

Email: _____

- I would like to receive regular newsletters.
- I would like to be a prayer supporter.
- I would like to be a financial supporter of EARS Inc.

I PREFER TO GIVE BY:

cheque / money order
(please make payable to EARS Inc. or Ears inc. Overseas Aid fund for tax deductible donations)

Please debit my credit card:

Bankcard / Mastercard / Visa / Amex / Diners

Card Number:

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Expiry Date on the card: ____/____

Signature: _____

This payment / authorisation is for:

A single gift of \$ _____

A monthly payment of \$ _____