



Members of the Ujong Battee community looking over the *Letters to Aceh* book, sales of which helped raise for funds for their kindergarden.

JIS Cares-JIS Peduli Opens Aceh Kindergarden

Members of the JIS community had the privilege of representing our school when we traveled to Banda Aceh to witness and participate in the formal opening of the major post-tsunami JIS Cares/Peduli project - the Ujong Battee kindergarden in Banda Aceh.

This beautiful facility was designed and built by Kurt Behringer and Doug Skipper from the Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT) with the very generous support of Schlumberger Indonesia and the donations of children and adults from JIS and the wider community. Added to the solid foundation of funds raised from the book *Letters from Aceh*, the JIS Cares task

force saw this significant project through to its completion.

The kindergarden is serving more than 100 children who are living in a housing complex surrounding the school. More families have moved into these houses and the kindergarden has helped draw displaced families into their new homes.

The opening ceremony was full of color, traditional music and dances, smiles and stares and very warm expressions of *terima kasih*. We knew it was our charge to take these thanks back to our wider JIS community, yet there was also a strong sense that we were thanking the teachers, parents and children in the Ujong Battee kindergarden for the welcome that they gave us.

Later in the day we toured the USINDO school, the library of which is the second major educational project for JIS Care's in Banda Aceh. Fortunately, Project Coordinator Margaret Sullivan was on hand and she took great pride in sharing her vision for the school as we walked through the emerging campus facilities.

Quotes from the day reflect the emotions we all felt on behalf of the JIS community and all those that helped make the project happen.

I think the trip to Aceh strengthened my belief in the resilience of the human soul. Here were young children who only 20 months or so ago had gone through the most horrific event imaginable, perhaps losing family and friends in great numbers, and yet who could still laugh, dance, sing and play. To be able to delight in swinging on a swing or sliding down a slide, even when still surrounded by constant reminders of the devastation, reminds me of the importance of living in the moment, taking joy where it comes, and being thankful for the support of those around us.

Valerie Scane, School Council Chairperson

It was a privilege to visit Banda Aceh and celebrate the completion of a vision and dream: The opening of a new community kindergarten, the excitement of the children, the warmth of the adults and the deeply felt appreciation for the care and concern shown by the JIS community were overwhelming. The work being completed by USINDO on the new library is well underway and innovative. The concept of building a middle school within the walls of an Indonesian university and using the school as a 'lab concept' will have a profound affect on the local community as well as the educational process. The trip to Aceh was eye open-



Chris Dickson (center), a JIS teacher, lends a ceremonial hand to the laying of the foundation for the library with Arian Ardie ('79, in batik).

ing. To be in the location where waves wiped away all signs of human existence is sobering. To witness the community's efforts at rebuilding and recovery is not easy, yet offers hope for humanity. The courage that was displayed and the visible support given through a larger world community was inspiring and something I will never forget.



On the same beach that brought them so much devastation in December 2004, smiles can still be found on the faces of the Ujong Battee community

Helen Bendall Hughes, PIE teacher

At the kindergarten, it was rewarding to see that the school appeared to be the focal point of this new community. We were welcomed by a mass of curious and smiling faces which gave way to a strong feeling of friendship and community. It was wonderful to meet and exchange well wishes with the Acehnese people and the AMURT staff. A strong sense of celebra-

tion and hope for the future was felt.

Debra Wallace, PIE teacher

It is wonderful to see the completion of this project, from the original plans to the laying of the Foundation Stone to its opening and the smiles of the children and their parents who benefit from the school. It is great to know that the school has been funded by the efforts of children from around the world.

Arian Ardie, JIS Class of '79 and member of JIS Board of Governors.

It is so heartening to see something positive occurring in Banda Aceh, after what the people there had suffered some 20 months ago. And also nice to see JIS, an institution which is not exactly 'impoverished', helping those who are dearly and genuinely in need of assistance. As guests in this nation, we need to do all we can to acknowledge and help our Indonesian friends.

Chris Dickson, HS teacher.

We are plugging along, about half built and well along on the process of developing the actual school, planning how the building under construction will be used to teach and to modify teaching practices. It is an exciting time that could not have happened without your generosity and continuing interest. Many, many thanks to our donors and supporters in JIS

Margaret Sullivan, USINDO School Project Coordinator

Other events

On May 27, just prior to the end of the last school year, the Yogyakarta region was struck by a major earthquake. Once again we witnessed devastation and grief in our host country, this time closer to 'home': A significant number of individual donations for the first phase of immedi-

ate emergency relief (i.e. donations of money, foods, blankets, tents, shelters, clothing and medicinal supplies) were delivered by individual teachers and support staff in our community. Faced with this new challenge, the JIS Cares task force revised its mission to expand our assistance to the most recent victims in Central Java and this revision allows us to be poised for any future disasters should they occur. At that time Mt. Merapi looked ready to erupt!

Our focus remains on delivering assistance to children in disaster-affected areas and on the re-establishment of schools and educational facilities. The task force maintains the vision that the need for access to good education is a primary focus in the rehabilitation process. We are again looking to AMURT and to assist their educational projects in another partnership.

In mid-June and early July, a team of eight JIS classified staff and four Bluebird employees led by Pak Syaiful (High School Science aide) collected funds, clothes, food and drinks and building materials and made two excursions into the areas in around Yogya that had been affected by the quake. This time instead of books and educational materials, the JIS crew carried with them picks, shovels and hammers - practical tools to help the local people in the clean up and rebuilding processes.

No doubt you also aware of the tsunami that struck Pangandaran, West Java, on July 17.

Thanks to quick advice from JIS Alumni, Arian and Tina Ardie, I was alerted that a very reputable NGO (Yayasan IDEP) was very quickly in place there helping the victims and survivors immediately after the tsunami hit. On behalf of JIS Cares, I transferred Rp.10 million to the IDEP on July 19. This donation was directed to assist their on-the-ground emergency relief efforts, providing much needed shelter, food and medicinal supplies.



The Ujong Batee school is fast becoming a center of the community and is helping people make their adjustment to their new homes.

Ways forward

In our most recent JIS Cares meetings it was decided that we should continue to help sponsor professional development in our partner schools in Banda Aceh.

After a final disbursement of our pledges to USINDO we will convert two-thirds of the remaining funds in JIS Cares into two endowment/interest bearing funds, one for each of our sponsored projects in Aceh.

Under a contractual agreement between JIS Cares and each Yayasan we will then monitor the annual distribution of profits from these funds for up to two years. Interest and dividends drawn will be allocated specifically towards the purchase of books and educational materials and also to professional development at each school.

Funds that remain in our JIS Cares accounts will go toward a cooperative project with AMURT for the construction of another school in Yogyakarta. Donations to JIS Cares since June 2, 2006 will be allocated to this project.

Should you wish to help check the guidelines in "How to Give" below.

How to give:

- Rupiah donations can be made by electronic transfer or direct deposit to Panin Bank account: "JIS Peduli - JISCares" (Panin Bank, Pondok Indah Branch, Account #: 106.3.13577.7 (account holder Steven Money).
- US Dollar checks and credit card deposits by following the links on the JIS web site www.jisedu.org. **These donations are tax deductible.**
- Donations via the JIS Business Office. Cash or checks can be deposited, the latter to be made out to Jakarta International School with a note that the donation is for "JIS Cares". The account number is SKF BO 35261.

JIS Cares also sponsors JIS Project manager, Andrew Slatter and his assistant Ibu Leah, to regularly visit and advise the above mentioned USINDO project. According to Margaret Sullivan their presence and their advice has been invaluable.

Your attention and continued support for JIS Cares-JIS Peduli is much appreciated.

Steve Money

Chair, JIS Cares

Valerie Scane, Chris Dickson, Helen Hughes, Karen Bonthron, Lyndah Vartell, Debra Wallace, Arian Ardie