

## **Streetwise Asia - Heritage School Restoration Projects in the Philippines (in association with AusAID and Philippines Department of Education)**

---

Streetwise Asia is committed to improving the educational facilities of poor children in Asia. School communities are transformed when facilities are improved. The first project, the conservation of a traditional Gabaldon- type school building, was completed in Camiguin Island in 2010. The second project, the Tocdog Elementary School restoration project, also a Gabaldon-type school, (on Bohol Island in the Southern Philippines) has just been completed in November 2011. Both projects achieved the restoration of a heritage school building in very poor condition, including the provision of upgraded toilet facilities. For both projects, Streetwise has partnered with AusAid, and for a total of approx. A\$50,000 per project a school has been transformed. Bruce Dawbin, has volunteered architectural services for both projects and provided outstanding volunteer assistance on this project - without his dedication and perseverance this project would not have been undertaken. Streetwise Asia Coordinator, Liz Vines, is delighted that the Streetwise funding for both projects, from a variety of donation sources has saved important heritage school buildings and provided upgraded school facilities for a poor communities.



**Left** - The first project at Kuguita, on Camiguin Island completed 2010 **Other photos** - second project at Tocdog at Bohol, 2011.



Given the positive impact of these two projects, the Philippines Education Department is proposing a **third school building to be conserved again with Streetwise Asia and AusAID funding**. The school chosen is the Canayaon Primary School on the island of Bohol again a typical 5 classroom timber Gabaldon School built in 1932, which has been identified as being in poor condition, and requiring upgrading.



**Above** – Canayaon School, the proposed project for 2012



Above – Canayaon School interior views, the proposed project for 2012

### Fund Raising for *Streetwise Asia* Fund Philippines School Restoration project No 3 – 2012 - Sale of Christmas Cards for this Christmas 2011

Given the success of the Kuguita and Tocdog projects (see above), the *Streetwise Asia* fund has made a commitment to assist another school in the Philippines, to ensure that the momentum and enthusiasm of AusAID in this arena of assistance is not lost. Liz Vines has taken up the challenge to raise another \$8,000 to allow for a third project to be undertaken. Bruce Dawbin has once again volunteered to provide the documentation required, and some continuing involvement.

The **Xmas Card fund raising drive** is to raise the *Streetwise* contribution for this third School. A great start for this fund raising has been the recent receipt of a cheque from Australia ICOMOS of previous donations by ICOMOS members. It is hoped that the **Xmas card drive, to be circulated in the next week**, will raise the balance required. **These cards can be tax deductible** with receipts provided - given that they are donations to a registered charity - and the cards are personalised to pay for building elements – eg floor board, stump, window repair, desk repair. They make ideal gifts, and **all the money received goes into the school projects, without any administrative money taken out.** *(Please note that all required Tax Office auditing standards are followed by Streetwise through their umbrella fund organisation Australind, which allows for all donations to be tax deductible.)*

**Thanks to all those who have previously donated to this cause, and resulted in the transformation of two schools in the Philippines in poor communities. It is hoped that a third school can also be undertaken with your generosity!!**

**Note on the “Gabaldon Schools”** - these are now widely recognised in the Philippines for their heritage value as an important group of approximately 3000 school buildings erected during the American colonial period (1898 – 1946). Many are in a poor condition (or empty due to neglect) and are under appreciated for their potential resource as restored school buildings or adaptive reuse for other community uses. The Philippines Education Department has previously initiated a program to undertake maintenance work on the Gabaldon Schools, but with over 3,000 in existence, many are in poor condition or derelict and the task is overwhelming. The AusAID and *Streetwise* commitment has put funding possibilities on a new level. AusAID have indicated their interest in continuing their participation in the Gabaldon Restoration Program together with DepEd and the Heritage Conservation Society. It has been demonstrated that the cost of conserving and upgrading a heritage building can match the cost of a new classroom building of equivalent area. This conservation approach has huge potential. There is no comparison between a Gabaldon School, (with its high ceilings, timber windows and elegant detailing) and a new concrete and steel classroom building, but classroom provision is the primary consideration of AusAID and Philippines DepEd.

The two completed *Streetwise* projects have resulted in new and important partnerships being generated between *Streetwise*, AusAID, the Philippines Department of Education, Philippines ICOMOS and the Philippines Heritage Conservation Society all of whom have in some way been involved in the school projects.

In visiting other possible future schools for *Streetwise* support, both Liz Vines and Bruce Dawbin have been deeply affected by the lack of provisions for basic education. Classrooms with 40 – 50 children are common, and one typical primary school had 800 students, with one computer and no printer! We have so much that we take for granted in our Australian education system. Bruce has arranged on visits to Kuguita School, the first upgraded school, to donate second hand lap tops and phones, which have transformed the local teacher's capacity.



For more information on the Kuguita project, see the *Philippine Enquirer* article of 22 May:  
[http://lifestyle.inquirer.net/artsandbooks/artsandbooks/view/20100524-271665/Philippine-Australian cooperation restores Gabaldon-type school in Camiguin](http://lifestyle.inquirer.net/artsandbooks/artsandbooks/view/20100524-271665/Philippine-Australian%20cooperation%20restores%20Gabaldon-type%20school%20in%20Camiguin)

Or contact Liz Vines on [liz@mcdougallvines.com.au](mailto:liz@mcdougallvines.com.au) or 0419 816 525 if you are interested in further information or helping in any way with the *Streetwise* fund project.

**All donations can be made directly by sending a cheque to:  
Australind Children's Fund – Streetwise Asia  
RMD 95 Back Valley, via Victor Harbor, South Australia 5211.**

**Receipts are issued by Australind so that tax deductions can be made in the donor's tax returns.**