

### NEPAL EXPEDITION 2018 – NAMASTE : ‘HELLO’ IN NEPALI

On 19 June, our group of 6 students and 2 staff departed for Nepal and arrived in Kathmandu, the capital, in the late afternoon of the following day. We were immediately exposed to the hair-raising drivers and traffic in the city – so began our Nepal experience! At our hotel, we met with our local agent to talk about the programme. The drive to Pokhara, 250km west of Kathmandu, was an interesting 10 hour (!!) journey. From there we were transported to the start of our expedition. What an amazing experience this was. It took us through some of the most scenic parts of the Annapurna sanctuary. It was hot and humid with temperatures above 30°C and high humidity! On day 2, we climbed over 7000 stairs and gained 1300m in altitude to get to Ghorepani!



From here we summited Poonhill! Yes, it was monsoon time but we were blessed with perfect weather. It only rained during the evenings and we woke up to breath-taking scenery in the mornings! Our guides and cooks were absolutely amazing and we departed as friends and not so much as clients! Back in Pokhara after 4 days of hiking, we started to get ready for and to plan our service project - this being the World Challenge part of the trip. We managed some sightseeing in the afternoon, visiting Devi’s Falls, a Tibetan refugee camp and the World Peace Pagoda on a hill overlooking the town of Pokhara.

The service project was at a small school (nursery class up to Gr5), 3 hours’ drive outside Pokhara. Our group included the first white Westerners to visit the school and to undertake physical service work there. We had an amazing welcoming ceremony from almost the whole community when we arrived - it was really awesome. The girls painted a mural – our South African flag with typical aspects and depictions of our country incorporated into the colours of the flag. Their artistic talent was incredible (see picture below). The boys did some physical labour and built a fence to stop the soccer balls from going down the hill. The rocks used for the foundation had to be broken with a sledge hammer, and they mixed their own cement, planted poles and built the wall. The Headmaster also helped to dig holes. They were all amazed to see that foreigners can also work hard as they thought that we only ever did easy office jobs! Almost every evening people from the local village came to see us and to check if we were ok and safe etc... After 5 days of work it was very hard to say goodbye as we had bonded so well with the staff, the kids and the community. We had an even bigger farewell ceremony at which the Headmaster said we had arrived as strangers but we were leaving as family!!

The next morning we left for our white water rafting trip on the Trusuli River, which is some of the best white water paddling in Nepal! This day was also the first of the monsoon season that we experienced, with soft rain the whole day. Landslides were everywhere and traffic jams were the order of the day, but we still had an amazing time on the river with an even better time at our river camp afterwards.

On the last day we made our way back to Kathmandu for our final evening in Nepal and to do some last minute shopping.

What a life changing experience this was! Meeting wonderful people along the way and making new friends. Thank you to Elané, Heinrich, Hosea, Danica, Hannah, Reuben and Mr Fullard for being #bestgroupever! Hardik Dhanyabad!!

*Mr Neil Haarhoff*



#### Photo Captions :

Top left : Annapurna South (7219m) & Fishtail (6997m)

Top middle: The group at the summit of Poonhill - *Back L to R:* Dex - Second guide, Elané Maritz, Hosea Muleya, Mr Neil Haarhoff, Mr Tiaan Fullard, Tara Watson from World Challenge.

*Front L to R:* Santosh - Chief guide, Danica Altenroxel, Heinrich Maritz, Hannah Rosendorff, Reuben Middleton.

Top right : En route to Ghorepani

Left : The mural at the service project

Right : Bridge crossing



### STANFORD’S FOOTLOOSE MUSICAL PRODUCTION

During 2018 several Stanfordsians have been working extremely hard to bring to the stage their own adaptation of “Footloose the Musical”. The musical includes foot tapping songs like the famous “Footloose”, “Holding out for a hero” and “Let’s hear it for the boy” to name but a few. The musical tells the story of a real party animal from Chicago who ends up in a dead-end town, where music and dancing is simply forbidden by law. Will the teenagers figure out how to convince the stubborn Reverend that dancing is not a crime and that he should allow them to be what they so desperately want to be - normal singing and dancing teenagers?

Come and find out ..... it will be on stage in the *Barnyard on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2018*, so put this date in your diaries now!!

*Mr Michael Swann*