

Locals continue to help with hearing program

WHITSUNDAY residents, Lew and Sue Tuck have recently returned from Ladakh in India where they worked as part of a Himalayan Health and Hearing program formerly known as HearingNEPAL.

The couple from Whitsunday Hearing said it was during a personal study program at a monastery in Nepal in 2009 when Lew was approached to see if he could help a senior monk who had been taken to Kathmandu for a hearing assessment. It was reported that nothing could be done to improve the monk's hearing but Mr Tuck found that the audiogram hadn't been completed.

Lew, an audiometrist, conducted a bone conduction test and was able to improve his hearing.

Although his hearing wasn't perfect, the monk was able to hear bells, chanting and feel a part of the world again.

The program was then established after they became aware of the need for hearing services in the remote hill country regions of Nepal and has developed into a collaborative association with a primary goal to secure services for the future. The couple are the founders and driving force behind the Himalayan Health and Hearing program.



ALL SMILES: Children from the Ngari institute in Ladakh India with their donated teddy bears. Whitsunday Hearing audiometrist Lew Tuck is pictured third from the right in the back row.

them, they have treated over 5000 people and fitted more than 300 hearing devices.

A memorable moment during this trip was Mr and Mrs Tuck's when they delivered 40 teddy bears to Ngari Institute in Ladakh.

The teddy bears were collected from the Mackay region's Red

Cross foundation before it can receive its Red Cross badge.

Mr Tuck was able to redistribute 40 bears that were awaiting correction to the children at the Ngari Institute. He rejoiced for their happiness and is driven to work for the

"I'm so happy to be with a child that's karma has been good enough to get a teddy and I was happy to share that joy with the child," he said. Lew's next journey will be to Manaslu in Nepal next month where he will be accompanied by a doctor from Germany. For more information visit hearingnepal.org.

Royal Flying Doctors Service

cleared to land at

Whitsunday Coast

THE Whitsunday Regional Council has donated more than \$9000 in landing fees for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

Council announced on Wednesday has paid \$9160.75 in landing fees for the 2013-14 financial year. Mayor Jennifer Whitney said council appreciated RFDS's work and happily decided to donate their landing fees back to the organisation.

"RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation which is dedicated to providing vital health care to anyone in Queensland and provides care for people in remote locations who would otherwise not have access to health services," she said.

"Although the RFDS receives some Federal and State Government funding, they rely on fundraising initiatives and donations from individuals, organisations and the community to help raise \$8million each year to keep their aircraft flying and purchase vital medical equipment. As part of the 2014-15 council budget \$100,000 is being spent of resurfacing the Bowen aerodrome apron which will ensure smoother transfers for patients and a more efficient Royal Flying Doctors Service for the Bowen area."

Mayor Whitney thanked the RFDS on behalf of the Whitsunday region.