

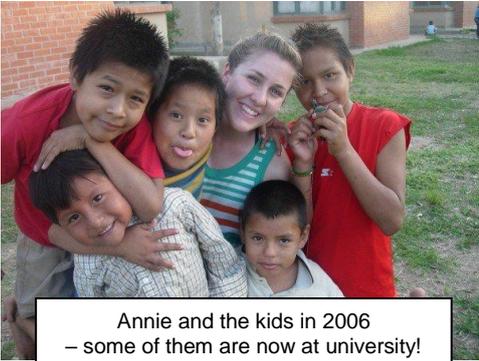


FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

I'm still working in East Ukraine, with child protection as an important part of my remit. However, as always the Internet means that I keep in close contact with Alalay and my work amongst the street children in Bolivia.



Annie and the kids in 2006
– some of them are now at university!

In June of this year the Harlequin Singers performed in a wonderful concert in Bristol and raised substantial funds to help the children – it was a truly great evening!

I mentioned in my last newsletter that 2016 is the 10th anniversary for my charity and that I would begin to describe some of the many things that have been achieved. I'm going to start the list in this newsletter, as it's far too long to include in just one end-of-year page! It is sometimes easy to forget how much has been achieved with your support - wherever practicable in ways that were self-sustaining and with nothing spent on administration.

As some of our earliest supporters may remember, in 2006 I volunteered at Alalay, in Santa Cruz, Bolivia for six months, at the end of which time I left with a determination to help the children to help themselves for many more years to come.

One of our first investments was in outdoor play equipment – there was none previously. It may seem a strange place to start our work but having some basic equipment opened up many opportunities for the kids. We also re-plumbed and re-drained much of the aldea (the out-of-town centre where the children live). Then Alalay hit a financial crisis (because of cutbacks in international funding) and we provided money towards food and other basic needs for a short period.



playground

Thanks to a healthy donation from a Bristol school we refurbished the Alalay bus and replaced the gearbox, meaning that our children could travel to the city for their vocational training courses and other activities.



Vegetable garden

We set up an extensive vegetable garden complete with irrigation system, so that the children could grow their own food and sell any surplus for extra income. Many of the children were anaemic when we first worked with Alalay – this has now been completely relegated to history! In difficult financial times we also paid the salaries of house mothers and fathers.

We bought five hundred chickens and established a very successful egg production unit, the children eating the eggs and selling the surplus locally.

There was an existing small bakery and also a textile unit. We funded new equipment and significantly increased the production from each of these. The children baked their own bread and cakes, and for a long period made their own school uniforms. They also started producing their first hand-made Christmas cards at that time and this has continued every year since.

We set up a fully equipped medical unit in a refurbished house on site and employed a local volunteer doctor to care for the children, staff and local villagers. Part of the house was then renovated and turned into basic but good accommodation for other volunteers from all over the world.

The chickens had been so successful that we decided to buy pigs and later on we also set up a quail farm of 3,000 birds and were able to sell surplus eggs and birds to raise further income. Each of these projects proved less profitable in the end than planned but we learned quickly and worked together with Alalay to solve any unforeseen challenges.



Medical unit

To be continued...!

Annie Syrett, Eastern Ukraine – July 2016

www.alalay.co.uk