



Le Don du Choeur

Chœur d'Enfants des Écoles Privées Genevoises



HIGHLIGHTS

Don du Choeur marks 15th anniversary

- Birthday party in Geneva
- 15 years of giving children a decent start at school

Madagascar

- Training sessions for teachers underway
- School canteen now provisioned by World Food Programme
- Award for Don du Choeur

Cambodia

- Visit by "Pas du Choeur" hiking duo
- Former Ta Pen students now studying hard

Don du Choeur Committee

Isabelle Chatel
President

Jean-Philippe Bernard
Multimedia communication

Jean-Claude Brès
Project leader, Kenya

Claude-Alain Burky
Project leader, Madagascar

Michel Firmenich
Project leader, Cambodia

Catherine Firmenich
Schools liaison

Laurence Parent
Treasurer

Sue Power
Events

A birthday party worthy of the occasion

Much has been achieved in 15 years, more challenges lie ahead

Around 125 friends of Don du Choeur gathered at the Halles de l'Île restaurant in Geneva on 15 May to celebrate the association's 15th anniversary.

A short documentary by committee member Jean-Philippe Bernard poetically summed up what the association has achieved in its short lifetime – 2,500 children have been helped into school for the first time thanks to funds raised at five major concerts in Geneva, and from donations and other activities.

Don du Choeur president Isabelle Chatel – flanked by the association's founder Pamela Walsh OBE – praised the work of the many donors, volunteers and partners, the private schools of Geneva and their choristers, and all who have made the achievements possible. She urged those present to

continue their support for ongoing and future projects.

After the official part of the ceremony, the evening was livened up by jazz from The Nyon Lights and there was a moment of pure emotion as a group of young children from the Geneva English School sang Don du Choeur's "anthem": Les Enfants du Monde.

The tombola, whose fabulous gifts included three bicycles, and the sale of handicrafts raised CHF 4,415. This means that Ta Pen graduates for the next three years will have new bicycles to get to their college or their apprenticeship locations.

On their behalf, and on behalf of all the communities whose lives have been touched by Don du Choeur, a huge THANK YOU! – and well done!



15 candles for Don du Choeur and partners



All that jazz – brilliant sounds from the Nyon Lights



An evening to celebrate 15 years of joint efforts



Hats off to the committee members (not all present), who work so tirelessly for the children

15 years of hard work and progress

Children in four continents have benefitted from the "spirit of Geneva"

2004 – Tambov, Russia

Complete renovation over eight years of a dilapidated orphanage sheltering 200 children suffering from TB. The roof, heating, dormitories, toilets and showers – all were replaced and upgraded. The project is now supported by local donors.

2006 – Chennai, India

Construction of a special needs school for 80 handicapped children, with a centre for job training. The students produce hand-made items to raise money. Today the school is financially autonomous.

2009 – Ta Pen, Cambodia

Construction of a rural primary school serving 250 children of extremely poor families. Today its 550 students have the possibility of going on to secondary education or apprenticeships.

2013 – Teso, Kenya

Renovation of two run-down rural state schools and construction of a special needs school for handicapped children; 600 children have benefitted from the project, which is now managed by a local association.

2016 – Andohasatra, Madagascar

Construction of a school for infants and primary level children, digging of wells and construction of a kitchen and refectory to provide daily meals to 360 children in this semi-arid, dirt-poor region in the south of the island.

2019 - Latin America will be Don du Choeur's next destination! More details in September on www.don-du-choeur.ch

Don du Choeur Association
2, rue Munier-Romilly
CH - 1206 Genève

+41 79 652 90 93
info@don-du-choeur.ch
www.don-du-choeur.ch

THE CAMBODIA PROJECT

"Pas du Choeur" hikers in the footsteps of former Ta Pen students

Anne-Claire and Vincent – who raised CHF 53,000 by hiking 800 kilometres in 45 days in 2017 – visited Ta Pen in March with friends, complete with "Pas du Choeur" T-shirts and pennants. They wanted to meet the 26 former students who are now in higher education or following apprenticeships, thanks to their fundraising effort.

They first spent a day with Ta Pen's 550 pupils and teachers, all prepared for their arrival. After a visit to the primary and secondary schools, they heard presentations by the pupils on activities in the fields of health and hygiene, learning to read, IT and English.

The climax to the visit came at the end of the day when the 13 students now at Khnar

Sanday college made a surprise visit to Ta Pen – an unforgettable moment for everyone. The following days were equally intense with meetings with former students now at the Institut National Polytechnique d'Angkor (technical training school), the Sala Bai hotel school and the Haven restaurant school.

As they left Anne-Claire and Vincent said: "We felt very emotional meeting 'our' students at Ta Pen. We realised just how much their education is the key to their future. They are very aware of the opportunity they have to continue their education and they have all really grasped this opportunity." It is to be hoped that their education and training will lead them to a real career.

[See reportage on \[instagram@lepasduchoeur.ch\]\(https://www.instagram.com/lepasduchoeur.ch\)](#)



Anne-Claire and Vincent deserved to have a photo of their protégés



Proud to be with former students who are now at college



Hesitant exchanges in English with Anne-Claire outside Ta Pen school

THE MADAGASCAR PROJECT

Certificate of Recognition for Don du Choeur



The Ministry of Education gives a Certificate of Recognition to our partner ToroHay, representing Don du Choeur

Don du Choeur has received an award from Madagascar's Ministry of Education for the building of the state school at Andohasatra-Betioky. The award is also a reflection on the contribution of Geneva's private schools. The project was a major challenge in this region of south Madagascar, one of the poorest and most remote in the country.

The venture would have been impossible without the astute advice and regular follow-up by SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar and the ToroHay bureau, with their perfect understanding of, and respect for, local customs.

Since day 1, the school was placed under the control of the local authorities and followed closely by the Ministry of Education. The commitment shown by Fokontany, the village

head, and the families of Andohasatra is the key to its success. Each tribe in the village was consulted and involved in the preparation of meals for the children. They also managed, despite great difficulty, to club together to pay the salaries of additional teachers. Today, of the 13 teachers at the school, four are paid by the families.

The 360 children at Andohasatra seem to have taken to their school with pride. Attendance is increasingly regular, in particular thanks to the World Food Programme which provides them each one meal a day – an essential factor in getting children to school in areas like this. Don du Choeur, which paid the school's running costs during the 2016-17 school year, is now financing training courses for the teachers.

Your donation will help us help these communities

Don du Choeur

Swiss non-profit association, tax-deductible since 2008

2, rue Munier-Romilly - 1206 Genève
www.don-du-choeur.ch
info@don-du-choeur.ch

UBS SA. Case postale - CH 1211 Genève 2
IBAN: CH 10 0024 0240 6036 14M1P

CCP: 17-540730-8



Children at Andohasatra are proud to wear their school colours

PARTNERS

Geneva Association of Private Schools, Brolliet SA, Fondation Coromandel, Fondation Covalence, SIG, Vaovy La Fondation.