



What's new for our 35th anniversary ?

MIBLOU HELPS DILIP PATRO'S QUEST FOR A NEW PARAPLEGIC REHAB CENTRE IN VISAKHAPTNAM

It was 1997, a young Mr Dilip Patro, a Software Engineer, was on his way to a new job and life in the United States, when a catastrophic road accident almost killed him and dashed all his future hopes and dreams. Very badly injured and left abandoned for four black hours, it was only at dawn the Police rescued him and finally took him to hospital.

But because of this delay and mishandling he suffered non-reversible spinal cord injury that has left him a wheelchair bound quadriplegic.

Dilip went from one hospital to another looking for meagre advice and support. This got him thinking about how wonderful it would be if only there was a place people in the same predicament as his, could get help. Thus not endure the nightmare he was going through.



Dormitory in rehabilitation centre.

His quest was born.

Some years later he got to know about Mobility India, Bangalore and their work. He learned there how to deal with his daily activities. This experience convinced Dilip that his old dream of a Rehabilitation and Orthopaedic Centre was attainable.

To do so he gathered around him a dedicated team and started his long battle to get support and funding to create a centre in his home town of Visakhapatnam. It wasn't easy.

With a limited budget and building materials donated or at reduced prices he surprised everyone.

His building came up quickly, impressing all with his courage, tenacity and commitment.

Dilip Patro was at last the Founder of his centre 'The Ability People' (TAP). But the building was just that...empty. That's when our paths crossed!

MIBLOU got to know about this extraordinary person and started to support Dilip in his quest by supplying the machinery and hand tools for the now fully equipped Orthopedic workshop. The adjacent Physio room now has all kinds of exercise material, plus its dormitory.

Three young people, sent by Dilip to Mobility Training Centre, to become Ortho-technician and Rehab-therapist will soon staff the newly inaugurated centre. That was on 3rd December 2015, International Disability Day and future patients just can't wait for Dilip's 'quest' to open

Dilip, dormitory inauguration.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

"People"

'People who need people are the luckiest people in the world.'

Barbra Streisand became an international star over fifty years ago thanks to this lovely song . So why did the words keep trotting around my brain before writing to you in our special celebration issue?

I think it's because MIBLOU is mainly to do with – **people**. Or maybe because we at MIBLOU are the luckiest people in the world!

Obviously then my message to-day must and will only be about –**people**.

Simply because **MIBLOU needs people. People like YOU!**

You are the **people** we needed. To give us the support and belief in us that enabled us to accomplish everything we attempted during these past 35 years. Many of you have been with us that long!

Believe me when I say **we still need you!** We also needed...

People like **Gautam Chaudhury** a young Indian physiotherapist who I met in Kolkata so long ago who introduced us to CBR, his brainchild. And who we helped establish his dream, SANCHAR now in their 30th year. To-day run by his wife **Tulika Das**. Gautam battles daily with his health and to our joy, is still active.

People like **Chapal Khasnabis** another young Indian who had a dream to open a Orthopedic Training Centre for young Indians in Bangalore. Mobility India who just celebrated 20 years of excellent service to fellow disabled students.

Also **people** like **Albina Shankar** Director, carrying on the wonderful work since Chapal moved to the WHO, Geneva where he has taken CBR Worldwide!

People like **Sudha Kaul, Tessa Hamblin and Reena Senn** at Spastics Society (IICP) Kolkata who have worked miracles to push ever forward their help to challenged children and young adults. And tripled the size of their school-centre and workload.

Now people closer to home ...

People like my late wife **Jo Millar** our Vice President who helped me start MIBLOU from the very beginning. She was involved in much initial work in south India setting up our DayCare centres. Plus, over the years, opening new projects while regularly visiting our partners around India.



Brian Millar, site manager for MIBLOU ! 1982

People like **Daisy Mottier** for over ten years our Chief Executive. Thanks to her knowledge of India and hands-on work with disabled people she took MIBLOU onto higher ground. She changed our perceptions on child welfare. Thanks to her foresight, enthusiasm and drive we became the champions of Indian children without a voice. Those millions of hidden disabled children. She was responsible for setting up and helping many welfare centres for these young people.

People like **Marika Millar** our new Vice-President who before that our Executive Secretary continuing Daisy's work for over 20 years. During that time she has found and assisted many dozens of local worthwhile projects. All involving physically challenged children and young adults....even women in distress. You have most likely read about them as over the past 30 years Marika has also been editing your MIBLOU Info!

People like....

MIBLOU Committee members and all those I don't have the space to mention who have given of their time, support and friendship for 35 years.

Finally...speaking for the tens of thousands of **people** who's lives have been touched by MIBLOU.



Brian & Jo Millar 1990

They doubtless feel they **'are the luckiest people in the world !'**

Thanks to all you people.
Brian.J.Millar
Founder & President
MIBLOU

MESSAGE FROM OUR PARTNERS

MIBLOU - A RAY OF HOPE FOR - GASS

One day of 2002 GASS once met a friend named Marika from MIBLOU, she was silent, calm, slow, courageous, very intelligent, cerebral and spiritual in a very non-religious sense, a combination of all of these attributes so to say.

Did the angels intervene to bring GASS and MIBLOU together?

Perhaps it was written in the stars... She gave something of herself to us and very generously indeed! What we tasted was nectar, the nectar of her love, that bit that was reserved for GASS. Marika's charm, dynamicity and philosophical calmness were assets in themselves. These were very special gifts.

Working in rather unconventional ways was also possible as MIBLOU taught all of us at GASS but we had to complement unconventional work with conventional work too, such being the nature of our developmental work frame.

MIBLOU had a commitment to end the suffering of the persons with disability

And the language needed to be a language of love. In the gentle kindness of Marika's eyes GASS saw a new friendship with MIBLOU that was to be lodged forever in inextricable way. That would transform the lives of the beneficiaries and residents of GASS forever. It was one of those contacts that were simply meant to last forever. We were taught ways, with MIBLOU'S financial and technical support, to run our home for the people with severe disability.

MIBLOU rejoiced over every step to success that GASS took, every move we made to enhance our work for GASS was shared with MIBLOU like children sharing a secret with an elder sister. A whole new world opened out to all of us. For both the organizations had experienced the joy of giving and sharing. **MIBLOU was like a family member and enjoyed and supported the growth and achievements of children in the Partho Home, a hostel that we ran at GASS.** Marika of MIBLOU understood their day-to-day problems, and her charity did not stop at that. She supported the 15 lady senior citizens too and had already done a lot in terms of understanding ground realities which was why she supported the construction of the GASS building, provided us with kitchen items, cots and boilers. Even sponsored our inmates' a trip to Australia to participate in the Special Asia Pacific Disabled Olympics competition. The inmates awarded came back with gold medals. They were the pride of the nation. Nothing could break their spirits, although they were from the poorest among the poor families, thanks to our friend. Marika of MIBLOU believed in community based rehabilitation via which she reached out to 3400 marginalized PwDs very effectively. And in doing so she effectively saved the lives of 200 underprivileged children with severe disability from GASS whereby she touched upon all aspects of their growth in terms of Daily Living Skills, sports, education, health, mobility, social relationships and skill,

All of us including the children were touched by her loving and enterprising ways. She personified adaption to the third world to humanity? MIBLOU reflected simple living but high thinking and GASS resolved to walk the path of love and care for the persons with disability and other marginalized populations. MIBLOU and GASS could reach out to the whole world as part of a common mission.

By pulsing on together despite all obstacles and forever growing in love for each other and for the disability sector we know MIBLOU and GASS will show the world what can be done via consecrated, dedicated work and more importantly immersing each other in the power of now - in mindfulness, in peace and strength and gentle resilience plus hard work!!!

Together both our organizations and many more can change the world.

All of us from GASS Love You MIBLOU and Marika!!!!

A GLANCE AT OUR PROGRAMMES

The sponsorship continue, Your sponsorships happily continue, the children are growing well, their health is getting better, and the parents are benefiting from their positive evolution. Also thanks to good coaching from all our teams.

Sponsorships for professional training:



The APD students

People with disabilities are sponsored and benefit from a professional training that can lead them to a good job.

Their lives now change, and they can live their life with dignity, support themselves and their family.

« **The Jo Millar award** » The 'Jo Millar Award' goes to Amala, 29 years old, from Taiz in Yemen, a country in the war zone. This student came from a family of 10 children where their father died young. After her studies, she worked as receptionist of an orthopaedic workshop. Seeing women crying because they did not want a man to take measures for their appliances, she decided to become an ortho-technician.

Coming to India and learning English was her first challenge. Then during her studies at Mobility India she suffered from various health problem.

But after 3 years of determined hard work Amala finished her studies.

It is for these reasons she was declared the 2015 winner of the ' Jo Millar Award '.

BCT - Visakhapatnam.

After the cyclone Hudhud, it took 8 month for BCT to clean all the mess, uprooted trees, and get their buildings back in shape. But most important : look to the future.

To help out, MIBLOU offered financial support for much needed repairs to the roof of the physiotherapy building.

All is now 'business as usual'. With patients

more than happy to return for their exercises.



The physiotherapy room

The latrines of Chamrajanagar.

This year the construction of latrines was slowed down somewhat, due to endless discussions with local governments concerning the extra funding needed. Finally all got sorted out...and MIBLOU is proud to announce that now we've constructed **500 latrines.** Our partner, Mobility India, is going to make a study on the impact latrines have on the health and lives of the local rural community. We hope that our next step will be a workshop with other NGO partners to teach them our tried and trusted methods and share with them our vast experience over all these years. The objective: convince them all of the many obvious benefits of offering latrines. We wish to thank MIBLOU sponsors ' Salon de la Bougie Geneva' and 'The Saturnales' for their great support in our project.

Accessible toilets in schools for disabled children are very rare. It discourages so many girls from continuing their studies.

To make Chamrajanagar's local government understand the problem and the necessity of accessible W.C's in their schools, MIBLOU finances a new accessible models. Lets hope the message gets through!



1st brick cemented !



Accessible toilets.

MIBLOU... 35 YEARS OF HISTORY

At the start of it, a young anglo-swiss couple:

Brian & Jo[†] Millar.

Unlimited love and respect for children everywhere.

They had four «home made» children :

Marika, Michel, Martin and Melany.

Then decided to adopt 6 more.

All orphans, all from India. Mina. Bablou, Mouni, Mitsi, Joseph and Savita[†].

Now they have 10 grand children and a great grand daughter too!

Immediately on return of their first trip to India Jo & Brian decided they must try to help its children. MIBLOU was born out of the name of their first adopted **M**ina and **B**abloU.

First 50 then 500 and now for 35 years tens of thousands of thousands of children have been looked after, nourished, had medical care, orthotics, physiotherapie, education and vocational training.

These children are destitute, untouchables, from rural or urbain slum areas living with their downtrodden families. In 1994, when Brian & Jo retired, their eldest daughter Marika became Executive Director supervising a small committee of voluntary workers.

MIBLOU is a Non Governmental Organisation and assists many local organisations all over India with expertise and financial support. All fighting for the respect of the physical and mentally disabled children, to avoid parents abandoning their offspring. Worse, a child dying due to lack of assistance.

Each partner organisation uses locally employed Indian directors and personal, and is constantly in touch with MIBLOU-Geneva, thanks to today's communication systems.

MIBLOU is an officially recognised charity in Switzerland and India.

En 2015 the branch « MIBLOU-France » has been closed down.

YOUR DONATIONS

Few examples :

100.- construction of a latrine

100.- cost of a mobility aid

365.- sponsor a disabled child

480.- a year training for a disabled teenager

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PARTNERS SPASTIC SOCIETY DE KOLKATA, IICP

One day of 1992, we had a phone call from a lady, Daisy Mottier and it was the beginning of a 22 year old relationship and friendship with MIBLOU.

She asked us if we had any project in mind and we told her about our training programmes which were conducted in collaboration with one of Kolkata's prestigious universities. These programmes included a B.Ed. course in special education, courses for doctors and courses for grass root community workers. However, we had no proper training rooms or modern equipment to train with. Within a short time this was rectified. **With MIBLOU's support we had three purpose built course rooms fitted with furniture and teaching aids, and some office space.**



Jo, Sudha and
Tessa from IICP
and Brian in 1993

We could not believe our luck! Jo and Brian Millar came to visit us during this time and as we went round the building Brian asked me if we had a hydrotherapy pool as he knew it was very beneficial for children and adults with disabilities. I told him that was a distant pipe dream, but not for the Millars! **Brian's immediate response was that MIBLOU would support this project,** and now for nearly 20 years our children and

adults have been enjoying the solar heated pool. The foundation stone was laid by Marika in 1996.

Marika was a regular visitor and we had told her about our next dream to have facilities for respite services. **As ever MIBLOU was quick to respond and within a short time we had three wonderful flats built and equipped for comfortable and homely respite stays.** Over the years we have been able to accommodate many of our service users, when there has been a crisis at home, when parents have gone on well-earned holidays and when there has been illness in the family. We also run week long holiday camps three times a year, which are very popular with both children and adults who have a week of fun and outings. The flats are also used for what we term 'Independence Stays' where young people are given the chance to hone their domestic skills and increase their independence.

In 2004 we had just completed a project funded by the British government to work in partnership with organisations working in Kolkata slums giving the community workers training and well as direct intervention for families with children with disabilities. We saw so much need in this area that we did not want to stop. **Once more Marika and MIBLOU stepped in to help, initially funding the project for three years. When this time was up MIBLOU continued to fund the project and it continues today with MIBLOU's support.** Initially there were three community organisations we were working with in small pockets of Kolkata. Since then, over the years we have worked with nine organisations. The first year of the project the IICP staff gave services to 29 people with disabilities. Last year that number was 165, and over the years over 1100 families in 89 slums have received direct services from our staff. Most importantly coupled with this the staff have conducted training programmes for community workers and parents of children with disabilities.

Over 1600 community workers have been trained to carry out intervention programmes independently. There have also been regular community awareness meetings conducted by members of IICP's disability activists group which has resulted in children with disabilities being admitted in mainstream schools and attitudinal changes in the community.

MIBLOU has not just been funding our projects but have been closely involved and a valuable guide. Every time Marika comes to Kolkata she visits the sites where our staff are working. It was encouragement from Marika which made us approach new organisations to increase our area of work. We can truly say that IICP has grown up together with MIBLOU by its side and we could not have done this, without them.