

Husband, Jim Heffron, our three teenage daughters and I traveled to Nepal in the winter of 1999 to visit and trek with long time Nepal resident friends, Mike Gill and Barbara Butterworth and another family. On our trek to some remote towns we were so impressed by the resilient women and ebullient children. Most of the working age men were working abroad, and the children expressed especial delight at seeing “dad” aged men. I have a treasured photo of one child who leapt on Jim’s back!

Interested in helping the Nepalis succeed, we began contributing annually to two organizations Mike and Barbara brought to our attention. One of the NGOs was Educate the Children, and we have been enthusiastic donors for over two decades. It’s been pure joy to know how much good is being done on a small budget that is so intelligently targeted at solvable problems. Over the years we have received many, many letters from school children expressing gratitude in their beautiful handwriting.

When ETC organized a Nepal trip in Spring 2023, the big draw for me was to see ETC’s work in person. When we arrived, we had several meetings with staff including one honoring the long-time director upon her retirement and another where young field workers spoke about their endeavors. After these briefings, we spent a day in small groups touring various projects — women’s association meetings, schools, kitchen gardens, agricultural projects and more. Everyone we met was so welcoming, and it was simply one of the most moving days ever. Meeting a young woman who received her early education because of the work of ETC and was now a scholarship student in higher education (engineering) in Kathmandu was a highlight. She showed so much poise and gratitude, and it must have required so much courage to blaze her own path!

I was also moved by the dedication of field workers and teachers and ETC’s administrators.

Thank you ETC for providing us the opportunity to be a small part of your amazing operation.

Barbara Michelson