

Dokar Story

After reading the story about 80 year old dokar driver I Nengah Purna who was trying to eke out a living with his humble dokar on Jalan Gajah Mada in downtown Denpasar I was spurred into action.

A dokar is a traditional Bali taxi, a horse drawn carriage. A driver since 1963, Nengah had seen his livelihood almost decimated with the recent advent of companies such as Go Jek, the cheap motorbike taxi service. From a high of around 10 passengers a day, dokars in Denpasar now struggle to get even 1 passenger. Most make less than 50,000rp (\$5aus) a day. The 8 remaining drivers, all Balinese unlike many Kuta dokars who come from Java, are in their 80's and with their demise the days of the dokar will end as there are no young people working in the industry & ready to take over the reins in Denpasar.



So as a young entrepreneur who ran a fairy house birthday party business in Australia and is the published author of a childrens craft book *How To Make Fairy Houses*, I did not want to see an elderly Balinese man who worked so hard and who cared so much for his horse, suffer.

In Bali with my mum Cherrell, a volunteer with the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program funded by the Australian Government, I felt I had to do something to assist Nengah and his horse.

Not able to generate an income during my time in Bali I turned my efforts instead to using the magic of my fairy houses to help change the lives of others.

During my previous school holidays I approached local Sanur restaurant, The Glass House, and asked if they would support my efforts to raise money for the dokar and his horse. Supported by owner Elizabeth Travers, my fairy house class raised 3.6 milion rp (\$360 aus).



Half, 1.8 million rp was been donated to Bali Animal Welfare Association (BAWA) Bali's animal rescue organisation who are now providing vet services to all the Denpasar horses and half went to Nengah the dokar driver.

But finding Nengah proved to be a challenge. A trip to the Denpasar market with BAWA on the weekend, where he plied his trade, failed to locate him. Not wanting to give up I again called on the assistance of BAWA to track him down.

It transpired that Nengah and his horse were both sick and had not been able to work for some weeks. Meeting with BAWA staff, I then travelled down narrow laneways, sought directions from local banjar head men,



travelled across rough terrain and finally entered an overgrown path amongst the banana trees that lead to a tiny plot in downtown Denpasar where Nengahs horse was peacefully grazing.



With his time outdoors ending for the day I helped Nengah move his horse back to his pen, a tiny horse house amongst the vegetable fields and banana trees that resembled of all things an enchanted fairy house one might stumble across in a forest.



Seeing first hand that the horse was so well cared for & with BAWA's approval I donated to Nengah the 1.8 million rp. The old man was close to tears as he accepted my money.



I think this is one of the best things I have ever done. To meet a person and to know that I have been able to make a real difference to his life and the life of his horse is something pretty special. It's something I never expected when I first came to Bali, that my fairy houses could be used to make such a difference. I will never forget Nengah and his horse.



If you love animals and Bali and would like to donate to BAWA please go to www.bawabali.com/donate-to-bawa/