

CHIT CHAT OCT 2009

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Building Futures for Children

Through most of 2009 the pound sterling has been weak and we have been very cautious, knowing that the running costs of our two homes would be increased by 15% on top of Indian inflation. The only capital expenditure approved was a major overhaul for Babu's 9 year-old Jeep which broke down and had to go to the Toyota dealer at Guntur for a long spell in dock. This caused considerable hardship. We would have liked to buy a new vehicle but we felt our reserves had to be maintained to meet the increased food costs.



Bore hole and pipe trench



We also had to complete the 2-year-long water project. A 35,000 litre brick-built water tank, twice the size of the old cracked one, was erected 7 metres above the boys' toilet block, finished last year, a new borehole sunk, and a pump purchased. Then the pipes to gravity-feed the water 150 metres round the campus had to be installed. On sensible health and safety grounds the 4" main was buried safely underground, out of the sun, a major operation. The heat in summer has been up to 46 degrees Centigrade. We are optimistic that all showers on the site will now work!



New admissions this year were kept to 30. We would have liked to increase our numbers, but this is not the time. The success of our school, much helped by Stuart and Claire Brown, has meant more 16 year-olds going on to College, to Polytechnics and nursing training. Visiting trustees and friends from the teaching profession have often wondered whether the strict sex segregation in our homes made it



difficult to adapt to life outside, and wondered how the older children got on when they left the homes.

It is a great credit to Pauline Stanton-Saringer, the trustee overseeing our "Safeguarding Children" policy, that her relationship with Rani has developed so well that we are regularly informed of any difficulties. This year ten girls and one boy who have been escorted home for consultation with parents or grandparents. Some did not come back.

Providing oversight of students once they are studying and often lodging away from the home is impossible, but Babu, Hepsy and Rani have always felt *in loco parentis*. We feel any helpful advice needs to come from within their own culture. Orphans without relatives pose a special problem

We are conscious of the fact that the home at Nidamarru does not get this sort of input. We spent a whole day there playing games with the children. The site always looks well cared for and the children unfailingly cheerful and well mannered. They would love to have a DVD player and TV.

We are sometimes asked what our children get up to in the holidays? This summer one of our girls called Anusha, who is 17 and at college, went home to her Mum and was sent to work in the fields with 18 other members of her extended family. This is normal routine and brings in about 70p per person a day, a useful contribution to the domestic budget.

In this instance they had to go 7 miles to a farm to harvest red chilli. There was no bus so they hired an "auto" (3-wheeled minicab with 2-stroke engine designed for 2 small adults and 2 tiny children). When carrying 20 people (how?!) the brakes, unsurprisingly, are not effective.

They had a smash and were all injured, one fatally. Anusha had a nasty head wound; her aunt fractured her hip. They were all taken off to Guntur General Hospital (ill-equipped and depressing)

Anusha was sent home with 12 stitches in her head to be looked after by an unregistered medical practitioner. An infection soon developed which was only found when she returned to Bapatla to retake an exam subject she had failed. Babu had her treated privately. She and her mother stayed with them for while to recuperate.

Perhaps this is a story worth re-telling if a child tells you what a great time **they** had on their luxury holiday.



As CHIT comes up to its fourth birthday we are pleased to announce that we have appointed two new trustees.

Kalwant Rai and his wife Mary have been loyal and generous supporters from the beginning. They are a spiritual



couple and regularly worship at St John's Church Kenilworth, where our President was the incumbent for many years.

Mary is a Non-Stipendiary Minister and has been very busy during their long interregnum. Kal is an active GP in a group practice in Coventry. Born in India, he has spent most of his life in the UK. They have two teenage daughters. We are already appreciating their gifts. Kal is planning to come to India with us next February.

Rajasekhara Babu's political ambitions remain unfulfilled. He was not selected to contest the Bapatla/Chennai constituency but his local popularity and ability were clearly acknowledged by his appointment as agent for six weeks of intense activity. With his elderly father being returned to hospital for urgent attention it was a stressful time for him.



The administration of the homes is very demanding, most especially at the end of term when senior students have to sort out where they are going next. Director **Rachel Rani**

is overloaded. **Mannika Rao**, (48) is a B.Com. with a wife who cooks for 150, and has three children. For several years house-father to the older boys, he has now been appointed Assistant Warden.



Committee member, **Honey**, seen here with Trustee **Pauline**, has been taking a close interest in the work, helping Rani.

We hope that one of our own girls, recently qualified as a nurse, is coming for a year of work-experience at Bapatla.

We do thank all our readers for their continued support. There was a lovely response to George's presentation from the parents at **Hall Grove School** in Bagshot where they had a splendid Indian meal as part of their "Indian Week".

Stuart and Claire Brown, and Graham and Vera Leeke, with various friends, kindly organised a highly successful CHIT tennis tournament which took place on three private courts on one of the few sunny days in August. It was followed by a magnificent lunch when fifty more friends joined them. A raffle with superb prizes took place. In total over £1,000 was raised. George went along to play and talk.

David and Ruth Dodge, old-time sponsors from Warminster, who joined us for the meeting we had with Babu last year, organised a well-attended meeting for us at their **United Church** where George was able to give a power-point presentation and answer questions.

We wish to make it clear that CHIT does not employ anyone in the UK. Howard, George and his wife Angela do all the administration, including printing and circulating the newsletter. They wish to acknowledge the help they receive from Nigel, Andrew and Dick who get them out of trouble when the computer overwhelms them.

Total expenses are less than 5% of income, now £80,000 and relate mainly to our advertising. Do try logging on to www.charitychoice.co.uk and click on "Charity category search" then follow the visitors' trail to CHIT.

Harvest time is here. You should know that late heavy rains in the Bapatla area washed away the rice crop. The price will soar. It is our biggest single expense. We are probably talking about a £5,000 increase. It is a bitter blow. Please consider increasing your giving. Send a cheque to CHIT or donate on line at www.chitonline.co.uk – Click on 'How can I help?'



President Rev. Canon Roger Turner gives a warm welcome to Chairman George at St. Swithin's Church **Barston** for the Harvest Festival service. Many thanks to this remarkable congregation for their heart-felt loving support for CHIT.

Treasurer Howard has been promoted and is busier than ever, George and Angela are not as healthy as they were. Who can help share the fund-raising load? Please pray for God's help on this. Could your Home Group support a child? £1 a week from six or seven people is no big deal, **but it is to the child**. If you want a slide show, there is one on our website. If you cannot do more to help us in the short term, then **please leave us a legacy**.