

THE EAST SHEEN-CHENGANNUR TRUST

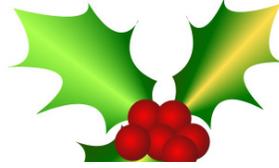
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WATER WELL BUILT FOR SPONSORED FAMILY

One of the problems faced by many families in the Chengannur area is that of getting clean water. Few if any of the families we help have running water and so have to fetch supplies from the nearest well which often can be some way away. Having their own well by their home is a huge benefit. Earlier this year Christine Allen generously decided to help the family of the little girl she sponsors. Costs of building have been rising dramatically in India over the last couple of years and a well now costs around £500.

The family wrote the following:

'My dear Aunty I am so grateful and happy for all the wonderful help that you are giving us. We are all the more happy now that you have given us money to make a water well of our own. They had to put in about 20 rings into the well to form the walls of it. They brought all these things in a lorry to the site and it took about 7 people to carry one ring – it was that heavy!! It took 4 days to finish. They started work at 8AM and worked till 6.50PM. We had to provide them one meal as there were not places nearby for them to go and eat. So we gave them tapioca, fish curry and chutney. We also gave them tea in the evening. My Grandfather helped them in the work and so that was handy. There was water springing from all sides as the rings were lowered down into the well. Each time they had to empty the well to clear the water. They filled the gaps between the rings with metal and sand. They also made sure that none of the waste mud fell into the well as they progressed the work. As they knew our poor back ground, they worked hard to get the well ready for us. All our neighbours came around every evening to see the well and felt very happy about it. It is usual that we leave the well for 2 days for the water to clear before we draw the water. They provided us with a rope and bucket to draw the water and also a net to cover the well. We are ever so grateful to you for this special gift to us. We can now be sure that we have plenty of good water of our own for drinking and other uses. Thank you for making all this possible.'



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HELP TO LOCAL CHENGANNUR SCHOOL

We frequently help small schools and nurseries and Jacob reports on the latest; "29th September, 2010 was a happy day for the 90 children of the Malankara Syrian Catholic Lower Primary school in Elanjimel, about 5 KMs away from Chengannur. The Govt. pays the teachers wages but the body that runs the school does not have enough funds to meet their other needs. The school headmistress Mrs. Soosamma George had requested some play equipment for their children as they had practically nothing to enjoy their spare time after studies. We managed to buy them 2 badminton rackets a net and shuttle cocks, rubber rings, skipping ropes, tennis balls, a football, snakes & ladders and chess boards. Lucy Hudson and her friend Angela both from U.K. came with me and at the school assembly in the morning handed over the gifts to the headmistress. The children were very thrilled about it and the school gave them a free hour in the morning and they were busy in their front playground trying out the different games and equipment. The Headmistress thanked us for these wonderful gifts and I could see the happiness in the faces of the children."

HOUSES

As mentioned above, construction costs have been rising and we are now increasing the target for building a 2 room house in the future from £1000 to £1500. This is still a tiny figure by UK standards but we know this may make it harder for supporters to raise the money. We have held the figure at £1000 since we started the project almost 20 years ago and this has only been possible through the skilful and careful management of each project by Jacob and also by gradually reducing the size or facilities in each home. We are able to combine supporters donations so that the costs can be shared and we are also able to top up donations from our own funds so please do not be put off by this rise. We can also use smaller amounts for wells, toilets or general repairs which Jacob receives many requests for.

In line with this several supporters have made major donations recently. Barbara Shimell has paid for a roof repair, new flooring and plastering of walls in the house of a family she sponsors. Mike Cooper and Angus Bancroft have paid for a new house to be built for two sisters and a daughter who lived in squalor. Geoff Thorsby has sent money for one of his sponsored families. Sarath and Akshaya live with their grandmother as their parents died in 1999 and with some aid also from the government they are building a small house. Ian and Rosemary Riddell have sent funds to build a house next year for a disabled family yet to be identified. We would like to thank all these generous supporters for their very kind aid and of course everyone else who continues to donate in a smaller way either regularly or occasionally.

LETTERS & GIFTS FOR INDIA

Many of our supporters like to send cards or money to their sponsored families at Christmas. This personal contact is of course greatly appreciated by the families. It is often better to send a cash donation than incur the cost of posting items which can be obtained in India nowadays. Please send any cards, letters or gifts direct to Jacob Punnen, The Indo American Club, Chengannur 689121, Kerala State, INDIA and send cheques to us at the address at the top of this newsletter payable to The East Sheen Chengannur Trust

STAMPS

Many thanks to all those people collecting and donating stamps to us. Sylvia Cook has again raised through her church and support group in Poole, Dorset an enormous quantity which had to be delivered by courier in several large boxes. The courier generously delivered them to us free of charge and we are currently sorting through them to sell. Thanks to everyone involved and all our regular savers who keep small packages arriving at regular intervals. When sending to us please check the correct postage cost.

GOAT PROJECT EXPANDS

In October we bought five goats for a ladies group. The prices varied according to the goats age and one goat was bought with its baby. It was a happy occasion for the group, Jacob visited them the following week on a day when the ladies meet in one of the members house. They all managed to bring the goats for a photograph in spite of the heavy rainfall for almost the whole of that week. They were all proud owners and in a short statement by the ladies representative, thanked us for this wonderful gesture and also promised us to look after their goats well and in a years time or so, give back the first kid to us to pass on to another family.



HUNGRY FUND APPEAL

Christine Higgins and Dermot Doyle have kindly agreed to donate £30 per month to help us provide rice and other basic necessities for destitute aged people. These were a group previously sponsored by Help the Aged who no longer operate in Chengannur. A few other supporters donate £2 or more a month to help this worthwhile cause and we are always looking for more support for this project.

****A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS****