

THE EAST SHEEN-CHENGANNUR TRUST

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HONEYMOON VISIT TO CHENGANNUR

At the end of 2010 Russell's younger daughter Jenny and her husband Grant visited Chengannur as part of their honeymoon travels around Asia.

Jenny says of her stay :

`My husband and I visited Chengannur and stayed with Jacob and his family in December 2010. During our stay Jacob took us to some of the sponsored families and we were shown around some of the houses that have been funded and built by the trust. We were delighted to see how greatly the new homes were appreciated and could see just from their smiling faces how it had changed the families lives for the better. We met families who showed us around their homes and took a look at folders where they kept letters and postcards from their sponsors. They were very excited to meet us and spoke fondly and gratefully of their sponsors in the UK. We could see how the money and

↑ Jenny presenting sponsored children with their i/d badges gifts the sponsors and trust collects for them provides vital essentials for everyday living as well as the occasional treat. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has helped make the lives of the people we met in India so much happier. It was a privilege to stay with Jacob and his family and meet so many interesting and lovely people. We were quickly able to see how the trust has played a vital role in improving the lives of many people in need and hope that this will continue with your help for many more years to come`



←Photo taken by Jenny of a typical original `house` of one of the of families we recently built a home for



This may look pretty, but is not healthy if its outside your house (and this was taken in the dry season)

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DONATION FROM ST WILFRIDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

The children at the school in Lancashire raised £50 from selling decorations at their Christmas fair. The money was used to buy mattresses for a YMCA project in the town next to Chengannur (Mavelikkara). With no outside funding they depend totally on individual donations. There are about 10 boys staying therein a house with the warden and his family. These children have parents but they are too poor to keep them at home. They also attend a school nearby run by a local church. The children did have some worn out bedding but were sleeping on hard bunk beds every night. Thanks to all the children at St Wilfrids who have provided some comfortable nights sleep!

HOUSE 44 COMPLETED

Jacob has sent an account of the latest house handover:

"March 20th, 2011 was another important day for the Trust and of course an unforgettable day in the lives of Thankamani, Shyamala and Mini. At 9am, Dr. Satheesh – a family friend and well wisher of the Indo American Club (the charitable organisation set up by Jacobs father to distribute aid) – handed over the 44th house to this needy family. All their kind neighbours and friends had gathered on the occasion. Jacob invited a crowd on behalf of the Club and Trust and also invited the Doctor to cut the ribbon and hand over the keys of the new house to the family.

Work on the house started back in October 2010 and their kind neighbour Nazeera, and her husband Suresh, who took all the initiative in constructing this house, was able to complete the same in almost five months which was very good timing. Their house consists of two rooms and a well laid out kitchen. They served high tea to all the guests. Some gave them gifts for their house warming and it was a happy occasion for all concerned. Suresh gave a thank you speech and mentioned that there was a time when no one was there to help these ladies in their quest for a house. They had approached the local govt. body and also other influential people in town but nothing worked out for some reason or the other and that was when someone told them of our Club and hence they made a request to us. Remembering their old shattered house, Suresh said it would have fallen down at any moment and the ladies spent every night in fear. Even when the house was being built they were sleeping in a friends house and cooked their meals in a shack beside their new home which was built from the salvaged material of their old house. And so there was happiness and hope, when the keys of their sturdy concrete house were handed over to them. They now have a concrete roof, with red oxide laid floors, proper windows and doors and strong walls and proper chimney and slabs for the kitchen.

Thankamani in her new kitchen ↓



What I noticed especially about this house was the effort of a simple lady like Nazeera who was just a poor neighbour – in fact her house next door looks shabbier than that of Thankamani now! Also her love and concern for this family brought almost the entire village folks together to help them. On the day the roof was put on she even went around the neighbourhood to collect some more money for an extra bag of cement or so! The collective effort of the villagers was very much seen. They presented the guests with flower bouquets. We have given them about £1350 as of now. They still have some work to be done like the plastering of some walls and a proper toilet instead of their temporary one. With rising cost in material and labour, the estimates seem to be shooting up and so we cannot always satisfy fully the desires and can only be a major helping hand. That is exactly what we have been and we are happy to state that we have given another needy family a proper roof over their heads – a place where they can be safe and sound especially as they are ladies. Our special thanks goes out to Mr Michael Cooper and Mr Angus Bancroft whos contributions made this family's dream come true."

SHEEN MOUNT PRIMARY SCHOOL AGAIN !!

The children and parents have raised a further £1000 which will go towards building another house. This is brilliant and we cant say a big enough thank you for their continuing efforts guided of course by the head teacher and staff.

GOAT PROJECT

In May three baby goats were given to the Trust by the recipients of earlier goats which had given birth to kids. These three were passed on to other families. They in turn will return the first kid produced so the benefits can continue to be spread to further families.

SPONSOR LETTERS

As can be seen from Jennys' description, families who receive communication from their sponsors in the UK do treasure these. When they write back to their sponsors we forward these letters on. We don't alter or stop any of these but inevitably the families will ask for extra money from time to time. Please do not feel obliged in any way to respond to these requests. The money you give already on a regular basis makes a huge difference and we don't want our supporters to feel pressured in any way either financially or morally. If you do wish to have more information about a request Jacob can investigate and give a balanced opinion on the need and how valid it is.

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

If this has been emailed to you please confirm receipt and remember to tell us if you change your email address. If you currently receive the newsletter by post but could have it in future by email please let us know as it helps cut down our costs and saves time, thankyou.