

The Andrew Clark Trust

NEWSLETTER June 2006

The Vera Thomson English School

This year the number of children attending the English classes has increased enormously during the state school holiday period March, April and May. In March and April the school was open from 7am until 6.15pm with a break for lunch. In the Beginners class there were 108 attending, and in all other lessons there were over 60 children. They not only came from Lintha Village but also from the surrounding areas, all packed into our one little classroom. Some lessons also took place outside the classroom. In the evenings videos in English are shown. Besides English, the children have also been taught art, recorder, swimming, singing and dancing.

Teachers

This year we have been lucky to have more teachers than ever before, and our grateful thanks go to:-

Alenka Ward from UK – who brought Barnaby Bear and lots of goodies for the children and taught English, art and singing. Alenka took a month's sabbatical from work.

Gisela Ansell from UK – who first visited the school whilst on holiday. She also taught English, art and singing.

Claire Ferraro from UK – who came during part of her gap year. As well as teaching English for three months she taught some children how to play the recorder, as she had brought over 30 recorders with her.

Students from Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) - As part of their final year project, four students from MIT (Ma Thiri, Ma Hsu Hsu, Naing Mai and Jason) volunteered for one month to teach English, singing and dancing to children.

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Saya John (John Gleave) returned again, teaching English to adults and giving swimming lessons to children. He brought with him around a hundred swimming costumes, goggles and caps. A number of children learnt to swim and were given certificates and medals. He also brought with him over 70 DVD's of films he had recorded to show in the Vera Thomson English School.



San Hlaing, who is a professional local artist from Thandwe town, Myanmar, taught a number of art classes to the older students, and showed them his studio.

Jochen Meißner from Austria is at present teaching English.

As usual, all the volunteer teachers taught free of charge. Not only did they teach, but also gave their time, effort and care to the children of Lintha, who invariably shed tears when it's time to part company.

Thingyan (Myanmar New Year and Water Festival)

This is a very important time of the year and everywhere stages are erected on the streets. Some children from our school sang, danced and played the recorder on a number of stages, during three days. The little ones danced and sang to action songs, the older girls danced a traditional dance, and six children danced hip hop, which proved the most popular. Ma Thiri was the choreographer and singer, helped by Hsu Hsu on guitar, Claire and children on recorders, and Jason and Naing Mai accompanied the singing. All the costumes were made free of charge by Ma Hla Hla who teaches sewing classes and her students. The experience of dressing up and dancing on stage was wonderful for the children, and some had never been to the nearby town 6 miles away before, where they performed on four stages.



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Healthcare

We now supply multi vitamin tablets to all the children at school, as they are not able to have a well balanced diet.

Right now we are sending this little boy (on the right) with his parents to Yangon to have a CT scan, and he will then be operated. Without our help there is no way that this poor boy would have the chance of a better future. Healthcare is such an important part of our work, as most people just cannot afford to see a doctor, let alone get treatment.



OBJECTIVES

- **To build another much needed schoolroom.**
- **To have an equipped playground where children can play and to have a vegetable patch, where children can learn how to grow fruit and vegetables for themselves.**
- **To continue to ensure that as many children as possible have access to education.**
- **To provide healthcare to all in Lintha, and help improve the quality of children's health.**

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO YOU ALL.

Please inform us if you have an email address, as this can save on our mailing costs.