

The Andrew Clark Trust

NEWSLETTER June 2008

OUR DREAMS REALISED

The construction of our new school is now finished, with a small room for studying or special tuition, and two toilets and showers for the children. Upstairs is accommodation for volunteer teachers, which may also be used as another classroom when needed. We decided to start building even though we did not have the funds, because of inflation, and building material costs going up and up, and that if we didn't start, we would never be able to finish.



**WE CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH AS IT HAS MADE SUCH
A HUGE DIFFERENCE.**



The Andrew Clark Trust



We were able to use the classroom for rehearsals of the children's Myanmar New Year performance.

As a result of employing two permanent teachers, we now have many more children that speak English, 48 classes a week, 9 extra lessons daily during summer school, making a total of 17 lessons a day. During summer school the children also had art, dancing and cross stitch lessons, given by our 6 Myanmar volunteers from Yangon, and another volunteer from the UK.

Our grateful thanks to The Yangon volunteers Thet Ko Aung, Seng Mai Aung, Zin Hnin Wai, Nwe Thazin Tun, Htoo Wah Paw, Hnin Hay Monn Oo, and Jeannie McNeill from the UK, who came to help for the second time.

In March Julianne Fruehbuss, a dentist from Italy, worked at our school, examining children's teeth, giving dental hygiene and basic prevention of tooth decay training to both our teachers and pupils. Our grateful thanks to Julia.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY AND HELPING

Now some of our older children are helping the younger ones with reading, writing, art, playing recorders and dancing during their summer holidays and weekends. They also helped Jeannie measure the sponsored children for their school uniforms. They clean the school daily, and take sick patients to the doctors or hospital, writing all details of the diagnosis and cost of treatment in English, and taking responsibility for helping the charity and their village. Sometimes it can take hours, waiting for x-rays to be taken etc., but they never complain, and are always pleased to help.

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Cyclone Nargis was forecast to hit Lintha. However, it changed course, and luckily the village was not affected. We received £1050 from donors for the cyclone relief, and this was forwarded to Merlin, which is a charity working in the disaster area.



OUR AIM FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS

- ◆ To plant as many banana and fruit trees as possible in the school grounds, and also grow many vegetables and fruit for the children to eat, as they do not eat fruit, and not enough vegetables
- ◆ To be able to feed the malnourished children as and when is needed. (We do not generally agree with handouts, although there are always exceptions, but this year the villagers do not have enough to feed themselves during the monsoon)
- ◆ To continue with our English Language classes – whereby the children’s English constantly improves, and that more and more children have the chance for a better future
- ◆ To have more reading books for the library and school
- ◆ To be able to pay once again for healthcare for the sick parents of the children of Lintha

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
YOU ARE MAKING SUCH A DIFFERENCE

Please note that there is an easy way to donate without any cost to you at all! All you do is visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk, nominate Andrew Clark Trust (NOT The Andrew Clark Trust) and purchase anything at no extra cost, from many big names including M&S, Tesco, Amazon etc.

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THE GENERAL SITUATION

This year during January/ February there was little or no fish in the sea, and so after a few weeks, many villagers went by boat up country, to try and fish. They left children with grandparents, neighbours etc., and in one case, a girl of 12 and her 10 year old brother were left alone with only some rice. The Andrew Clark Trust were able to feed the children until the parents returned. However after about a month the villagers returned, having been unable to fish due to rough seas, therefore the fishermen and their families are now faced with a worse situation, because they have been unable to earn and save so much for the monsoon season, and have lost nearly two month's income. In total they have been able to fish for five and a half months out of 12. Another factor is that the fishermen are earning less due to the cost of diesel skyrocketing.

This coupled with the fact that there has been a lack of tourists this year, and with households relying on a family member who works in a hotel, to bring in a good salary, in some cases jobs have been cut, salaries reduced while others have been working part-time.

We are therefore extremely worried about their situation during this monsoon period, as normally they live from hand to mouth but during the rainy season we see a lot of families with little food and are malnourished. This year we fear there may be starvation.

However we must add that there were plenty of fish in the sea after that period, and we are hopeful that the tourists will be back in larger numbers starting in November.



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FACTS

Average daily wage is 1500 kyats = which is just over \$1

Rice for 1 person per day costs 250 kyats
(the cost has risen by 25%)

One egg costs 150 kyats

Cooking oil per day per person 125 kyats

Vegetables and fish for one 500 kyats per day

Charcoal to cook per day costs 150 kyats

Two Candles per day costs 100 kyats

One pair of rubber flip flops cost 1500 kyats

Return bus fare to the local town 6 miles away costs 800 kyats