Enable

(Working in India)

NEWS UPDATE No 12 WINTER 2002-2003

Registered Charity No 1053560

Devi meets her sponsor *see page 2*

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HELPING MANY MORE CHILDREN

Dear Friends,

In the past six months there has been a tremendous growth in *Enable's* work in India, with many more disabled children being cared for.

Since our last Update, written in May, the number of children being cared for at our two centres at Kanigiri and Ongole in Andhra Pradesh has risen from 134 to over 200. I cannot give an exact number just now as we are in the process of admitting a number of blind children, for whom care is being given for the first time. 17 former center residents are now being supported as college students. And the "Outreach Programme" mentioned in the last Update, is now caring for a further 100 children in their home villages.

We have recieved news, on almost a weekly basis, of exciting developments in the work being done in India. The fact that so many disabled children are now being given a chance in life gives us much joy. We are, however, aware of the increased responsibility that comes with trying to care for so many children. I'll speak about this later on. But first, the good news!

The project for blind chi'dren

I will start with the most recent good news, which is the current development of caring for up to 30 blind children. When Fr Gali Arulraj

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Visiting my extended family in India

By Eileen Brydon

Earlier this year I visited India – and had what I can only describe as the most rewarding experience of my life. My reason for visiting was to meet two important members of my "extended family", 14 year old Sri Devi and 8 year old Nagaraju who are both disabled as a result of polio.

Meeting Sri Devi and Nagaraju

Sri Devi became part of my life about 6 years ago when I started sponsoring her through *Enable.* It meant a lot to me to know that by sponsoring Sri Devi I was enabling her to be cared for, first at the Kanigiri Centre and now at Ongole, where she would get medical care and a school education – things she would not otherwise have received. During her time at the centers she has had a series of operations that enable her to walk with the aid of a calliper. Encouraged by letters from Sri Devi herself and regular updates on her progress, my family decided to help another child too and last year we began to sponsor little Nagaraju.

I had never travelled outside Europe and a trip to India seemed unimaginable. However, I very much longed to visit my sponsored children and give them a big hug from their family in England. At last the opportunity arose. When I met Sri Devi and Nagaraju face to face I just melted and felt I had an instant rapport with them.

Learning to live life to the full

Sri Devi (whose name means 'Resplendent God') is a beautiful girl. She is a responsible 14 year old, and studies well. She hopes to pass her exams so she can go to college and train to be a teacher. She is a little shy and has to be coaxed to sing, revealing a lovely voice. Nagaraju has been at the centre for only a year but I could see a vast difference between his appearance now and the earlier photos I had been sent. He is very small for his age and very shy but with an endearing smile that would melt anyone's heart. In his village he spent most of the days left alone

while his parents went out to work. Now he is making friends. It is as if he only existed before, whereas now he is learning to live life to the full.

Eileen wit/i Nagaraju and Sri Devi

I visited Sri Devi at the Ongole Centre and Nagaragu at Kanigiri. Not only did I have the joy of meeting my own "special" children, but I was overwhelmed by the affection of all the children. They are beautiful, full of life and fun. They entertained me with songs and dances, eagerly read me stories from their English books, and welcomed me into their lives.

Extending the family: Ashok and Kasim

My "extended family" does not only consist of Sri Devi and Nagaraju. I was also particularly pleased to meet Ashok, sponsored by my mother, and Kasim sponsored by my son David and his girlfriend Mary. These two boys are amongst the more disabled of the children. Though their physical mobility is restricted they are fully included in all the activities at the Kanigiri Centre where they live. I was delighted to meet them and to be able to tell

my mother, David and Mary all about them when I

returned home.

Visiting the children's villages

For six years **I** had heard of the excellent work that Fr Arulraj was doing for some of the most deprived and poor children in India, and to actually see for myself the transformations in the children's lives was an overwhelming experience. Fr Arulraj took me to the villages that Sri Devi and Nagaraju come from and I met their parents and families. They live in grinding poverty, earning only a few rupees a day, hardly enough to support themselves, and certainly not enough to provide their children with the care they need.

I felt humbled and ashamed that wein the West have so much whilst others have so little. While I was at the centres many parents with disabled children arrived, having travelled long distances, hoping Fr Arulraj could care for their children. I could see what motivates him to continue caring for as many disabled children as he and his staff, with *Enable's* help, can manage. The children have such great needs, but the care they receive at the centres meets those needs.

Being enriched by the children

On leaving Sri Devi, Nagaraju and the other children, I was resolved to help
Enable to raise additional funds and find new sponsors so that other needy disabled children can be helped.

Kas,m (left) and As/iok – gain mobility through a hand-propelled cycle

It is so fulfilling to be involved with a charity that is making such a difference to the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable children.

Sri Devi, Nagaraju, Kasim, Ashok and all the children at the centres have a special place in my heart. I thought my visit would be a once in a life-time trip, but now I can't wait to see them all again. I know Sri Devi and Nagaraju have benefited from my family's support. But I feel it is we who are enriched by becoming part of their lives.

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CHARITY NEWS

- Thank you to all who have ordered **Christmas cards.** It is encouraging to hear that the cards are very popular, with some people saying the quality is so good we should sell them at a higher price! The two designs are sold separately in packs of 10 at £3 per pack, plus 50 p & p. Cards are still available. Details of the Christmas cards and also our **notecards** can be found on the website.
All sponsors should have received recently, with the letter about Christmas cards, a two-sided sheet **"Questions and Answers for Sponsors."** If you are a sponsor and have not received this please let us know.

Our website **www.enable-india.org.uk** contains much information about *Enable's* work in India. Recent Updates, including this one, are posted on the site. If you have any opportunities to promote the site – e.g. within local schools, community newsletters, Churches, clubs, etc. – please do. We are happy for supporters to arrange links from other websites to *Enable's* site, or for them to email those listed in their address books with details about *Enable.*

- If you change your **email address** please let us know! It helps communications. We won't pass on your details to anyone else.

- Finally, **thank you** for all you have helped us achieve during the past year. It couldn't be done without you!

HELPING MANY MORE CHILDREN

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(the director of the Centres in India) wrote, in the letter printed in the last Update, that he hoped to be able to begin caring for blind children in the coming months, we feared that we would not have sufficient funds to start the project. Thanks, however, to the generosity of *Enable's* individual supporters and some trusts we have been able to set up temporary accommodation, attached to the Ongole Centre, where the blind children will live.

In the next few years we hope, if our finances allow it, to be able to construct a purpose-built centre for the many blind children who need our help. We anticipate that some may be able to regain their sight partially or fully by surgery. Others, however, will remain blind, and their needs are particularly great.

The Clarins Award

At the end of May the skin care specialists, Clarins, named Alison Davis, *Enable's* Founder and Chair, as the winner of its "Woman of the Year" award. Nicky Lyon-Mans from Clarins announced Alison as the winner saying: "We were incredibly moved by your experiences and humbled by all that you have achieved at the Kanigiri Centre, with the new Ongole Centre, your Scholarship Fund for former residents of the Centres and your plans for the Outreach Programme. Yours is truly an amazing personal feat."

Clarins gave Alison a cheque of £30,000 for *Enable.* Some of it was allocated to fund the immediate admittance of 30 new children to the centres. The award also bought a new minibus for the Ongole Centre and helped to pay off the outstanding debt on the centre.

Publicity in the Mail on Sunday's "You" magazine led to more support and sponsors,

Al/son wit/i Sureka (left) and Roja at Ongole

enabling us to care for many more children.

The children in India are benefiting so much from the award that it is no wonder Clarins is now Alison's favourite company! Anyone familiar with all Alison has done will know she is a most deserving award winner, though she sees it as an award for *Enable* itself – which functions thanks to the many supporters like Eileen Brydon, whose impact on the children's lives we are happy to report in this Update.

Greater responsibilities

Enable's work is developing considerably. Many more children are being brought from neglect to care, from desperation to hope. We now have many more responsibilities – and, also, some concerns. We won't have the additional £30,000 next year, and it is always something of a worry whether we will have the necessary funds to continue our existing projects. We are also aware of the great needs of so many other children we are presently unable to help. Your ongoing support is so vital to our work for disabled children in India, and so greatly appreciated.

With my sincere thanks and best wishes, Cohn Harte

Enable (Working in India)

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Enable (Working in India) is a registered charity (no. 1053560) set up in 1995. It supports centres for disabled children in Andhra Pradesh State, South India. All donations are sent in their entirety to India. Administration, publicity and general expenses are funded by the charity's trustees or from donations made specifically for these purposes. Please **make cheques payable to "Enable."**