



Kathleen Keegel Children's Fund

Hi Everyone!

Welcome to the Christmas Edition of the 2009 KKCF Newsletter.

In this issue we get to meet some of the children at the orphanage. Thanks to visitor Sue

Jasper we get a wonderful insight into the daily lives of the children at the orphanage.

Remember as Christmas is only a few weeks away please consider making KKCF your Christmas charity.

Think about becoming a regular donor - "A dollar a day goes a long way".

Wishing everyone a safe and Merry Christmas from all of us at KKCF!

Who is KKCF?

The Kathleen Keegel Children's Fund (KKCF) is an Australian-based charitable organisation helping to relieve poverty in Sri Lanka.

Olivia (one of Kathleen Keegel's ten children) and her husband Fred Bartholomeusz have been in Sri Lanka since March 2004 and have faced many challenges during their time there.

For an update on their progress visit our website: www.kkcf.org

Orphanage Update Buy A Block

As you know this is one of the key projects at the orphanage; building a wall to enclose and secure the property. Before we took over the children's home,

been cracking on with the building works and around 2/3 of the perimeter is now secure. In August we had to cut down around 50 trees that lay on the

help in completing this project. We are asking that you 'donate a block'. Each block is valued at \$5.00 and you can donate as many as you like. At the end of the project a plaque will be struck to commemorate the donations to the wall. Those of you who donate 10 blocks or more will be individually acknowledged on the plaque.

You can donate a block at the following link :

http://www.kkcf.org/ways_to_support/donate-a-block



boundary line, so we are hopeful that this major project will be complete in the next couple of months.

local people had become very accustomed to using our land as a shortcut and helping themselves to anything they wanted from the property, something that continues to happen even though we are now firmly in residence. Obviously there is a risk to the children's safety too if strangers can just come and go undeterred.

The plan is to build a 4 foot high brick block fence and then add another two feet of security mesh to the top of the fence.

However, the perimeter of the property is quite large (5 acres), so we are turning to you for

Our grateful thanks to everyone who has already contributed to finance this work.



As you can see from the photos, Ramesh and his maintenance team have



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Orphanage Update continued...



Introducing Kenny....

Continuing on the theme of security we were delighted to welcome a new member to the orphanage family. Kenny our German shepherd puppy is now 4 months old and when he's fully grown will patrol the property at night.

At the moment the children are having great fun playing with our new bundle of fun; we just need to remember not to leave shoes within his reach as he is chewing everything in sight!

Meet Charmara and Tharaka

The youngest child at the orphanage is 6 year old Tharaka who came to the orphanage with his elder brother Charmara who is now 10.

When Tharaka was only 3 months old his mother left the children in the "care" of their elderly grandmother and an alcoholic father who used to beat the boys when he was drunk, almost a daily occurrence.

The children were finally rescued by Sri Lankan Child Protection Services 6 months ago when the people in their village, from whom they had been scavenging food, reported them to the authorities.

Both boys were severely malnourished when they arrived with the distended stomachs you probably associate more with images of child starvation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Charmara used to gobble up food so quickly at mealtimes that he would often make himself sick and Tharaka's development has been so stunted that although he is 6 he's the height of a 3 year old and still only weighs 10kg.

It's hard to imagine their earlier lives when you see them now.



This is Charmara on his 10th birthday where we celebrated with a snakes and ladders cake.



Tharaka is the most gorgeous, affectionate and happy little boy who spends most of his days either sweeping leaves into piles while singing to himself or pretending to drive an invisible car.



He's looking forward to going to school next year although that will be a challenge for the teachers as he has a "colourful" vocabulary, copied from his father.



Orphanage Update continued...

Balangoda...



The excitement was at fever pitch when we told the children we were going to spend a few days at the Balangoda agricultural project in August.

The van was packed to the gunnels with essential building supplies, bags of rice, and eggs from the ever productive hens at the orphanage as well as our own bedding and luggage. We broke the 5 hour journey at Ratnapura where we ate our lunch packets and visited a gem museum and pulled in to the Balangoda property as the sun was going down.



We immediately noticed the difference in climate - much cooler and drier - and by the time we had unpacked the van, sorted out the

sleeping arrangements and had dinner we were exhausted and ready to hit the hay. The children and the carers (Duthika, and Chalani) were all sleeping on the floor in one room while Olivia and I had the luxury of mattresses on the floor in the room next door.

Next morning, the children were up bright and early and we headed out to explore the surroundings, climbing up the mountain to get a great view over the property where



we could see how much progress has been made in reclaiming the land from the jungle and planting fruit and vegetables.

From our vantage point we could also see a lake in the distance which we visited later in the day.



Some of the children had come from the Balangoda area originally and so their families had been invited to come to lunch the next day to spend some time with them in a safe environment. Duthika and Chalani pulled out all the stops in preparing a feast and a pleasant afternoon was had by all. The van was called into

use again as a taxi afterwards when Olivia drove our guests back in to the town... 23 people in a 12 seater van!



TRAVELLER'S TALES

A visitor's view....

My name is Sue Jasper and I spent a few weeks at the orphanage in August this year.

I'd visited Sri Lanka several times since my first visit in 1982 so when

I was made redundant from my job as a project manager working for an insurance company in the UK I grasped the opportunity to do something completely different and searched the internet for a charity in Sri Lanka where I could do some voluntary work for a few weeks prior to my husband coming out to join me for a holiday.

I found the Kathleen Keegel Children's Fund immediately (boy, I love the internet) and after a brief exchange of emails with Georgiana initially and then Olivia I found myself in Hewadiwela a couple of weeks later.



While I was there I taught English, (something I hadn't done since the early eighties!); spent some time



teaching the carers how to bake bread, cakes, pastries and pizza and generally helping out with keeping the children occupied and amused. When my husband came to join me in Sri Lanka we took the children to the nearby elephant orphanage for the morning which was great fun.

It's clear to see that the children are thriving under Olivia and Fred's guardianship.

When they are not at school they have a timetable of arts/crafts sport,



religion and English language activities.

The cricket pitch is very popular, but you do have to watch out for snakes, and I've never ever seen kids so happy to do chores like gardening and sweeping leaves.



Here are some pen pictures of the children....



Sajee:

I teased him that he was my Sri Lankan husband after he gave me a plastic ring one day.

Very affectionate and gave me a daily report

on whether he liked what I was wearing. He has an amazing singing voice.

Lahiru:

He loves shopping in the market and took it upon himself to impose the strictest quality control on all the stallholders we bought



vegetables from.



Paul: aka "sporty boy".

He can't walk in a straight line without practising his bowling action!

Gayathri:

the onl Shgirl. never stops talking and her favourite colour is pink.



A visitor's view.... continued

Charmara:

Reserved, always pleased to get your approval. Making good progress at school.



Tharaka:

If I could have put him in my suitcase and brought him home I would have!



(and Gayathri is desperately hoping that there will be at least one other girl amongst them) but with this brings a need for continued and additional support from all of you wonderful people who are generous enough to fund the work that Olivia and Fred are doing.

I have memories of my time at the orphanage that will never leave me. Thank you Olivia and Fred for letting me visit.

Sue Jasper

Sept 2009



Shivakumar:

Shy, but with a wicked sense of humour. He has a rubber face

and would make a great comic actor – he's destined for the stage.

The authorities have told Olivia that there are 15 children currently in

refugee camps in the north who are destined for the orphanage. The orphanage certainly has enough space to take more children



RECENT EVENTS

Lentil as Anything Dinner, 10th October

A fun night was had by all who attended the dinner at Lentil as Anything in Abbotsford on 10th October.

Lentil is a fun place to get great vegetarian meals. It's crowded, noisy with a great atmosphere of fun

and community. We raised \$515 from the night.

Congratulations to Christine Parrott who was the lucky winner of our raffle.

Lentil As Anything
1 St. Helliers Street,
Abbotsford, Vic 3067

Phone 94196444.
Email abbotsford@lentilasanything.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

KKCF Garage Sale

KKCF Garage sale will be at

**169 Belgrave Hallam Rd,
Narre Warren North**

on 11th, 12th and 13th December

Call Georgie for details 0403 023 949 / 9774 7883

Donations of household goods, books, etc gratefully accepted. No clothing please.





KATHLEEN KEEGEL CHILDREN'S FUND

www.kkcf.org

New Year's Eve Gold Ball

Thursday 31 December 2009

7.00pm – 1.30am

Preston City Hall

284 Gower Street, Preston

Music by

Internationally reknown

Replay 6

Golden Roast Big Buffet

Dress: Formal

**Donation of \$75.00 per head or \$650 for 10
(incl glass of champagne on arrival)**

Children 4-15 @ \$25

Sri Lankan Milkrice at midnight

BYO drinks and

some drinks available to purchase

Contact

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Major Sponsor - THE ARTHOUSE

We thank Maree and Peter Kelly for their amazing support. Please visit the ArtHouse Backpackers and Studio at 616 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, 9347 3917. Original live music six days a week. www.theartthouse.com



Major Sponsor - THE SUCCESSFUL INVESTOR

If you are looking for quality investment property, we highly recommend the very valuable services of Michael and Laurel Michael. They have very generously supported KKCF in the past and continue to do so. We can personally vouch for their integrity and commitment to helping others - <http://www.thesuccessfulinvestor.com.au/index.cfm>

Pronto Software Pty Ltd.

KKCF wishes to thank the Company and Staff that Steven Keegel works for Pronto Software Pty Ltd.

The Staff raised \$1050 in donations and this was generously matched, one to one by Pronto Management, bringing in a total of \$2100. These funds have already been put to good use in the Orphanage,

So to Pronto Software & its Staff - THANK YOU!!!

About Pronto Software Pty Ltd: With over 30-years experience building robust, mission-critical Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) products, Pronto Software's expertise is second to none. This depth of skill in our staff, and the staff of our partners, enables us to professionally review your

business needs and deliver a complete, successful and appropriate solution using our flagship ERP product, PRONTO-Xi. For information about Pronto Software,

Check out their website at <http://www.pronto.com.au/>



*Help us to paint
others' lives
with sunshine
KKCF
Making an Impact
Changing Lives*

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KKCF is on Facebook

Donations can be made to
KKCF Westpac account
BSB 034041, account 261007

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have always wanted to travel to
Sri Lanka or just want to do
something different please
consider visiting us in Sri Lanka.

Global Development Group

GDG is a Non Government Organisation [NGO] carrying out humanitarian projects with approved partners and providing aid to relieve poverty. Or Support a *Project in Progress* with your donation.



KKCF is an approved partner of GDG. With this partnership comes the ability to provide our donors with **tax deductibility** on their donations.

To make a tax deductible donation to our Agricultural project, visit GDG's website :

www.globaldevelopment.org.au

GDG accepts payment by credit card or direct deposit. In the "my donation to go to" field, enter **J215**. Contact us if you need assistance or further info.



Fred and Olly need all the help they can get and you are guaranteed an amazing, enriching, first-hand experience at making a difference.
Email Fred at kkcf@inbox.com for more information.

KKCF sincerely thanks Janine Rainbow and Christine Wood for their work in publishing this newsletter.
Check our Chris' photography business at her website

www.christinewood.com.au

Thank you to UDARA and the team at Master Graphics - Kiribathgoda.
Tel: 011-2906996

DONATIONS

Make KKCF your charity this Christmas.

Please note that donations by Australian residents made through Global Development Group (GDG) will be **tax deductible**.

Visit www.globaldevelopment.org.au

