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Serpanchy. Rochelle

Young. Rita (9557 2364)

Young. Annesley/Jennifer

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CLUB WEBSITE

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR



***J Wijenaike nee Van Gramberg, aged 62, is married and has two children aged 36 years and 34 years respectively. Unfortunately the elder child is an invalid, her ailments caused by instruments used during her birth. The younger has health problems as well. They need constant tending which Mrs Wi-***

***jenaikie is unable to do because she suffers from a heart complaint. So, her husband has to provide the care that the children need which means that he is unable to accept any permanent employment. The entire family is under-nourished and weak due to the lack of adequate and/or regular food and Jennifer has to visit the Hospital Clinic every week for treatment. Despite being unwell, the younger child does a 'small job' and helps to pay the rent of Rs.5000 monthly; although the rent is in arrears. Their only regular income is the welfare benefit paid to them by the Eighty Club. Recently, a member of this Club, Mr Mike Muller, gave us a generous donation from him and his family and requested that it be used to help a family that was in dire straits. After discussion with the DBU Welfare Chair, Ms. Anthea Muller, (the glamorous lady on the right) we decided that the Wijenaike family merited some special assistance. The picture shows Anthea Muller presenting Mrs Wijenaike with Rs.10,850 which is what the donation translated to. Needless to say, she was overwhelmed by the donor's generosity. She planned on spending the money on some medications which her elder child needed and also on some good and wholesome food on Christmas Day. Any money left over would be saved for a 'rainy' day. Our grateful thanks to the member donor for his generosity***

*Once again a family of 'battlers' in Sri Lanka have been assisted by this Club, thanks to the generosity of one of its members. We received yet another large donation from another member and details of how that was used is found in the column headed HOW YOUR MONEY IS SPENT. The family that benefited from that gift was really deserving as their living conditions were terrible.*

*Families living in abject poverty in Sri Lanka and needing assistance are legion. This Club does its best, thanks to the generosity of its members, to improve their lot BUT we ask that each and every member does his or her part by paying their membership fees if they are due. Many reminders have been sent to those in arrears but some members seem to find it hard to remember to send us a paltry sum of \$30 which is all it takes to bring membership fees up to date. PLEASE !!!*

**CARING FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE**



# President's Message

*March 2011*

*As we begin another year I hope all our friends and members have enjoyed a very Happy and Fun festive season. It is my fervent wish that our club will continue to prosper in the year ahead; this can only be achieved with help from all our members.*

*Another successful lunch was held in February and my thanks to the coordinators for their good work. Thanks also to Melanie and Mazar Rauf for the very tasty meal they provided.*

*Please remember that it is events such as these luncheons that help us raise the funds required to keep up the good work that we are doing to help our less fortunate brethren in Sri Lanka.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank our student sponsors for their generosity in helping us to provide education for these children. There have been some sponsors who advise us that the children do not correspond with them. Trevor Collette our Student Sponsorship Coordinator and I have requested the DBU to ensure that the children are reminded of the need to correspond with their sponsors. However, the children also do appreciate hearing from their sponsors and I ask you to please write to these children as this also helps develop their English skills.*

*I would remind sponsors that the children rely on these sponsorship monies' to pay their school fees etcetera. As such our club does not withhold payments should there be a delay in receiving your payments'. It would be appreciated if payments are made on receipt of your invoice. The need to follow up sponsors is costly and requires a lot of extra time and expense.*

*Marie and I wish each and every one of you a very Blessed Easter.*







**SHEVIN HINDLE** of De Mazenod College, Kandana participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Schools (Under 16) soccer tournament held in Indonesia. He is seen here proudly wearing the gold medal that he won at the tournament. Shevin is one of the children belonging to the Student Sponsorship Scheme run under the aegis of the Eighty Club Melbourne, Inc..

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*The following is an excerpt from an article in the Courier Mail of 8.2.2011*

MUTTIAH Muralidaran, once an outcast spurned by Australian cricket fans, will sign on as a guest spin coach to help mould Australia's next generation of young spinners into champions. In a stunning coup for Australian cricket, The Courier-Mail can reveal Muralidaran, Sri Lanka's controversial spin genius, will spend several weeks at the Brisbane-based Centre of Excellence in June for intensive training with a young crop of rising Australian spinners.

Test cricket's greatest wicket taker will not only impart the secrets of his spin wizardry but also videotape a spin coaching tutorial so his extraordinary know-how will be passed on to future generations of Australian spinners. It is a sign of how far the wheel has turned that Murali - who has been repeatedly heckled, taunted and even had fruit thrown at him by unruly fans here since being no-balled by Darrell Hair in the 1995 Boxing Day Test - will become our potential spin saviour.

*The above article inspired popular cartoonist, Max Gerreyn, to come up with the following:*



# How Your Money is Spent

Mrs H Holmes is aged 73 and married. She and her husband live in Wattata in a shack that has been built in a paddy field. They were tsunami victims and the plot of land on which they have erected their shack was



given to them by the Government. From the time they moved into their new home it has been inundated with water whenever it rains. They live in a home that is constantly flooded because of the heavy rain in the recent past. Not long ago, she called at the DBU to complain, in tears, that all their clothes had been covered in mud and they could not do any cooking as the flood level was too high. They were forced to move out and seek refuge in a nearby church. In fact, this family is as poor as church mice and lives a life of extreme poverty. In the recent past, a member of the Eighty Club, who wishes to remain anonymous, gave us a sizeable donation to assist a family or individual in dire straits. The Welfare team of the DBU and I decided that the Holmes

family fitted the bill as one deserving special assistance. The photograph above shows Mrs Holmes accepting Rs.27,137 from Mrs Anthea Muller, Welfare Chair of the DBU. On receiving the money, Mrs Holmes' initial reaction was to dissolve into a flood of tears and thank the donor for his gift. On being asked what she intended to do with the money she said she would try to effect some repairs to her home to make it as flood proof as possible and buy good and wholesome food as they had been almost starving at that point. Our thanks go out to the anonymous donor of this timely gift.

## EMERGENCY FUND PAYMENT DETAILS

- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs C Quyn who is 60 years old and cannot find a job. Had not eaten for over 24 hours and was desperate.
- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs. M Rajapakse nee Philips aged 69 years. Lives with a son who is mentally challenged and has no regular monthly income.
- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs A Vanhoff who is 70 years old. Has arthritis and high blood pressure and no money for day to day living. Children are poverty stricken too.
- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs O Williams aged 67 years. Has an enlarged heart and high blood pressure. Needed money for medication.
- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs H Holmes aged 73 years. Lives in a low lying area and house is constantly water logged.
- ✓ Rs.3000 to Mrs R Hamer. Had a black out, fell and was injured. Was in hospital for surgery and needed medication.
- ✓ Rs.2000 to Miss C Mack, aged 67 years. Used most of her savings for a heart operation. Needed money for medication.

*Our renewed thanks go out to those members who pay their membership fees regularly and also give us generous donations. The details shown above should convince them that their money is being put to very good use.*

*Darryl Isaaks*  
WELFARE COORDINATOR



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN 2011

**APRIL 10 - STRINGHOPPER PILAU**

*Coordinators Laraine Muller/Rita Young & Arlene/Tony Scarnivel*

**JUNE 5 MID YEAR LUNCHEON at THE GRAND**

*Errol/Violet Jacotine; Rodney/Marie de Kretser & Leonie Martenstyn.*

*PLEASE NOTE ONLY TABLES OF 10 OR 12 MAX. SMALLER TABLES WILL BE JOINED TOGETHER.*

*MUSIC FOR DANCING BY SAM DE SILVA*

**AUGUST 28 ROTI LUNCHEON**

*Annesley/Jennifer Young & Rochelle/Patrick Serpanchy*

**OCTOBER 9 RICE & CURRY LUNCHEON**

*Marie/Rodney De Kretser & Trevor Collette/Jill Amit*

**DECEMBER 10 DINNER DANCE at the GRAND**

**Music by MIDNIGHT MIST**

*Tony/Arlene Scarnivel & Earle/Shireen Ferdinand.*

*Lunches (except the mid-year lunch) will be at the Good Shepherd Hall, Wheelers Hill. However, dates, venues and menus may be subject to change. Reservations may be made with the contacts named above whose phone numbers will be found on the front cover OR with any other committee member.*

**BOOKINGS CANCELLED THREE DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT MUST BE PAID FOR IN FULL.**

**GUESTS SHOULD ARRIVE AT THE HALL AT 12.30 PM OR AFTER, NOT BEFORE.**

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

*We extend the hand of friendship and a warm welcome to the following new Members:*

*Godwin Van Rooyen of Caloundra, QLD  
Mohan & Gillian Hensman of Adamstown Heights, NSW  
David De Zilwa & Ursula Nesci of Bentleigh, Vic  
Richard & Stuart Gill of Queens Park, WA  
Humphrey & Prudence Lourensz of Rowville, Vic  
Bill & Shani Farrow of Hampton East, Vic  
Loretta de la Harpe of Avondale Heights, Vic  
Evan & Carmen Knower of Noble Park, Vic*



# IN GOD'S HANDS

LEEMBRUGGEN - Christabelle Ruth passed away on 22nd January 2011 aged 95 years. Wife of Shelley (deceased.) Mother of Francesca.

HATCH - Rita Hatch and members of the family of the late Conraad Hatch, express their heartfelt thanks to all those who sent messages of sympathy and prayerful support, telephoned to convey their condolences, attended the funeral and sent donations to the 80 Club in Conraad's memory.

Your kindness, concern and thoughtfulness are greatly appreciated.

ABEL – Carlyle Mario (Kell) taken suddenly but peacefully on February 3, 2011. Husband of Nella; father of Adam and Lauren. Son of Binky and Doris. Brother of Tania and brother-in-law of Austin, Mary, Domenic, Sebastian and Kannika.

SCHRADER – Everard Percival passed away on 4.2.2011 after a short illness. Husband of Peggy. Father and father-in-law of Diane and John; Geoff and Ian; Nasima and Norbert; Deborah, Jennifer and Alex; Sally and David. Grandfather of Scott, Daniel, Sam, Siobhan, Rachel, Patrick, Andrew and Nicholas.

ABEL – Binky and Doris would like to thank members of the Eighty Club for their prayers, condolences and presence at the funeral service for their CARLYLE (KELL) who passed away suddenly on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2011.

ALTENDORFF - Rita (Blossom) died in England on 23.12.2010 at the age of 76. Daughter of Ayala & Hyacinth de Niese. Beloved sister of Dulcie – (dec); Sheila (SL); Yvonne (Aust); Alexis (SL); Earle – (dec); Gertrude (SL), Anne (Starling) (UK); Bryant (Aust); Lorraine (Aust).

DE ZILWA. - Dr. Percy. Died on March 10, 2011. Husband of Naomi (dec.); father and father-in-law of Jenny and John; Carole and Ken (dec.); Wendy, David and Ursula. Grandfather of Andrew, Natalie (dec.); Felicity and Tim, Linda, Tracy and George, Camille and Paul, Sally and Damien, Stephanie and Kate. Great grandfather to Landon, Zoe, George, Madison and Jack.

## **BATTICALOA HIT BY SEVERE FLOODS**

In the past few weeks, we have read about the devastation caused by the floods in Sri Lanka. One of the most affected parts has been the Eastern sector (Batticaloa). The problem is that if monies were donated from overseas, they may go the way of the tsunami monies. So, the best way to assist would be by remitting financial aid to the core centre; to those in need and to those who can help them. Our attention has been drawn to the plight of the Burghers in Batticaloa who have no one to turn to. In appealing for help they say that a paltry sum of \$A5.00 (Rs.500) would assist one family to purchase much needed victuals. There are 998 such families who need assistance. Individuals and organizations who wish to help the people of Batticaloa may send their donations to The Treasurer, Eighty Club Melbourne, Inc., PO Box 2645, Rowville, Vic.3178 for forwarding to those in Batticaloa who are distributing the aid received.

The Eighty Club has donated \$1000 and a member, \$250, to the Batticaloa Flood Relief fund. This money has been transferred to the BUB in Batticaloa already.

(The above facts have been condensed from a note received from Victor Melder.)

**YOUR \$5.00 CAN FEED A FAMILY !**



### **COWES HOLIDAY HOME**

*Modern and spacious two storey, four bedroom, two bathrooms/toilets with great water views and only five minutes drive to Cowes and three minutes walk to beach. The house includes outdoor decking with Gas BBQ, fully equipped kitchen, split system heating/cooling upstairs, table tennis table and basketball ring and sleeps 12 persons. Rates from \$180.00 per night.*

### **SUNDERLAND BAY HOME**

*Three bedroom one bathroom/toilet holiday home with huge decking situated on the Esplanade with magnificent ocean views. The house sleeps eight persons and includes fully equipped kitchen, Gas BBQ, table tennis table and basketball ring. Rates from \$160.00 per night.*

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RING SHIREEN ON 03 9887 1373 OR MOB . 0425719249

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### **HOUSE IN SRI LANKA FOR SALE**

*TWO STORIED HOUSE IN MIRIHANA FOR IMMEDIATE SALE.  
FOUR BEDROOMS, TWO BATHROOMS AND TOILETS WITH HOT AND  
COLD WATER SUPPLY, FIVE CEILING FANS, TWO SITTING ROOMS,  
DINING ROOM, PANTRY, KITCHEN AND SERVANTS ROOM WITH  
TOILET AND GARAGE. STANDING ON 9.61 PERCHES OF LAND WITH  
TWO ROAD FRONTAGES. CONTACT SL PHONE 2825496*

### **EXPECTING VISITORS FROM SRI LANKA?**

The **AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION** has informed us of its new visa application lodgment arrangements for applicants in Sri Lanka effective from February 8, 2011 which will include the collection of biometrics. To enable the lodgment of visa applications, the collection of biometrics, and to improve the quality of service to clients, Australia has entered into a new service delivery partnership with VFS Global in Sri Lanka. The Australian VFS Global Visa Application Centre (AVAC) in Sri Lanka is located at Level 5, Access Towers, 278 Union Place, Colombo 2. In Sri Lanka, all people lodging paper-based applications, including any dependants listed as travelling in the application, regardless of nationality, **will need to attend the AVAC in person to lodge their application and/or provide their biometrics.** Applicants will also need to present themselves in person to the AVAC to collect their passports once a decision has been made on their application.

**Before you speak, listen  
Before you write, think  
Before you spend, earn  
Before you criticize, wait  
Before you pray, forgive  
Before you quit, try**

“At the end of our lives, we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made or how many great things we have done. We will be judged by “I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless and you took me in.”  
*Mother Theresa*





## **VISIT TO SRI LANKA AND DBU CHILDRENS' CHRISTMAS PARTY - 2010**

During a recent visit to Sri Lanka, my wife Noeline and I had the pleasure of attending the DBU to get acquainted with how things worked. We were encouraged by Rodney and Marie de Kretser that, time permitting, it would be a rewarding experience to attend the Christmas Parties put on by the DBU for the sponsored students and welfare beneficiaries.

It was 9.30 in the morning of the sponsored childrens' Christmas party. When we arrived at the DBU the festivities had begun and all vantage points were taken up by the parents. We introduced ourselves to Anthea Muller and her helpers. Party games such as Musical Chairs had finished and all the children present were requested to join in the Dance Competitions. It was great to see all the children dressed in bright colours eager to dance. Noeline was drafted as a Judge to pick a winner from each age group. The children performed with gusto and the sheer joy on their faces was a pleasure to see.



Now it was time for Father Christmas to arrive. We assisted in presenting of the gifts. You had to be there to see the look on their faces as they received their gift of toys (childhood memories flooded back). The older children were given gift vouchers. Father Christmas was the most jovial person I had seen in a long time. Plenty of food and drink was provided for the children.

We were able to meet the parents of the student we sponsor. The mother, with tears in her eyes, thanked us for helping to educate her son. It is good to know we are helping the less fortunate. Anthea and her staff do a great job at these functions and must be commended.

We implore any members visiting Sri Lanka to arrange to be at the DBU either at one of the functions or on the day payments are made to the Welfare Beneficiaries or the children. It will truly fill your heart with joy to witness the looks on these peoples faces. It also makes one very emotional when you see the looks of gratitude for these little mercies. It certainly tugs at your heart strings as it did ours.

*Noeline and Ernie Mortimer*





*CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR EIGHTY CLUB'S SPONSORED STUDENTS - DECEMBER 2010*



*Fiona Pereira & St. Nik*



*St. Nik and Helpers*



*Visitors from Melbourne*



*Royden de Bruin*



*Ruth Slemmerman*



*Dancing in Progress*



*Michelle Brohier*



*Melanie Senanayake*



*Tenisiya Outschoorn*

*To those of you who are seniors, for those of us who will be seniors soon (and at least we can read it now) and for those who work with seniors, I think you will love this.*



### Senior Version of Jesus Loves Me

A pastor once stated, "I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's hymn 'Jesus Loves Me' (for the children of course) during a hymn sing and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best."

Here is a new version just for us who have white hair or no hair at all. For us over middle age (or even those almost there) and all you others check out this newest version of Jesus Loves Me.

### JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me, this I know,  
Though my hair is white as snow  
Though my sight is growing dim,  
Still He bids me trust in Him.  
(CHORUS)

YES, JESUS LOVES ME.. YES, JESUS LOVES ME..  
YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,  
With my hand in His I'll go  
On through life, let come what may,  
He'll be there to lead the way.  
(CHORUS)

When the nights are dark and long,  
In my heart He puts a song..  
Telling me in words so clear,  
"Have no fear, for I am near."  
(CHORUS)

When my work on earth is done,  
And life's victories have been won.  
He will take me home above,  
Then I'll understand His love.  
(CHORUS)

I love Jesus, does He know?  
Have I ever told Him so?  
Jesus loves to hear me say,  
That I love Him every day.  
(CHORUS)

God Bless Us All!!!





## SOCIAL NOTES



*Warm and sincere anniversary greetings to:*

**RITA AND BERT VAN GEYZEL  
INA AND ANTON BLACKER  
PRIMROSE AND MERVYN WERKMEISTER  
MELROSE AND CHOLMONDOLEY WILLENBERG  
MELODY AND BRADLEY KING, AND  
LEANNE AND SHANE ISAAKS - SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.**



*CONGRATULATIONS TO CHRISTINE & NORMAN DECKKER  
WHOSE GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY WILL BE ON APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2011.  
MAY GOD BLESS YOU BOTH. CONGRATULATIONS ALSO TO PETER AND  
VALERIE WEERAKOON WHO CELEBRATED THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING  
ANNIVERSARY RECENTLY.*



CONGRATULATIONS TO LEANNE AND SHANE ISAAKS ON BECOMING GRANDPARENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME AND WELCOMING **SHANNON MICHAEL** TO THIS WORLD. SHANNON IS ALSO JUNE AND DARRYL ISAAKS' FIRST GREAT GRANDSON.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO:**

**SHIREEN FERDINAND  
IVOR DE KRETZER  
MARIE SCHOORMAN  
KRISTINA DEKKER  
BRADLEY KING  
LEANNE ISAAKS  
EILEEN FERNANDO  
ANTHEA MULLER (DBU SRILANKA)**

*My wife and I were sitting at a table at her high school reunion, and she kept staring at a drunken man swigging his drink as he sat alone at a nearby table.*

*I asked her, "Do you know him?"*

*"Yes", she sighed,*

*"He's my old boyfriend.... I understand he took to drinking right after we split up those many years ago, and I hear he hasn't been sober since."*

*"My God!" I said, "Who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"*

*And then the fight started...*

*Thanks Lyn*

## CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR EIGHTY CLUB WELFARE BENEFICIARIES – 7 DEC 2010



*The dancing begins, the two oldest ladies take the floor*



*The finals of the "Pass The Pillow" Competition*



*Everyone joins in to show off their bailable skills*



*Age, nor infirmity shall prevent them having a good time*



*Some of the beneficiaries joined the organist in the carols*



*Etienne, Mystica and Anthea applauding the dancing*



*Even if we cannot be on the floor, we can still enjoy it*



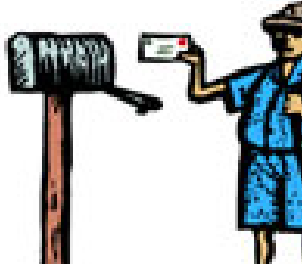
*Standing in line for the Bonus and hampers*

*In order for this Club to increase the number of its welfare beneficiaries and/or increase the amount of the benefit paid to them it is vital that we build up our membership base. As such please persuade your friends and relatives to become members of this prestigious Club by sending in an application form with a year's membership for only \$30.00. An application form is included in this newsletter.*



## COIN COLLECTIONS

<i>Mrs Muriel Gauder</i>	<i>17.90</i>	<i>Bryan &amp; Electra Drieberg</i>	<i>314.30</i>
<i>June &amp; Darryl Isaaks</i>	<i>14.90</i>	<i>Anton &amp; Ina Blacker</i>	<i>30.00</i>
<i>Deanna Van Cuylenberg</i>	<i>17.00</i>	<i>Noel &amp; Louise Hannibalsz</i>	<i>32.00</i>
<i>Anonymous (2 bottles)</i>	<i>112.40</i>	<i>K C &amp; V Lemm</i>	<i>26.10</i>
<i>Ray Kelaart</i>	<i>67.00</i>	<i>V Mack</i>	<i>20.05</i>
		<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>651.65</i>



### FROM THE MAILMAN

*From Mrs J Wijayanayake of Laxapathiya, Moratuwa*

*Dear Sir/Madam,*

*I write this letter with great gratitude in my heart for the wonderful gift I received unexpectedly.*

*I was in deep prayer on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2010 when I received a post card from the DBU requesting me to visit the DBU on receipt of same. I was instructed to meet Mrs A Muller on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2010 at 10 am. I was really shocked and surprised to hear that mine was one of the families chosen to receive a gift of Rs. 10,850 from the Eighty Club.*

*I take this opportunity in thanking your good selves for this meritorious deed which will not be forgotten as it came in very handy to meet expenses for all of us to celebrate a good Christmas especially for my handicapped daughter, Nicola, who needs much attention towards medication which is very costly. In conclusion I wish to quote this message from Proverbs 17.8:  
A GIFT IS A PRECIOUS STONE IN THE EYES OF HIM THAT HATH IT. WHITHERSOEVER IT TURNETH IT PROSPERETH.*

*May God's blessings abundantly flow TEN FOLD during the year 2011. Yours faithfully, J Wijenayake*

*From Mrs H Holmes of Hendala, Wattala.*

*Dear Sir,*

*Wish you a Happy New Year. Received your gift of cash through the Dutch Burgher Union. Thanks very much for this act. I am very happy as I used this money to do up the roof in my housing which was leaking. Once again I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you very much and may God bless you. Yours, Hilda Holmes*

*Ladies, thank you for your letters of thanks. We are glad if the unexpected money brought some joy into your lives and may God bless you and your families.*

*The two letters above were from Mrs J Wijayanayake and Mrs H Holmes. They were selected to receive two donations from two Eighty Club members earmarked for two persons in extreme want. Their circumstances are described on the front page (in my editorial) and in the section titled HOW YOUR MONEY IS SPENT.*

## **STUDENT SPONSORSHIP SCHEME -**

### **Colombo (DBU) managed students**

There are currently 134 students under sponsorship through the DBU

The payments for the first quarter amounting to allowances of Rs. 724,000, the book allowance of Rs.296, 000 and Rs 320,000 in gifts have been made.

The schedules for the second quarter's payments are currently being drawn up.

### **Batticaloa (BUB) managed students**

There are currently 21 students under sponsorship through the BUB

The payments for the first quarter amounting to allowances of Rs. 88,000, the book allowance of Rs.49, 000 and Rs 3,000 in gifts have been made.

The schedules for the second quarter's payments are currently being drawn up.

### **New Students & Sponsors**

A fresh lot of 15 applications for student sponsorship have been received from the DBU. These are currently being processed and potential sponsors are being contacted.

**Trevor Collette**  
**Student Sponsorship Coordinator**



## **TERTIARY STUDENT SPONSORSHIP IN BATTICALOA**

**By Trevor Collette, Student Sponsorship Coordinator**

My communications with Mrs. Mignon Barthelot the student sponsorship Coordinator in Batticaloa reveals that there are currently seven children from Batticaloa undertaking tertiary education who are finding it extremely difficult financially.

Vilma and Lindsey Arkley are members of the ECM who sponsor children both in Batticaloa & Colombo. Lindsey was requested by me to investigate the current educational facilities both secondary & tertiary in Batticaloa during his visit in late 2010.

His report follows:

### **REPORT ON STUDENTS TERTIARY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN BATTICALOA:**

"This is a report based on a meeting in late November 2010 with Ms. Mignonne Barthelot, of the Burgher Union of Batticaloa, who helps to administer the Student Sponsorship Program (SSP) there on behalf of the Eighty Club.

There are about 1000 Burgher families in Batticaloa, totaling about 2500 people. They are mainly the descendants of Portuguese settlers, although some also have Dutch ancestry. Portuguese remains to this day as the first language in the home in perhaps about 300 families. However, Tamil is the first language of almost all other Batticaloa Burghers, and is the main language spoken in their homes. Tamil is the main language of instruction in all local schools. English is the second language of most Batticaloa Burghers - except for those speaking Portuguese, for whom it is a third language. English is taught as a second language in local schools (Ms. Barthelot is an English teacher in a major secondary school).

A total of 21 Batticaloa students are currently being sponsored under the SSP. All attend government schools. These students receive the same monthly payments as Colombo sponsored students. Ms. Barthelot has forwarded details to the Eighty Club of a number of other students who she recommends for sponsorship as they come from low-income families, in many cases single parent families.

Ms. Barthelot was asked in particular about the possibility of the Eighty Club extending the SSP in Batticaloa to tertiary-level students. Notwithstanding the fact that there is still some school-age children who she would like to see sponsored, she was enthusiastic about this prospect, and stated she felt sure it would be of benefit to quite a few children with limited means to enhance their employment prospects through further education. (Continued)



In an extremely competitive system, if marks are good enough, Batticaloa children can gain admission to the Eastern University of Sri Lanka (EUSL), located in Chenkaladi, 12 km north of Batticaloa. The EUSL offers fee-free courses in Agriculture; Arts & Culture; Commerce & Management; and Science. The medium of instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Culture is Tamil. The medium of instruction in all other faculties is English. A special English Language Teaching Unit has been set up to help students struggling with English proficiency. Three Burgher children are currently undertaking courses at the EUSL. Although they don't have to pay fees, they have to pay about Rs. 1000/month (approx A\$10) to copy the handouts they are given.

The EUSL offers hostel accommodation to many students, for about Rs. 5000/month (approx A\$50). For 9 months a year over 4 years this would amount to Rs.  $5000 \times 9 \times 4 = \text{Rs. } 180,000$  (approx A\$1800). For students who continue living at home, the alternative is daily travel by bus, at a cost of about Rs. 150/day. For, say, 20 days a month this would amount to Rs. 3000/month (approx A\$30). For 9 months a year over 4 years this would amount to Rs.  $3000 \times 9 \times 4 = \text{Rs. } 108,000$  (approx A\$1080).

One Batticaloa boy is currently undertaking an engineering course at the University of Moratuwa on the outskirts of Colombo. His living expenses while there amount to about Rs. 8000/month (approx A\$80). For 9 months a year over 4 years this would amount to Rs.  $8000 \times 9 \times 4 = \text{Rs. } 288,000$  (approx A\$2880). His traveling expenses between Batticaloa and Moratuwa are extra.

Like young Sri Lankans all over the island, for the majority of Batticaloa Burgher children who pass the equivalent of the Australian Year 12 (GCE A Level), university is not an option because of the severely limited number of places. They are faced with a plethora of further education choices - with a very wide range in both quality and cost.

On the top rung are professional courses such as that offered by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA). This course can be completed within 3 years, and according to CIMA the average cost to a student is Rs. 300,000 to 400,000 (approx A\$3000 to \$4000). However, CIMA tuition classes are not currently offered in Batticaloa, and any student wanting to undertake this course would have to add accommodation and other expenses while studying in Colombo or elsewhere.

One Batticaloa Burgher boy has undertaken a cheaper alternative course offered by the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). This course, currently offered at two registered institutions in Batticaloa, can lead to formal qualifications as an accountant after successful completion of three levels, each of 6 months - Foundation, Intermediate and Final. The full fees for this course (four subjects) currently amount to Rs. 19,500 (approx A\$195). Foundation Level exams are offered in Tamil, English and Sinhala but Intermediate and Final Level exams require reasonably good English. Thus, completion of the full course could require a Batticaloa Burgher child to simultaneously undergo extra English tuition.

Like all other major population centres across Sri Lanka, Batticaloa also has numerous other institutions offering certificate or "diploma" courses in various subjects, many of them in IT, including graphic designing, web designing, etc. The cost of these courses can range from about Rs. 2000 to Rs. 20,000 (approx A\$20 to \$200). Ms. Barthelot advises that successful completion of such courses can enhance employability.

Various courses are available to study online. However, Ms. Barthelot advises that many (most?) Batticaloa Burgher children do not have home computers. Depending on the configuration, a reasonable PC in Batticaloa costs Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 65,000 (approx A\$500-650). Home internet connections cost Rs. 5000 (approx A\$50) to set up, then about Rs. 1000/month (A\$10) to maintain.

Another option is study abroad - with institutions from all over the world advertising for fee-paying students. However, Ms. Barthelot advises that few Batticaloa Burgher families, if any, would be in a position to afford the fees." (**LINDSEY ARKLEY**)

The ECM Committee has recently approved a tertiary student sponsorship scheme for children from Batticaloa. The sponsorship would be \$A75 a quarter and funded by sponsors, similar to the current scheme for secondary students.

Sponsors are presently being sought to commence this scheme and those interested should please contact me— by phone (03) 97061084(AH); e-mail [trevor.collette43@bigpond.com.au](mailto:trevor.collette43@bigpond.com.au).

**Trevor Collette**

*OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS  
FOR THEIR GENEROSITY.*

Donations received from 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010 to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011

Arkley, Lindsay & Vilma – For flood relief in Batticaloa	\$250.00
Bartels, Aileen – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 25.00
Beekmeyer, Kevin & Monica – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 50.00
Bellbirds Club	\$ 90.00
Colpo, Patricia	\$ 40.00
De Vos, Heather & Harry	\$ 30.00
Gerreyn, Ralph & Phil – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 50.00
Goggin, Peter & Rosemary	\$ 50.00
Gray, Faye	\$ 20.00
Henderling, Kingsley & Elizabeth	\$100.00
Holsinger, Heather – Gifts received from 70 <sup>th</sup> birthday	\$225.00
Jackson, Kevin L	\$140.00
Kelaart P & C – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 25.00
Kelaart, Sheelagh – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 50.00
Koelmeyer, Anthony & Rosemary – in celebration of Canna Chapman's birthday	\$ 50.00
La Brooy, Glen & Suzanne	\$ 5.00
Ludowyk, Robin & Joan – in memory of Felicia Pereira	\$ 50.00
Mack, Derrick & Bernice – in memory of Jean McIntyre, Conraad Hatch & Brian Bukner	\$ 90.00
Mack, Spencer – in memory of Conraad Hatch	\$ 50.00
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Meerwald, Travis Patricia	\$ 10.00
Serendib Financial Service	\$ 70.00
Siebel, Brian Kathleen – in memory of Michael Kretzheim	\$ 20.00
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TOTAL \$ 370.00



## **Sponsorship Programme for Children of Burgher Union, Batticaloa**

It is indeed a joy and pleasure to thank the Eighty Club Melbourne, Australia for their ongoing magnanimous and wholehearted support for the education of the Burgher children in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

Eight children, for whom financial assistance was given by their sponsors through Eighty Club, and whose names are below, have completed the O/L and A/L examinations. We take this opportunity to sincerely thank the sponsors and the Eighty Club for its generous gesture to help these children.

May the good Lord bless all the sponsors and members of the Eighty Club.

Sylvester De Zilva  
Rexclin DeLima  
Roger Filson Outschoorn  
Romela Outschoorn  
Robinson Peterson  
Mary Roshan Ragel  
Meriya Evenjalin Starreck  
Richard Webster Warnasinghe

Sgd. Sonny Ockersz,  
*President,  
Burgher Union, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.*

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