



SalGO News

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India Visit- better late than never!

The visit we intended to take last October finally began on 29th January with a flight to Hyderabad, arriving 5.20am. A taxi to the internal rail station was followed by a tedious 8 hour train journey to Bapatla. The enthusiastic welcome at Bapatla Station from the children in the CS and PS Homes made it all worthwhile; the two weary travellers in their late 80's were now in good hands. Over the next 12 days we made at least 20 visits, including all the community projects we support in education, child care and among the elderly. Please continue your prayers and giving for SalGOERCO's work with the poor.

Above all it was the celebrations around the **20th Anniversary of the Opening of a temporary Home for 15 orphaned and abandoned children in Bapatla** which took us to India at this time. Originally planned for 19th January it was finally held on Sunday 3rd February, so that Clifford and Pat, representing SalGO Assist, could be present. And what a great occasion it was! Most of the "old boys and girls" returned for the reunion accompanied, in many cases by husbands, wives and children. The very first residents, rescued from begging and taken in on 19th January 1999, remembered the little room where they ate and slept, the area outside for cooking and washing, and getting used to daily school attendance – a new experience for some. Others could only remember the new, purpose-built Home, opened in 2002. But for all present, right down to the children taken in during this last year, it was a proud occasion. Many photos were taken. Clifford was invited to plant two commemorative coconut trees in the garden of the Boys' Home (CSHB). Both Homes looked at their best, the CSHB having recently been painted and repairs completed.

The evening celebration, which included sketches, dances and songs, was highly appreciated by the 550 guests, who were also treated to a sit-down meal in the play area next to the PSHG. Children from the two Homes, from FSP and SUTAE "shared their hearts how they are benefitting from SalGO Assist and continue for higher studies" (the words of Shalem, the Warden). In accordance with tradition all past and present residents of the Homes received new clothes and mementos of the occasion. Clifford and Pat were presented with a handsome commemorative plaque which they have since been able to share with trustees and supporters of SalGO Assist back home.

Pat and I want to record our deep appreciation of all the hard work, enthusiasm and prayer that went into the celebration, especially the Wardens, Shalem, Indira, John, Rekha and Suvarna Kumar, and Vamalamma, the cook and the many willing helpers.



The children and wardens with Clifford and Pat



The girls entertain the large audience with their dancing



SalGOERCO leaders and visitors hold the commemorative plaque

The cost of the 20th Anniversary, which our friends in India felt they really must celebrate, was £2133. The balance still owed for clothing and other costs is £1088. If any of our readers would like to help clear this debt please contact the chairman or treasurer as soon as possible.

FSP (Family Support Project) Family News

One of the many visits was to the **FSP (Family Support Project) families**. Here we share a couple of highlights from these visits.

Shahanazbee, from a Muslim background, has been with FSP since 2014, and her story is remarkable. Not only does she look after two children of her own she also cares for her three brothers, with the two older having learning difficulties. The eldest cannot work at all, the second stitches buttons in a tailor's shop 3 days a week, and the youngest works as a painter.



Married to Suresh at the age of 14 years Shahanazbee gave birth to a son, Abishake, then a daughter, Reshma. Two years later her husband deserted her for another woman. In 2010 when they were divorced Shahanazbee and her children went back to live with her mother and brothers. In 2014, when her mother died, Shahanazbee decided to take

responsibility for the whole family. Although we had met her in 2016 it was only on our trip in February that we learned that she would like to open a shop, something she could do from home. For less than £200 we have got her started. We wish Shahanazbee every success in this venture. Meanwhile the children are doing well at school: her son, Abishake has just completed 9th Class and her daughter, Reshma, 6th Class.

Nagamani was married off at 13 to a rickshaw driver aged 24 in 2003. After the birth of their second child he found another woman, began to beat his wife, and failed to provide food for the table. It was when he twice tried to murder them all that Nagamani decided she must leave Appikatla with her children. She rented a house in Padisonpet, Bapatla. And there her life changed. SalGOERCO invited her to join the FSP and receive a modest but regular monthly allowance from SalGO Assist, provided she sends her children regularly to school.

But she is also determined to help herself. She took some tailoring training in women's and children's clothes, so when Clifford and Pat visited in February she knew exactly what she wanted – a sewing machine. As it happens a member of our congregation had given me £50 for whatever need came up. This was surely the time. With a few pounds added Nagamani was able to fulfil her dream. Soon after our return to UK we received this picture showing her at work on the first garment she made. There's not enough demand to work only at tailoring so she does casual work in the fields whenever possible. Her son, **Prem Kumar**, and daughter, **Sindhu**, have just completed 6th Class and 4th Class respectively. We wish the whole family every success in the days to come.



Pastor Battu Bhushanam, RIP.

Pastor Gamaliel's uncle died on 19th March, age 70 years, less than 3 weeks after his wife, Meclarin (age 77 years). He has suffered from diabetes and blood pressure for the last two years. They will be remembered as having looked after some of the first 15 children taken into the temporary CSO Home. When Gamaliel ran out of money to feed them, it was his uncle and aunt who took them into their home in Krishna Dt. Gamaliel's father, Pastor Zachaiah, used to visit Battu's Church and encourage the believers. Two faithful servants of God are now at rest.

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Donations can be made via: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/10477>