

OCEAN STARS TRUST



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NEWSLETTER 11

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WWW.OCEANSTARS.ORG.UK



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<http://ost09.blogspot.com/>

Key Highlights:

- Ocean Stars has now raised over £140,000 since inception and is actively funding over 25 projects.
- OST visited projects in Sri Lanka during March. Future projects are planned for June, July, August and October 2010.
- Fundraising; £1000 raised in a recent curry evening
- Teacher training sessions receive positive feedback from local teachers with new skills and ideas now being used with the children in the classroom.
- New part time field worker appointed to assist EOST on the ground as number of projects undertaken expands.

Current Wish List:

- More donors needed for our lunch projects. £10 a month. Please see page 2 for details.
- FIVE more sponsors required to cover teachers wages. -£15 per month.
- Children at Grace Children's home are looking for funding to help with books and everyday essentials such as clothing and shoes -£10 per month.
- SIX PARACHUTES needed for Playgroups. Cost is £20 per parachute. SIX needed.
- TWO HUNDRED children require playgroup Uniform at t £3.50 each..

AYUBOWANG VANAKKAM HELLO

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our eleventh newsletter. It is now 5 years since the Ocean Stars Trust was established following the Boxing Day Tsunami of December 2004.

Ocean Stars now focuses its work on sustainable community development with a view to rebuilding the lives shattered by the 30 years ethnic conflict as well as the scars of the Tsunami. Our aim is simple-we aim to bring a smile to the faces of children and families who have so little but give so much to all whom they meet.

I would like to thank all our donors for your continued support. Without your vital donations-our work could not continue. Thank you! The people of Sri Lanka with whom we work are so grateful for all that we do to make a difference to their lives. Our field workers on the ground have asked me to pass on their

heartfelt thanks to you for giving them the opportunities to transform their lives.

We must also give a big thank you to Ranchan, the Chairman of EOST (Eastern Ocean Stars) with whom we work closely to ensure that the projects we sponsor work smoothly. We would also like to thank his dedicated team who work tirelessly to make sure all our projects receive the personal touch which all the beneficiaries on the ground really value. A special big thank you also goes out to Yasmin, OUR Trinco co-coordinator and Mrs Nadarajah who single handedly runs Grace Children's Home for 27 boys. Their hard work and dedication to these communities mean that we have been able to see visible changes on each of our visits.

Dilanee Founder, Ocean Stars Trust

Matt Marshall inspired by his trip last October returned to Sri Lanka for 8 weeks in March 2010!

Here is an extract from his blog

"Today it was back on the road on the back of Ranchan's motorbike! . My first visit was back to Tirrukovil nursery. This was the first project I visited in Batticaloa last year and one which has stayed in my mind when I was thinking about coming back. I was relieved to see that little had changed. The freedom and joy with which the children play and learn is a true testament to the two teachers' abilities and dedication. We spent almost all morning playing with skipping ropes,

the parachute and blowing bubbles. Then it was time for the children to have lunch and then home-time! I have six more nurseries to visit – not to mention a whole host of sponsored children and their families! I have no doubt that Ranchan will be keeping me busy

<http://mattm2010ost.blogspot.com>



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GIFT CATALOGUE 2009/2010

www.oceanstars.org.uk

Set up by Bron Lambert, the OST Fund Raising Officer, our second catalogue was an even bigger success than the first! It has enabled Ocean Stars to give over £1200 worth of gifts to the people of Sri Lanka. The gifts of bicycles, school uniforms, tables and chairs, to name a few have been received with much happiness, and we hope that the new Gift Catalogue will continue to be a way of meeting the needs of the Sri Lankan people that we support. Here are a few examples of gifts donated



New school uniforms for 500 children



A new bicycle for teacher of painting class



Over 500 chickens were bought to help families start their own business in poultry farming.

TEACHER TRAINING

Following a successful teacher training day in October 2010, teachers are now using some of their new skills we taught them as well as using the parachute we provided and demonstrating the new skipping skills with their pupils.

A small parachute costs £15 and a skipping rope can be bought for under

a £1 in Sri Lanka. The teachers are looking forward to learning more new skills during team visits in 2010.



Children receive new school shoes from Gift Catalogue funds

LUNCH PROJECT APPEAL

Ocean Stars runs three lunch projects at the moment. This gives over 100 children

the opportunity to have a healthy nutritious meal every day. We believe this project is vital and without it, most of these children would not receive a hot, nutritious meal on a daily basis. The teachers

in the lunch project nurseries have commented how healthier the children are for having this meal. They have less colds and coughs and fevers and are able to concentrate better. The funding we have had from a private donor is soon coming to an end. We are appealing for donors to come forward with donations of £10 or more a month. The total cost of the projects is £200 a month. We are now looking to encourage home gardening so that the lunch projects can become self sustaining as soon as possible.



A report from Matt who spent a few days at Grace:



All the boys at Grace were a little shy at first when I met them during their study time. However with homework out of the way, that all changes and thanks to the bouncy balls that Maureen Johnston of Fleet

had sent for the boys. They went down a treat and we spent many hours playing with them! The boys were still calling me master, at this point, which I have to admit, I found rather strange given that I was there to play

with them and not to take the authoritative role they are used to men taking. However yesterday they

started calling me "Uncle" in Tamil, which made me feel a lot more comfortable! The following day, I had a chance to watch the boys doing

their chores; watering the plants and sweeping up the leaves before they were allowed to play sports. As soon as the chores were done a group of grinning boys ran out to the grass with the

parachute donated by Heatherside Infant School last year. I was pleased to see that they had taken such good care of it and took great pride in showing me the games they like to play with it.

Ocean Stars would also like to thank Mrs. Nadarajah who "has been a wonderful host" to Matt. She is nearing 75 years of age and looks after these 27 needy boys on her own. Our thoughts are with her that a successor may be soon found.



OCEAN STARS TRUST



Ocean Stars sponsors over 100 children from poor communities in

Batticaloa and Trincomalee in Sri Lanka. It costs just £10 a month to sponsor a child. This money is transferred directly to the child and only the mother has access to the account. We get regular bank statements from Sri Lanka to make sure the system is operating and that the children are receiving the funds.

We have continued requests for more children to join our sponsorship programmes. To do this we need more sponsors. If you are interested in sponsoring a child till the age of 18 then please get in touch with us. Matt

had this to say about the sponsor families he visited: "In a sense this makes the work I'm doing with Ranchan in Batticaloa more powerful; with these young children Ocean Stars really has the opportunity to make permanent change.



www.oceanstars.org.uk

<http://mattm2010ost.blogspot.com>

CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Every day

I'm visiting a nursery in the morning

and then three or four sponsor children and their families each night; the reception from these families is without fail so happy and so grateful despite whatever the situation of that particular family may be.

When asked if they have any messages for their sponsor, the vast majority ask for a family photo - they want to

have a real and tangible link with these people towards whom they have so much gratitude - something that Ocean Stars can facilitate, whereas other larger NGOs may not. Even more so than my last visits, it has really struck me how powerful the gift of sponsorship is; the children almost always use the money for extra tuition, and it provides them with a very real sense of future and security."



I am struck by how powerful the gift of sponsorship is. It makes such a difference to the life of each

individual child.

GIFT AID

If you are a new donor please contact us about receiving a Gift Aid form. If you are a taxpayer, we are able to claim tax back on your donation.

Gift Aid is an extremely important form of finance to OST. It should be noted that if you are a higher rate tax payer, you may be able to obtain further relief on your Gift Aid donation in your tax return.

"Last year Ocean Stars received over £5000 in Gift Aid"

Ocean Stars Web-shop

www.buy.at/Oceanstars Web shop

We would like to remind you to shop at www.buy.at/Oceanstars. All you have to do is log on to our web shop at www.buy.at/Oceanstars and select the retailer that you would like to shop from. You will then be directed to the normal on-line web shop of your choice. Any purchases you make from the retailers will generate commission for Ocean Stars - at no additional cost to yourself. Many of the big -name on-line retailers feature on the web shop e.g. Amazon, Marks & Spencer, John Lewis etc and many have **free postage**. The commission they pay Ocean Stars is our reward for promoting their retailer.

SRI LANKA LENTIL CURRY

- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 2 medium onions finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 mugs red lentils
- 2 cups vegetable stock and 1 cup coconut milk
 - 1 cinnamon stick
 - 2 red chillies finely chopped
 - chopped fresh coriander



Heat the oil in a medium pan. Add the onion and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes till onion is golden brown. Add the chilli and turmeric and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the lentils, coconut milk, stock and cinnamon stick. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick. Garnish with chopped fresh coriander and serve.



Images from Projects



Women making items at their painting class to sell at local markets. They are grateful to Ocean Stars for providing them with a livelihood.



Children from Urani Playgroup enjoy their first ever group outing to the beach. Even though they live near the beach parents do not have the money to transport children to the beach.



Children perform for the OST Christmas extravaganza where every child received a gift from Ocean Stars.

<http://ost09.blogspot.com/>



TEDDIES FOR CHILDREN

Each year the OST Team take with them teddies knitted by people all over the UK to give to children in Sri Lanka. Over the last 5 years over 700 teddies have been distributed to children. For a child who has no toys a teddy gives them something to cuddle and hold and possess. If anyone would like to knit teddies for us then please do so and get in touch with us to arrange collection.

TEDDY PATTERN can be found on www.teddiesfortragedies.com



CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Every child in the playgroups that Ocean Stars works with received an Ocean Stars rucksack as their school bag for the year. The children also received an Ocean Stars uniform. We would like to thank all of you who have donated funds for uniforms. The children wear their uniforms with great pride.



GRACE CHILDREN'S HOME

Funds raised by Heatherside Infant School in Fleet have gone towards purchasing a drum set for the children of Grace. Roy, one of the children, shows off his skills to Matt.

<http://mattm2010ost.blogspot.com>

OST VISITS 2010

Helen Oliver, a member of Team 2008, is going back to visit OST projects in June 2010. with her husband Calum. She will be then joined by Janaki, an Ocean Stars Trustee, and they will be working with playgroups in Batticaloa. Also joining them are 3 other supporters of Ocean Stars. They will be playing with the children as well as running a workshop for some of the teachers. OST Team 2010 will be making their annual visit to Sri Lanka in October 2010. Members of all teams have been busy fund raising for OST projects. A Karaoke evening, curry evening, coffee mornings are some of the activities that have taken place so far. The trustees are very proud that so many Team members have been inspired by their trips to do more for the people of Sri Lanka. We thank them all for their hard work and wish them well in their travels.



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We hope you continue to support our work in making a difference to the lives of the people of Sri Lanka. Donations made payable to "Ocean Stars Trust" can be sent to us at the above address. We will continue to keep you updated with our work.

May God Bless you. Budhu Saranay.

From left to right

Janaki Jayasuriya
Trustee

Shona Holroyd
Treasurer

Dilanee Bunter
Founder

Jo Barton
Secretary

John Bunter
Chairperson

Bron Lambert
Trustee