

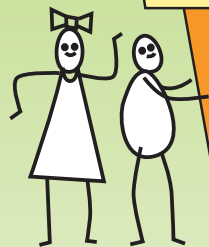
NEWS

from

BATEMANS

ISSUE 14

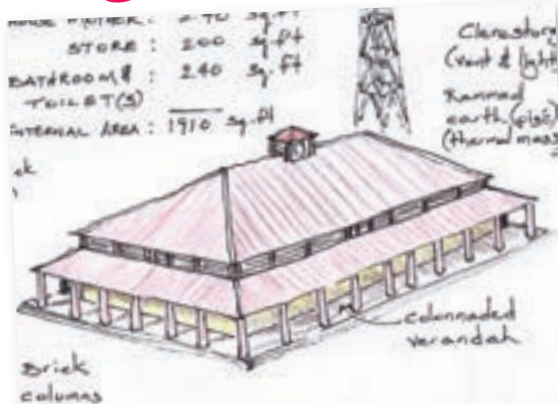
Autumn/Winter 2014



Angelina and Morganapriya.... animatedly re-telling Michael Rosen's classic children's story 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Visit our website at batemans.org.uk to see them feature in our uplifting film about Batemans.

New school plans are forging ahead

So far, your donations have enabled us to buy the bus we need to transport children safely between schools, homes and hostels and, with careful management, we're delighted we now have enough in our reserve funds to purchase land for our new development. We are researching areas outside Chennai that have the greatest need for schooling, while being within reach of schools in Chennai for existing and older Batemans children.



Welcome...

This newsletter is packed full of news of the Batemans Trust and the progress of the children in Chennai who we are all supporting. These are very exciting times as the charity pushes ahead with plans for a new boarding home and school that will help so many more children. We still have a long way to go, but with your support we believe we can do it.

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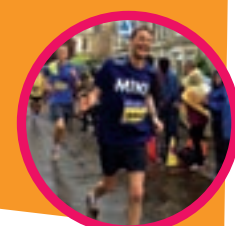
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Donate to Batemans and make a real difference...

Visit our page at www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust

Chennai Chatter



Above: The Batemans Open School children looking smart in their new uniforms.

Support from the Overseas Women's Club

Our project manager, Monica, gave a brilliant presentation to the Overseas Women's Club (OWC) in Chennai in September.

The ladies were very interested in our work and some have already been to visit our projects – donating supplies and committing to reading in the Open School.

We are grateful for their interest and support, and look forward to working with them in the future.



Our Batemans Bus

A big thank-you to everyone who contributed to the purchase of our new bus! We're very pleased with our 12-seater – and we'll soon have the Yellow Board licence,

which will mean we can transport the children between hostels and schools. In the meantime we've been able to use it for travelling shorter distances.



Madras turns 375 and Independence Day

In August it was the 375th birthday of Madras, now known as Chennai. To celebrate, the girls baked birthday cakes and the Open School children went on

a heritage tour of the city. They were very impressed by the buildings, including the 16th century Luz church and the Stone Chariot at Valluvar Kottam.

Boys move home

The Boys' hostel has moved to a new home and the boys are enjoying the extra space. Jean, who had been a matron at St George's and Lisa Bhavan, is now looking after the boys and keeping them clean and tidy!



New children

We're delighted to have welcomed some new children to the school and hostel, including youngsters whose parents are migrant workers from Nagaland in the north-east of India. A steady trail of migrant workers from states in this area come to Chennai for work, but a lack of documents, and not understanding Tamil, means they are often excluded from mainstream schools. It's wonderful to see them enjoying school and all the children have had lots of fun learning about their traditions and celebrating new festivals!



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Tuition teacher for one month... £50

"It was so rewarding to see the very same children that we were helping to read six years ago, now studying at college"

Former Batemans volunteers Alison and Simon Reid, from Bristol, returned to Chennai this summer. Here, they recall a few highlights

Six years ago, our whole family – two adults and four children (then aged 13, 11, seven and four) volunteered for the Batemans Trust.

None of us had ever visited India before but we were excited by the idea of working with the children at St George's School, helping them learn to read, teaching them drama and mounting a theatre production on the new outdoor bamboo stage to celebrate Bateman's Tenth Year Anniversary.

We returned this summer, full of excitement about meeting and working with the children again, while also knowing

'We were overwhelmed by how enthusiastic and responsive both staff and students were'

we were returning to a new setting for Batemans' Open School and boarding houses.

It was wonderful to see the new school up and running and to visit the new boys' hostel too. We spent three days playing drama games and working with the students – it was incredible how much we did and



how much fun we had. Monica, who now so calmly and confidently heads up the school, commented on how some of the more shy children had begun, even in that short space of time, to come out of their shells.

We were overwhelmed by how enthusiastic and responsive both staff and students were, how welcoming and open they were to new ways of working.

From playing the 'chewing gum game' (a game that Monica has since told me is asked for almost daily!) in the ground floor of the girls' hostel, to creating a moving auto rickshaw just using their bodies on the roof-top of the boys' hostel – they all threw themselves fully into everything. The children's ability to work so openly and confidently with new people is a credit to Monica and all the hard work, love and warmth she pours into their lives.

We were touched that some of the old boys and girls came to see us. How rewarding to see the very same children that we were helping to read six years ago, now studying at college. They were so grown-up and determined to succeed – one boy has even been Facebooking our daughter, discussing English literature, which they are both now studying! What better endorsement for supporting this charity and the incredible work that is done nurturing young people from very disadvantaged backgrounds successfully through school and college.

The family feeling of support and encouragement floods out of the school. We just wished we had stayed longer and are already wondering when we can return again.





Celestial (third from left) with her fellow trainee nurses

Changing lives forever

Celestial is in her third year of nursing college and really enjoying it. In July her sponsors visited Chennai and she had the chance to meet and thank them. Celestial is sponsored by The Australian Dream Makers who are former pupils of St George's living in Australia.

Here are some more Batemans' success stories:



Eileen, a former St George's pupil and Lisa Bhavan (girls' hostel) resident is now working full-time at a communications company and doing really well. Eileen, an orphan, was supported by Batemans

from the age of five when her grandfather brought her to us. Eileen says: "Batemans has been one of those very brightly-lit stars that guided me and showed me the way to success and I can't thank them enough. Batemans have always encouraged me in all the hard battles of my life. I will always remember Batemans and their unconditional love and help towards my upcoming and for what I am today."



Former Open School student, Catherine, now helps out at the girls' hostel using the tailoring skills she learnt to take in work and earn her keep. Catherine

had a very unsettled past and was heading for a juvenile detention centre when her grandmother brought her to Batemans. She joined the Open School and did well; she was academically capable but not suited to the formal school system. After courses and work placements in hairdressing and tailoring, it became clear that Catherine was most secure and happiest within the Open School, so she has settled with us and is very happy.



Mervyn, a former Open School student, is now working at a Radisson Hotel in Chennai. An orphan with two brothers at St George's, Mervyn was dyslexic and couldn't keep up at school. With Batemans Open School he passed his 10th standard and gained lots of confidence building skills like learning to swim. Mervyn says: "I am so grateful to [The Batemans Trust] for what I am today. I have grown in confidence and I am proud that I am independent now and able to look after myself."



Robert was only four when he came to live at our boys' hostel. His family lived a precarious life sheltering on the construction sites they worked on. After his father and brother disappeared, his mother, an illiterate site-worker, brought Robert to Batemans, determined he should have a better life. He is now studying at Little Lambs School and enjoys reading books, playing football and swimming lessons.

Staff member Q&A: Fiona, from Lisa Bhavan girls' hostel



Fiona has been with The Batemans Trust since 1999. Until then she was at home bringing up her two sons, George and Deon, both of whom have completed school/college and are now employed.

Q What does your average day involve?

A Waking up the children from bed and preparing them to go to school, supervising preparation of breakfast and packed lunches. Then I get the other children ready to go to Open School.

I arrange tea for teachers and put out snacks for children. During the day I make school/college visits at regular intervals, supervise lunch and escort the Open School

children and 'home girls' in the van. In the evening I serve and supervise evening tea and snacks and supervise study time for senior girls from 6pm to 8pm. After supper, I organise prayer time.

Q What part of your work do you most enjoy?

A Being involved in the upbringing of children. I've been at Lisa Bhavan for so long now and I've bonded with the

girls so much that I miss them during my days off.

Q What is the most challenging aspect?

A Behaviour management of children has been one of the chief challenges.

Q What do you do in your spare time?

A See my family, husband and sons and catch up on my own housekeeping!



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Christmas dinner for ten children... £18

Fundraising events

It is thanks to the generosity of our donors, supporters and sponsors of children that the Batemans Trust is able to flourish. All have been magnificent. For 16 years the Wilton Party has made a big annual contribution. For 14 years the Tallow Chandlers Company has supported us generously, as has John Denham. The "old boys" in UK and Australia, Francesco Faresin in Italy and Yuletide Reelers have also sustained us. To them and to all our many donors, the Trustees are extremely grateful.



Dan and Lawrence man our stall at the Truck Festival in Oxfordshire

Our annual stall at the Truck Festival in Steventon was a great success, raising more than £2,000 through the sale of soups and casseroles. A big thank-you to Blewbury School who helped man the stall, and our other hard-working helpers!

In August, a group of supporters visited 'The Clink' Restaurant, in Brixton prison.

The restaurant is staffed by inmates and helps rehabilitate prisoners, reducing re-offending rates and providing a future. It was a very enjoyable and inspirational day out, as well as raising money for Batemans. Thanks to Mary Thompson for organising this and all our events. To find out more, email Mary at batemans.events@gmail.com or call 01235 832077.

This summer, longstanding supporters Sheila and Gerald Wilton held their 16th lunch event for Batemans! Their summer BBQ was a great success and raised more than £2,000. We are so grateful for their incredible support over the years.

The annual Spice Lunch in Steventon, organised by Nick and Mary Thompson, raised £710. It was well-attended and great to see so many familiar faces.

A big thanks goes to the folk at St Mary's Church in Cholsey, Oxfordshire, who have raised an incredible £9,000 through their fundraising events for Batemans. This has contributed towards the purchase of the Batemans bus, supplies and general running expenses for the Open School and hostels.



The Wiltons' famous annual BBQ lunch in Kent

Mike's marathon effort



Mike Sewell ran his first-ever marathon in May, raising more than £6,700 in the process for Batemans.

Mike, who is chair of Batemans' trustees, was among some 25,000 people who took part in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival, one of the biggest events of its kind in the UK.

He completed the 26.2 mile course in 3 hrs 37 minutes – and is delighted to have fulfilled a long-held ambition to run a marathon, while also supporting Batemans. "My family and I spent a year in Chennai in 2006," he said. "Our eyes were opened then to the way Batemans' work transforms the lives of youngsters from some of Chennai's poorest and most disadvantaged communities.

"The training was hard, but it would have been a whole lot harder if I hadn't been able to draw on my own experiences to remind myself what it was all for. I would like to thank everyone, including family, friends, work and other contacts who contributed so generously."

Would you like to take part in an event to raise money for Batemans? It's really easy to set up a fundraising page via justgiving.com/batemanstrust or contact emma@batemans.org.uk for help.

Generosity makes such a difference

The Batemans Trust is very grateful to the wonderful financial support of a number of organisations and individuals.

Natural skincare company Liz Earle (www.uk.lizearle.com) has made an extremely generous donation, while former students of St George's School, based in Australia and the UK, have also given generously to our work, because they see how we are supporting members of the Anglo-Indian community in Chennai who are in need.

We have also received funds via a number of bequests and would like to thank the many hundreds of people who buy items via our Wish List.

Thank you to you all.

Make the most of our 2014 wish list!

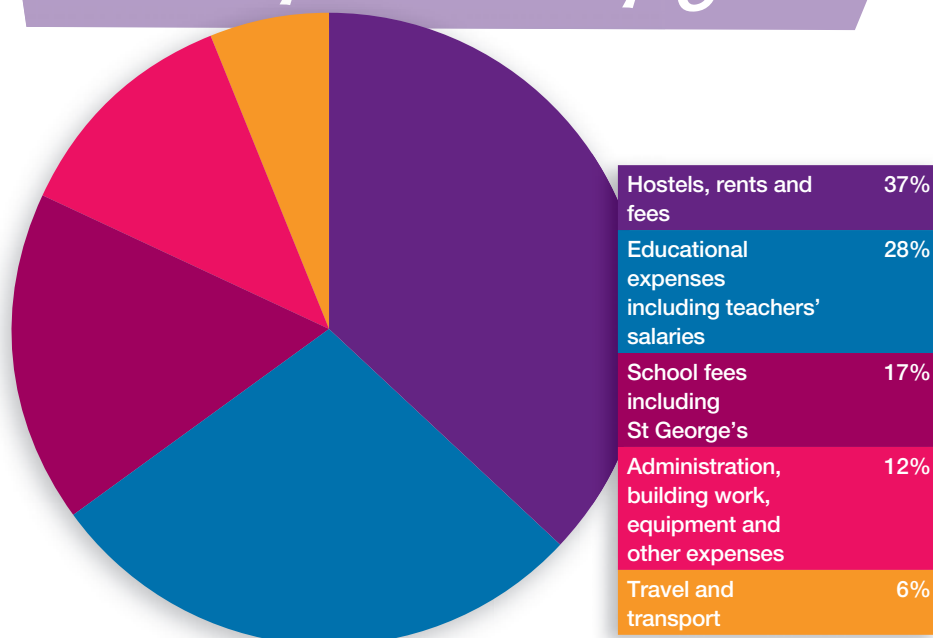
Thank you to everyone who has donated via the Batemans wish list over the last few years. It's an important part of our annual fundraising and we're reliably informed it helps you with your Christmas shopping every year!

Our wish list allows people to 'buy' items for Batemans' children by way of a gift for family or friends. This year we are asking people to buy everyday essential items and resources that our children need, to help us cover our core costs and ring-fence donations towards our new school.

For more information, go to www.justgiving.com/wishlist2014



Where your money goes



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Uniform for one child... £10

Meet Emma, our new fundraiser

Emma Sagar started working for Batemans in April. After interviewing several impressive candidates, we decided that Emma had the right mix of skills - marketing, fundraising, copywriting and corporate experience - and the right approach. She also has a self-confessed love affair with all things Indian, having visited and studied South Asian Culture at SOAS in London



Dear Batemans Supporters,

I've been immensely impressed with the work that Batemans have done over the years and the incredible support you have given to make this possible... long may this continue!

My role is to promote The Batemans Trust to potential donors, particularly corporate, major donors and trusts who will help us to raise the money needed to build a new boarding home and school. As you can imagine, this is no small task and requires a long-term plan.

We've kicked off by developing a detailed plan for the new school, including pricing and plans from

The Auroville Design consultancy in Tamil Nadu (they have a reputation for creating sustainable, low-cost and efficient school buildings).

I've also been working with Mike Sewell (Batemans' chairman) and his company CPL to redesign the website to really let the work of the charity shine through.

With the help and expert input of Alex Jacob, Sophie Bessemer and Becky Sewell I've created a Schools Pack, to encourage UK schools to fundraise for Batemans and sponsor children in Chennai.

Blewbury Primary School in Oxfordshire will be the first school to trial this pack and we hope many more will follow.

I'm also applying to trusts and corporations with interests in India for larger donations so if you know of any funds or companies you think we should be approaching please drop me a line at emma@batemans.org.uk or call me on 07740 379 162.

We're very grateful to the UK All Indian Anglo Association Education Fund for their generous gift of £2,000 towards the school fees of our children.

As you know, our children attend local fee paying schools and higher education institutes - this is an increasing expense as we enable more of our children to go on to higher education and vocational training to achieve the very best they can!

Please go to our recently updated Facebook page and 'Like us'. We're also on Twitter so 'follow us' on there for more updates.

Can you help us? Do you know anyone working in corporate social responsibility or a charitable trust that you could recommend Batemans to? Or maybe you have links with a primary school or teacher who would be interested in our schools pack?

Personal recommendations are our strongest asset, so if you can help spread the word, please do!

Emma



Got a fundraising idea? Contact Emma via emma@batemans.org.uk or call 07740 379 162



Donate to Batemans and make a real difference...

Visit our page at www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust

