



**AUSTRALIND
CHILDRENS
FUND**

Make a Difference

NEWSLETTER SEP 18.4

EDITOR: Alex Jane

Australind Childrens Fund is a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization that works with organizations and communities in India with a focus on health and education for children with disability and disadvantage. For more information, visit:

 <https://www.australindchildrensfund.org/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/AustralindCF/>



PREMA VASAM
Chennai, India



MITHRA
Chennai, India



JOHNSONS SECONDARY SCHOOL
Herbertpur, Northern India



PARIJAT ACADEMY
Guwahati, Assam, India

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(above) Chinnama shoots for a goal at Prema Vasam

REPORT FROM LEX JANE

In June/July this year I visited Prema Vasam for the fourth time in the last six years. Every time I arrive in India I am greeted by Indra or Selvyn and several of the girls who are ready to take my bags (no matter how much I protest). This initial act of humble service – greeting and assisting – truly sets the tone for every trip to Prema Vasam. Whilst volunteering is often carried out under the pretext of ‘helping’, I can honestly and unashamedly say that the help I personally receive at Prema Vasam far outweighs anything I could possibly offer in return. Therefore, the reasons I have repeatedly returned to Prema Vasam are simple and clear: to learn as much as possible, to understand the importance of service and perhaps most of all, to have fun with close friends.

The benefit of visiting Prema Vasam over an extended period of time is witnessing the consequences of persistent hard work and belief. Only four years ago I recall visiting the plot of land where Prem Illam (the girls’ home) now stands. I remember Saturday mornings involved travelling by bus with Indra, Mumtaj or Selvyn out to the construction site with a handful of girls to carry bricks, plant trees and mix concrete. Whilst I only helped once or twice (and it is questionable whether I helped at all!) it is remarkable to believe that Selvyn was there every weekend with a range of people to assist in any way possible. Arriving at Prem Illam, after four years and countless hours of work later, it was inspiring to see the home now standing with several children waiting to greet us.

It is also important to note the colossal effort of Indra to complete the official paperwork for the home and officially running Prem Illam with love and determination.

What started as a plot of land covered in rock has been transformed in a matter of time thanks to the tireless work of those involved. I am proud that the Australind network was able to help finance this amazing project that will have long lasting impacts upon the education of young women in India.



(Above) Pugal carrying bananas harvested from Prem Illam. (Left) Pugal with Kotti and Sumitra at Prem Illam. (Far left) Lex Jane at Prema Vasam.

**AUSTRALIND CHILDRENS FUND
40TH ANNIVERSARY HIGH TEA**

On the 24th of June this year, Australind hosted our second high tea fundraising event at the Stamford Plaza, Adelaide. The sold-out event was a fantastic way to reflect on the achievements of Australind over the past 40 years.



(above) MC, Dorinda Hafner auctions Aileen Gale's famous scones.



(above) Naveen and Remo in the physiotherapy room at Prema Vasam.



The other noticeable change at Prema Vasam was the manner in which the home is able to carry out its motto: to serve, not to be served. Whilst it is always amazing to see some of the carers still serving others every day (Chinnama, Uma, Natsuma and Coutima to name a few), it was perhaps more remarkable to see others continually contribute to the running of the home. Upon my first visit in 2012, Divya and Poornima were two young girls who, though always helpful, often required the assistance of others. Six years on, Divya and Poornima now help feed others who are unable to feed themselves. Other girls who have finished their studies also assist the home in any way possible. These are just a few examples of the constant progression and willingness to help others that ensures that their motto is persistently realised and Prema Vasam continues to function as the largest family I know.

Finally, it is important to note that despite all the hard work and acts of service that happen on a daily basis, time spent at Prema Vasam is always unmistakably fun. Fun comes in many forms at Prema Vasam such as playing badminton or basketball, coco (an Indian running game) or just joking with whoever is around. So, I would like to thank all at Prema Vasam who make every moment enjoyable. On returning back to Melbourne I feel refreshed, privileged for my time spent in Chennai and always with one eye on the next time I can visit.

(left) Lex Jane with Pugal during his trip to Prema Vasam in June/July this year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Celebrating and reflecting on the past 40 years of Australind Children's Fund with afternoon tea/coffee including Aileen's famous scones! We look forward to seeing you there.

WHERE: YILKI UNITING CHURCH. 30 GILES ST, ENCOUNTER BAY

WHEN: SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER AT 2PM

DONATION \$ _____

DATE: / /

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

Please indicate in the boxes below whether this donation is for an annual \$10 membership and your preferred form of contact

- This is a \$10 membership donation for Australind CF
- post email



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