

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au



TEWFI And TEWOAF Governance Status Approved

Earlier this year the Government of India cancelled the permits of all NGOs receiving funds from overseas, prior to a detailed review of all of their operations.

The East West Foundation of India was one of the first batch of NGOs that ticked all the boxes and was reissued with the Foreign Currency Regulatory Authority permit in August this year.

The Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission has also reviewed The East West Overseas Aid Foundation and is totally satisfied with its operations.

**“Thy business is with action
only, never with its fruits”
Bhagavad Gita 2;47**

At our 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner Dance on October 6th our generous supporters provided the final kick to ensure the medical facility building project can be completed by early 2018.

See Page 2 for Dr Roy Karna's note of his recent journey to improve the medical facilities available to the women of the Uluru community.

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

“My next challenge is to have a small emergency treatment room and to enlist the help of a part time female doctor.”

Dr Roy Karna, June 2017 TEWOAF Newsletter

Our sporting coaches exhort their players to attend to the processes of their game and the result will take care of itself. It is a theme they have borrowed from the renowned Indian scripture the Bhagavad Gita, where Krishna (the coach) tells Arjuna (his main player) that we have control over our work and actions, but we have no command of the results.

As Dr Chandran, Andreas Bickford (our architect) and I embarked upon our project to help disadvantaged women folk in the Uluru village community, we had to often heed this advice.

Deprived of a female doctor who could examine them in clean, sterile conditions, where they could be treated with dignity and the calming reassurance of a women's health service, these women had suffered for many years, whilst at the same time toiling and tending to their families.

The project of building a treatment room and a Women's Health Clinic service has been mired in financial and logistical problems. Over the past 18 months we have dealt with these issues one by one, trying not to think of the end result because it seemed so far away.

At our 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner Dance on October 6th our kind and generous supporters provided the final kick to ensure the project can be completed by early 2018.

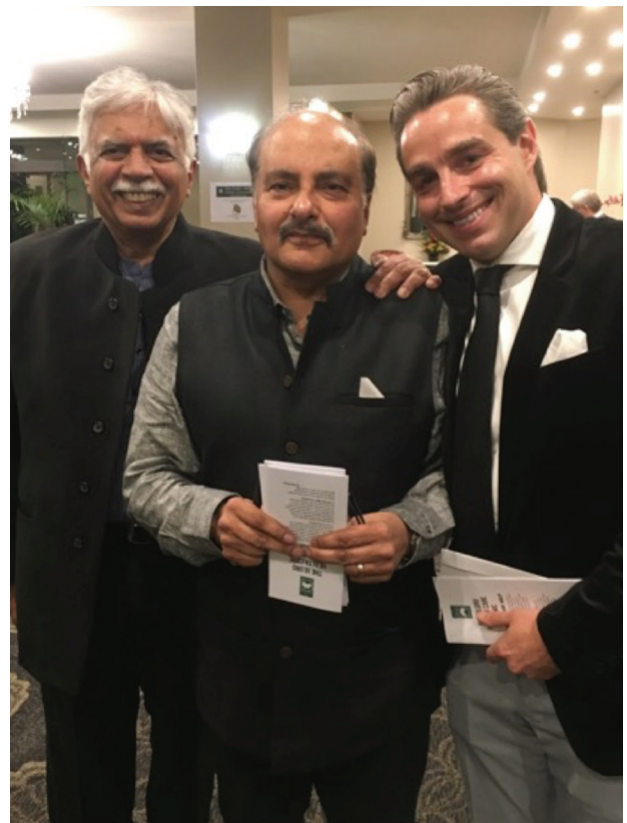
I want to particularly thank the Vicki Standish Foundation, Dr Hedley Griffiths and Fiona Mercer for their generous support.

All our supporters who made both large and small donations also have my eternal gratitude and I will in forthcoming newsletters show how those funds have been put to use in completing the building infrastructure.

At this time I would also like to note that the Foundation's lifeblood actually relies on our **Day Sponsorship Program**. Nominating a day a year and supporting it with a \$400 donation a year provides the day to day running costs of the TEWFI Uluru community. (Please see the back page of the newsletter as well as Dr Chandran's enclosed letter for details).

I am afraid that October 6th, the day of our 25th Anniversary Dinner, is a day that I have already taken to sponsor. It is the day where I saw an Australian community support another more needing community in a different, remote part of the world in a way that brought a lump in my throat and tears to my eyes.

Dr Roy Karna



Dr Natteri Chandran, Dr Roy Karna and Julian Standish at TEWOAF's 25th Anniversary Dinner Dance

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

TEWOAF's 25 Year Celebration!



On Friday 6th October 2017 the Foundation celebrated its Silver Anniversary with a fundraising Dinner Dance. The function was a wonderful sign of support, with over \$100,000.00 received from ticket sales, the raffle and auction, day sponsorships and special donations from the night.

The ballroom shimmered as guests mingled amid splashes of vibrant colour. Beautifully hand decorated champagne glasses came with a raffle ticket allowing entry into the raffle for a marquise diamond cluster dress ring. On each table were earrings for the ladies and a thankyou card drawn by the children.

David Parsons and Arch Staver as Master of Ceremonies and Auctioneer respectively, assisted with the proceedings. We thank them both.

The auction and silent auction proved very popular once again. An added attraction was the Uluru craft table, where guests could bid for

beautiful jewellery sets and works of art, all produced by the children of the Uluru Children's Home.

The Junior Shiamak Dancers entertained us with great enthusiasm along with the senior Shiamak Troupe, who also taught some tricky Bollywood routines. A special thankyou is due to the dancers for their popular performances.

We were also treated with a stunning film of traditional Indian dancing by some of our older Uluru students. The Foundation aims to ensure the children are fully immersed in traditional culture. We were honoured to see their obvious passion and skills.

Puah, a past Uluru child now attending university, was also filmed for the celebration. She gave a beautiful, humble speech thanking the Foundation. The Founder, Natteri Chandran, took us on a 25 year journey from the beginnings of the Foundation to now by describing

many milestones; the building of the Medical Clinic, the Children's Home, the Kindergarten, the School and also the programs assisting the local community. Chandran made a point that it was all as a result of work over the years by a lot of dedicated people and by the generous contributions of many donors.

Roy Karna also spoke with a heartfelt plea for donations to complete the building and furnishing of a small emergency treatment room and related facilities for women at the Clinic.

We wish to thank you all who attended and to the donors of the auction items. It is due to your amazing generosity that the Foundation can go on with its good works.

We look forward to seeing you again in 2018 for the 26th Annual Dinner Dance.

Denise Hutchins

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

TEWFI News

ULURU EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Meet Mrs Amudha, Head of the Uluru Early Learning Centre

Mrs Amudha was born in Chennai and was brought up and finished her educational qualifications in Goa where she completed her Bachelor of Science (Botany) Degree and her Bachelor of Education and Master's of English.

Mrs Amudha then started her career as a schoolteacher in Goa.

After marrying she came back to Tamil Nadu and was very keen to teach poor children, so she and her husband established a Nursery and Primary School in 1995. She was appointed as the Principal of her dream school! Even though it was a private school, she fixed low fees and ran the school for 19 years successfully, educating future engineers, doctors, teachers etc.

Mrs Amudha then became a teacher educator due to her extensive experience in teaching.

The Foundation has now appointed Mrs Amudha to head the Uluru Nursery

and Primary School. She is regarded as very keen and kind in her interactions with the children and teachers and is fluent in Hindi and English. Hindi is also now taught at the school. Her innovative teaching technique has been popular with the students. She also guides the teachers in taking classes, preparation, writing lesson plans, conducting examinations etc.

The Foundation and the Uluru community are very fortunate to have Mrs Amudha with us.

"It gives me an honour and pleasure to give my impression about the foundation in which I work. First of all I give my respects to our Founder Dr. Natteri V Chandran and the Trustees of the Foundation. Secondly, I share the free and frank behaviour of my colleagues and other staff of this Foundation. I thank the Foundation, which does an amazing job. I know how challenging it is just running a Foundation like ours and appreciate the enormous effort put in by many people. It is my privilege to be a part of such an amazing Foundation filled with such amazing people. I hope you know how much I enjoy working with you although I am a small part in your Foundation."

Mrs Amudha



Mrs Amudha with some of her students

Australian Teachers To Provide Curriculum Support

When Ros Horin and Joe Skrzynski visited TEWFI last year, they were startled by the enthusiastic, bright and cheerful children at the Uluru Early Learning Centre. They watched parents arrive dinking children on bicycles, with auto-drivers or motor bikes – all crammed with eager pupils.

They quickly became aware how the local community members recognised the importance of their children being educated in an English stream school and came up with the idea of sponsoring two teachers from Australia to assist in coaching English and to assist in teacher training.

Mrs Amudha, who heads UELC, responded to Ros and Joe's offer by saying that the best intervention at UELC would be to train the Tamil speaking teachers to engage in English proficiency with the use of a 'teacher's coach'. Targeting English speaking skills would then improve the ability of the children to speak, read and learn in English in a multi-faceted manner within the current operation of the school.

Brendan Murray, who set up Victoria's Parkville College Youth Justice Centre in Victoria, sought out two of the College's top teachers, Jamie and Dan Gould. Jamie has a Masters in coaching teachers and Dan specialises in environmental education.

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

TEWFI News



Jamie and Dan Gould are off to support the Uluru Early Learning Centre in January 2018 for six months.

Jamie and Dan will begin a six-month stint at the school in January 2018. Brendan will initially join them and will together, with Mrs Amudha, work in setting up programs that will focus on providing her team of teachers with the assistance to develop a creative method of not only teaching English but with open class approaches, interaction and discovery.

Mrs Amudha, UELC's six teachers, together with Sudhakaran, the Environmental specialist at TEWFI, and Maya Seshagiri, who recently joined TEWFI, will all be working together with Jamie and Dan.

The team, with the specialist teachers from Australia, will assist in up-grading the UELC to become a leading early learning centre in rural Tamil Nadu.

A sincere and big thanks for Ros and Joe's Sky Foundation for their initiative and Brendan's Article 26 Education Consultancy.

Meet Sri Bhagirathi Seshagiri (Maya)

Maya joined TEWFI in August 2017 for a two-year period.

Maya grew up in Chennai and has a Graduate Degree in Architecture and a Diploma in Montessori teaching.

Her role is to teach in the school, assist with environmental programs and support and teach the UCH children.

A Day in Maya's Life at Uluru

...One of my first impressions of the Uluru campus was its cleanliness and neatness. So also its aesthetic feel – the way the buildings are proportioned and spaced. All are located next to breathtaking back-waters.

A typical working day for me starts with a visit to the home kitchen anywhere around 7 to 7:30 in the morning where amidst much banter I cut vegetables for an hour. On weekends, there is company from older home children who've come over.

The UNPS school prayer is at 9:15 and the children are in formation, reciting and chanting, ending with the national anthem.

My first class is with Standard Five. We have explored pollination, continents and oceans and the life cycle of butterflies so far. Many of the classes take place outside.

Continents, oceans, and the solar system have been covered.

My final class for the day, science for Third Standard, has been about exploring wind, wind instruments, effect of hot air, small creatures in the garden, my neighbourhood and the skeletal system. The children are quite sharp and quick in grasping.

By 2 in the afternoon I am at the Environmental Center. Either I am with the people working in the field or at the

computer working on preparing flash cards of herbal plants found around TEWFI.

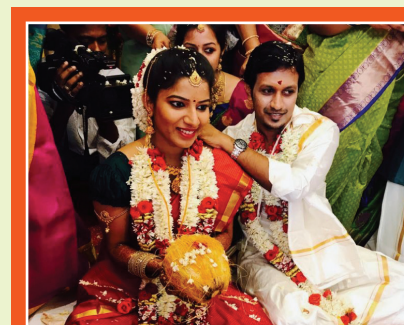
My day winds down by 5. By this time, many home children come back from school. I take out my spinning charkha and sit in the entrance porch of the previous boys' hostel. The children get their drawing books out along with paint and engage in painting and drawing while some spend time making crochet. This continues until their six o'clock tuition bell rings.

So far there has been a trip to the Alamparai Fort and a couple of forest visits with the Home children. I am lining up more in the coming days. I am also planning to engage the children in creating their own kitchen garden in view of the altered water situation, thanks to the recent rains.

There are days I go out onto the backwaters, late evening and spend some time there, dreaming of the day when it would be possible to take the Home children casually on walks there...

Sri Bhagirathi Seshagiri

September 2017



Dr Prenmath and Ms Sangitha at their marriage in September. TEWOAF wishes the couple much happiness.

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

TEWFI News

ULURU COASTAL ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION CENTRE PROJECT

The East West Foundation has been privileged to have Joss Brooks, the renowned Australian Environmentalist from Pitchandikulam Forests Bioresource Auroville, join its Board of Trustees in India. Among other things this ensures that the Foundation's precious eco estuarine lands are in the best and safest of hands.

Born in Tasmania, Joss Brooks, who with his partner Anita Truchanas, has lived in India for four decades and has contributed to monumental changes and improvements in the environment around Auroville and in Tamil Nadu. Joss has planned and managed a restoration project in the city of Chennai where a 12-acre garbage dump at Otteri in North Chennai has been transformed into a green lung of indigenous vegetation.

Joss established Pitchandikulam in 1973 to restore the green cover over the Auroville Green Belt. Pitchandikulam is now a tropical, dry, evergreen forest with 400 medicinal plants. The Nadukuppam School that his team adopted several years ago

also has an Environment Centre, water supply, toilets and solar-powered water treatment systems. The children have planted a vegetable garden in the grounds, women grow spirulina and prepare herbal medicines for cattle camps, and men increasingly do organic farming.

In 2005, the Pitchandikulam team began work on a master plan for a 350-acre wetland site at the Adyar estuary. Over the following years, the typical urban wasteland environment of debris, garbage and sewage has changed into an example of species regeneration, practical environmental education and citizen/ government collaboration.

The Adyar Poonga wetland restoration project is still underway, evolving into a crucial initiative to cleanse and transform the other polluted waterways of Chennai.

On 20th July we had a valuable opportunity to hear Joss speak in Melbourne on the very special Eco Estuarine region that TEWFI is located on; its uniqueness and importance,

and the role that his brainchild the Uluru Coastal Environment Education Centre (UCEEC) will play in its preservation and wellbeing.

Joss explained that education is the key to creating interest in and awareness of our environment and of the need to conserve nature.

The goal is to set up a series of Education Centres of excellence with effective environmental education programs that can be seen, felt and understood by all. The plan is to develop further the environment education programmes that have already been started by Pitchandikulam Forest Auroville, at the Nadukuppam High School, the Adyar Poonga in Chennai and the Kadapakkam (Uluru) Coastal Environment Education Centre. The aim is to incorporate the environments of forest, farm, city and coast into a sharing educational experience with a strong scientific base.

Further information on the project as it develops will be presented in future newsletters.



Dr Beth Charles, Ron Merkel, Joss Brooks



Joss Brooks on his visit to Melbourne in July 2017

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

SAVE THE DATE: TEWOAF 10th ANNUAL GOLF DAY



Friday March 2nd, 2018 at Southern Golf Club

Enjoy a game at Southern Golf Club's magnificent course and assist the Foundation with its next major fundraising initiative.

Come with a group or by yourself and join us for a great day at one of Melbourne's most prestigious golf courses.

If you are not a golfer there are other ways you could help out, for example by becoming a Golf Day supporter through a tax deductible donation which will be recognised at the event.

Sponsorship packages are also available, with benefits including:

- Company Logo to appear on the Golf Day entry form
- Prominent signage at the golf course on the day
- Either a banner provided by your company or signs can be provided by TEWOAF
- Recognition at the club house award presentation
- Business brochures can also be distributed at the event

Sponsors for 2017 included Seasol International, Jellis Craig, Ladbrokes, River Capital, Nelson Alexander, Radisson on Flagstaff, Robe, Shaw & Partners and ULR Landrover.

We would be delighted to have your involvement and assistance

Please contact a Golf Day Committee Representative for further information

John Shuster 0419 887 295 Judy Nutbean 0402 324 557 Gwenda Flintoff 0402 413 978

Sue at The East West Overseas Aid Foundation Office on 03 9650 0514

THE EAST • WEST OVERSEAS AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter

Issue 24, December 2017

www.tewoaf.org.au

The East West Overseas Aid Foundation Day Sponsorship Program *We continue to need your help!*

The generous support from those who have taken up the Day Sponsorship Program ensures that TEWOAF can continue to offer the range of programs supporting our children and the local community.

We still have days on the calendar to fill. There are two options: full day \$400 or half day \$200.

You can nominate the day and/or the loved one you wish to honour. The children in turn honour you and are made aware of your kindness.

We thank Seasol once again for generously continuing to cover the administration costs for this program.



twitter.com/TEWFindia



facebook.com/TEWOAF



instagram.com/eastwestfoundation

A sincere thank you to Lisa Boyd and Seasol International once again for the support with the cost of printing this newsletter.

Seasol's ongoing generosity to TEWOAF and TEWFI continues to be critical to our capacity to provide support for and assistance to the UCH children, the local community and the wonderful and extremely important local natural environment.

Seasol[®]
INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD

