

## UPDATE TO THE CCRS CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEES

The CCRS Constitution has been amended with the approval of the Charity Commission to enable there to be up to 8 Trustees. This amendment has allowed Jenny Lunn and Clive Brown, who are able to provide additional skills sets to our Trustees, to be formally brought on board. Jenny has been on placement at CCRS in Kolkata undertaking research for her PhD on the role of religious organisations in social development. Jenny is now in Sierra Leone but is easily contactable by email. Clive is a retired solicitor and, as such, brings innumerable business skills for our benefit. So there are now 7 Trustees in total.

To enable Rig to continue to work in collaboration with third parties in our development work, the objective of our charity has been widened to enable us to work in other Indian states – such as Jharkhand, and now reads:

*'The purpose of the Charity is to further the work of the Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service ('CCRS') amongst the destitute and needy of the city of Kolkata in West Bengal or in other states where the CCRS is engaged, either through itself or one or more of CCRS's collaborative partners.'*

## CREATION OF EMBRYONIC LINK BETWEEN MELBOURNE PARISH CHURCH AND THE DIOCESE OF KOLKATA AS PART OF THE DERBYSHIRE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA

If you take a look at [www.northindia-derbyshirechurches-partnership.org.uk](http://www.northindia-derbyshirechurches-partnership.org.uk) you will see the extent of the link that already exists between churches in the Derbyshire Diocese and The Church of North India. Bishop Ashoke Biswas is the relatively new Bishop of Kolkata and also leads the CCRS Executive Committee to which Rig reports.

Adrian has been trying to set up a direct link between Melbourne Parish Church and the Kolkata Diocese through this Derbyshire Churches Together website and this has recently been agreed by the Derbyshire Churches Together management. If you look at the 'links' page, you will see an embryonic link in place but Adrian is now writing the

**Adrian Whalley**

**BANKER'S ORDER & GIFT AID?**  
The Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service derives its funds from church contributions and individual donations. The raising of funds can be greatly helped by two factors. We carry out administration on a voluntary basis. Regular payments by Banker's Order enables us to build on current donations. By making a Gift Aid declaration you help us to recover some £2,000 per year from the government to forward to CRS. **Send your completed form to Adrian Whalley.**

<b>Friends of CRS Banker's Order</b>	
To.....	(Your Bank)
at.....	
.....(Postcode)	
Please pay the <b>Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service</b> at Sort Code 20-98-57, Account No. 30389226 the sum of £.....(figures) .....	
(words) on.....(Date of First payment)	
and thereafter each .....	
.....(month, quarter, year)	
Until otherwise instructed by me. Supercedes any existing order .....	
.....(Date)	
.....(Signature)	

information to be placed on this page to include links to the websites of CRS (presently being re-built) and to Bishop's College, a theological training college in Kolkata with which CRS has strong links.

**Adrian Whalley**

Adrian Whalley, Honorary Secretary  
Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service  
The White Cottage  
Main Street  
Botchaston  
Leicestershire LE9 9FF

tel: 0044 (0)1455 828506  
mob: 0789 490 1961  
Email: [adrian@mpswebco.org.uk](mailto:adrian@mpswebco.org.uk)

**WEBSITE:** [www.friends-of-crs.org.uk](http://www.friends-of-crs.org.uk)

### COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL?

Many of you will appreciate that email makes an important contribution to both the speed and cost of communication. If you are able to receive future Newsletters and communication by email, the cost savings will go to CRS in Kolkata.

Please email your address to Adrian Whalley at [adrian@mpswebco.org.uk](mailto:adrian@mpswebco.org.uk). Your address will be kept completely secure with Friends addresses and will not be used for any purpose other than for communications in relation to CRS and its business.



PremierOil has generously covered the production costs of this Newsletter. The company is a leading independent oil and gas company with interests in the UK, South and South East Asia and Africa and prides itself on the assistance it provides in local infrastructure for the poorer countries in which it operates.

## OUR NEW FRIENDS IN JHARKHAND STATE

This is where CRS has, for the first time, expanded its project initiatives beyond the state of West Bengal. Jharkhand, situated some 350 km west of Kolkata, is one of the most impoverished states of India. The Sarwangin Vikas Samiti (SVS) is a grassroots organization located in Gumla, Jharkhand. The organization has been catering to the tribal and backward classes, which form a large percentage of the local population. SVS has been successfully running education and women's empowerment programmes for the last nine years. The pro-

gramme has been running on whatever little health among its communities due to lack of resources despite extremely poor health of the residents.

CCRS plans to not only support the education and women's empowerment programmes, but also introduce a school health programme, with both clinical and preventive components, which will benefit the health of children and the larger community as well.

**Reshma Mukherji**



Our New Friends in Jharkhand

## DUM DUM SCHOOL RENOVATION—THE ACTION

CRS initiated the Dum Dum project in 1975 to educate children from the slums. Over the years, the project has come a long way. However, the school facilities had become run-down and dangerous through use and we are greatly indebted to those friends of the late Esme Prince in the UK who so kindly donated £1,100 at Esme's funeral in lieu of flowers. You will see the memorial stone dedicated to Esme on the photograph.



The centre hosts the following outreach:

**Education:** The centre has a formal school for kindergarten children to class vi. The total student strength presently is 46. The centre also runs a non-formal centre for dropouts. There are two local teachers. The entire outreach is housed in the building you see in separate classrooms. The activities are overseen primarily by the school committee with the support of the community.

**Health:** All sorts of healthcare are made available here. The mobile medical service is run on a monthly basis, given the location of the community which receives a highly appreciative response from the local people.

**Women's Empowerment:** This skills-training is run by an ex-student with 20 students at present. The adult literacy workshop has been moved to the evenings to enable the women to attend as many of them work as domestic helpers during the day so are not available for classes.

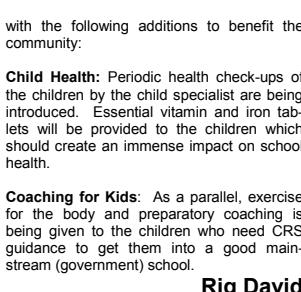
**Self - help groups:** A number of these are being formed and, so far, there are 4 groups made up of 10 in a group. Each is in the process of opening bank accounts to obtain loans to start group/ individual trades – yet another example of micro financing that CRS encourages.

**Community composition:** This is largely made up of Bengalees' – ie. women mostly employed as domestic helpers and men engaged as rickshaw pullers, brick layers etc.

The dilapidated building has been hindering the growth and extension of the community development. With the renovation completed, normal school and women's empowerment classes are being restored, along



Before



After Renovation

with the following additions to benefit the community:

**Child Health:** Periodic health check-ups of the children by the child specialist are being introduced. Essential vitamin and iron tablets will be provided to the children which should create an immense impact on school health.

**Coaching for Kids:** As a parallel, exercise for the body and preparatory coaching is being given to the children who need CRS guidance to get them into a good mainstream (government) school.

**Rig David**



## friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service

### Newsletter—December 2009

#### RIG DAVID'S FIRST VISIT TO THE UK

Rig David, the Director in Kolkata, paid us a very successful first visit to the UK, staying in London, Cambridge and Leicestershire. As this was meant as a holiday for Rig, he was given the chance to sail on the river Thames, to be fascinated by Westminster Abbey, see the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace and to experience London shopping. In Cambridge he visited some of the Cambridge Colleges and Ely Cathedral.

Then on to Leicestershire and lunch with the Bishop of Derby, a day

trip to Oxford, a trip to Stratford upon Avon and a visit to see the Loughborough Emmanuel under 10s football squad in full flow at training. Although a holiday, Rig worked incredibly hard in giving many presentations at various locations for CCRS as well. Thank you to all those who came to support us at the various events. His reflections on the visit are given below.

#### "OH TO BE IN ENGLAND EATING PUDDING AND PIE"

Air India Flight AI-111 left Calcutta for the UK at 10:30am on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009. I slept through the flight and experienced a surge of wonderful thoughts of **Great Britain** in its magnificent grandeur.

Anyone would fall in love at first sight with London where I was warmly welcomed at various places by the UK Friends. **I was now on the move.**

I had the most wonderful opportunity to talk to congregations of several churches and observed their eagerness to hear more and more about the work of Cathedral Relief Service in the slums of Kolkata and villages of West Bengal. It was amazing to see their enthusiasm in the mission statement of CRS "that if enough people cared together and felt for the situation, there would be change".

St Alfege School visit was a wonderful experience in meeting the children who have been in touch on an ongoing basis with G.B. Lane School in Kolkata. I spoke to Year 4 students who eagerly listened and asked questions about the children of the slums. I was particularly touched by the enthusiasm exhibited in wanting to know more and do something to make a difference in the lives of the slum children.

While speaking to the children of St. Alfege at their Harvest service, it was an experience which made me see the genuine way in which they empathized with children in the "Bustee" through their small personal contributions.

While making the first presentation at St. Margaret's Lee church, I experienced a sense of hearing of the situation, and how CRS has been addressing the problems faced by the children, women and communities in need, using their prayerful support from a distance of more than 7000 miles. I also assumed that they were making a quick comparison of the two countries and the different nature of poverty that exist.

I did get an opportunity to answer some very interesting questions at the lunch table.



A special mention need to be made with regard to Reshma, who I met at Cambridge, and who owns a store. She has supported the work of CRS through the Friends. Her positive attitude and concern towards the cause of deprived children and women in India came across to me as very genuine. I felt we would nurture Reshma as a potential friend to get more Indians living in Cambridge to support the cause.

I spoke to Revd Dr John Davies and a group of sixty parishioners of Melbourne Parish Church at "An Indian Evening"; some of the ladies and men dressed in Indian clothes. I chatted comfortably at each table during the course dinner of sumptuous Indian food. I found them passionate about the charity and the slum and village dwellers of West Bengal.

Our working lunch with Bishop Alastair at Derbyshire was indeed a very valuable experience. Bishop Alastair will be in Kolkata in February so I will be able to show him our projects then..

The Loughborough football team of under-10s was so exciting. I had the opportunity to talk to them, after watching a most enthusiastic practice match. While talking to them, I observed a great sense of curiosity about the teams in Kolkata. I got the feeling that if given a chance, they would love to visit Kolkata and play with the teams in slum schools.

I was convinced that the ripple effects of this whirlwind trip would get more supporters to the Charity.

In all, what I experienced during my 17 days sojourn in the UK will be treasured. I had the good fortune of visiting many of the prominent places such as the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, Traveling on the Thames, Greenwich, Big Ben, 10 Downing Street, the Educational Institutions in Cambridge and Oxford, Shakespeare's home, Museums in Oxford and many others. I relished the English food and pudding and pie!

**Rig David**  
(edited for reasons of space)

## SISHU SHIKSA NIKATAN SCHOOL

Sundarban, means, "Beautiful Forest" (Sundar – Beautiful, ban – forest). True to the word, Sundarban is possibly one of those foremost places that can make any traveller breathless with its inexplicable charm of mystifying beauty. The abode of a wide range of flora and fauna, Sundarban can instantly transport nature lovers to the extremes of emotions.

Women & children are engaged in catching seedlings of prawn fish from the river. In the



Against this back drop, "Arpan Mahila Samiti", the charity I head, with the support of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service, initiated the education & health project. There are four class rooms, (14 ft x 16 ft per room) & student strength is 86, (42 Boys, 44 Girls); the age group is 3 to 10 years.

The project has introduced joyful learning education. The children learn action songs, rhymes, alphabets, numbers, science, & environment. Most of the children are first-generation learners.

With the newly constructed school, more children will get an opportunity to attend school and parents of these children have a new hope for their children to be educated.

**Arnab Mohanti**

## THE VITAL ROLE OF FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS LIKE CCRS

Imagine trying to govern a country of over one billion people. Our own government struggles to fund and provide adequate services for its citizens on a much smaller scale. It is therefore no surprise that the Indian government's provision of basic services often falls short.

The gap is often filled by non-governmental organisations (NGOs); many of these NGOs are faith-based organisations (FBOs). FBOs are accepted by the Indian government providing that they do not engage in proselytism.

However, government provision is getting better. The problem is that many poor and illiterate people do not know what services and facilities they are entitled to. So CCRS is also working with marginal communities to educate them about their rights as citizens to

One such FBO is CCRS. In West Bengal, CCRS provides education services, health care facilities, vocational training courses and micro-credit schemes to people who miss out on government provision, such as those who live in the city's slums or in remote villages.

In this way, the role of FBOs like CCRS in India is vital to support people who have missed out on government provision and to enable others to benefit from services available. Ideally, in the long term, the government will be able to serve all its citizens adequately, but in the meantime there is plenty of work for CCRS to do.

**Jenny Lunn**

## G.B.LANE & BD COLONY FOOTBALL

The children of G.B. Lane and B.D. Colony have been given a unique opportunity to come together through sport with the formation of two under-10 football teams. This is a novel concept for CRS schools as this is the first time that they will have official sporting teams. The 7 a side teams consist of children in the primary sections of the schools. The children of both schools practice several days a week. However, practice grounds have been flooded for long periods during the monsoon season, so the teams will kick-off against each other for the first time at the end of October. The children of both schools are extremely excited about the upcoming match and will come out in full force to cheer their teams on!



GB Lane Team—Where's the Goalie?



Practice Session  
**Reshma Mukherji**

## SCHOOLS LINK : NEWTON SOLNEY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL , DERBY-SHIRE WITH KOLABAGAN

Rig met with Linda Latchford, Head Teacher at Newton Solney Primary School, who said that she would very much like her school children (55 primary school children of ages 3 – 7) to be able to communicate with children of a similar age in Kolkata. To set this

up, Adrian attended school assembly, showed photographs and brought a message from the children in Kolkata. In fact, he went one better than that and gave each of the (very receptive) children an early Christmas card from Kolkata, challenged them to make some cards in return, left an impressive display of photographs with narrative for the parents and children to consider AND gave them all a sweet. Now come on children....!

**Adrian Whalley**