

Sponsor Programme

When Val and I were asked to take over from Melanie Parish as coordinators of the UK input to the Child sponsorship programme, we didn't envisage that this would provide the 'excuse' to become such regular visitors to Smyrna Home.



We're currently planning our sixth visit to Ooty since August 2016 and feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to get to know so many of the sponsor children and the way that they're growing and maturing with the help of their sponsorship, which they are so grateful for.

There are many success stories, including that of 10 year-old Anushka who recently obtained a distinction in a violin exam conducted by Trinity College London.



Thanks to the help of the Sponsor Department at Smyrna, we've also visited the homes of many more sponsored children and some who have recently applied for sponsorship. In February we visited two pairs of children whose fathers were killed when a bus crashed through the barrier on the mountain road that leads to Ooty. We're very pleased to say that new sponsors have now been found to help these needy children through their education.

We have six other children waiting for sponsorship currently, so please contact us if you know of anyone who would like to help, through a small monthly contribution (£10), and make a huge and lasting difference to the life of a disadvantaged Indian child.

Tony and Val Neal

Comings and goings

After several years at Smyrna, **David and Jill Hines** and their four children are moving back to Belfast this June. They have made a great contribution to the strategic planning and the day-to-day running and support of Smyrna Home, including their vision and drive for the refurbishment of the Guest House. They will be greatly missed.

However, this summer **Tim and Bianca Wright** from Hebron School in Ooty will move into the Hines' house at Smyrna, and will be involved as much as they can. Tim is vice-principal of Hebron, so his time will be limited. Bianca heads up Home Economics, and is interested in helping to oversee the Guest House and Café.

Anik and Peace have recently moved onto the campus. They have a prison ministry, where the inmates create craft items such as necklaces and tablemats from recycled materials which can be sold. Their arts/crafts studio has also been transferred to the site, and Anik is helping some of the women with difficulties to learn new skills.

Hayley Allen, who was part of the team visit last summer, has volunteered to help as an International Guest at Hebron School for a year starting in August.

We feel sure that the wonderful team at Smyrna will be encouraged by the contribution all these folk will bring.



Smyrna Guest House Refurbishment

The 180-year-old Colonial House in the heart of the Smyrna campus has been refurbished into 6 guest rooms. David and Jill Hines came up with the idea of refurbishing the guest house to make it an income-generating project for the charity.

The rooms were designed to reflect the colonial heritage of the building whilst giving them a modern twist with roaring fireplaces, comfy beds, tall ceilings, teak floors, all giving a hint of grandeur and luxury.

All rooms lead off the common area in the house, which doubles as a reading area and art gallery. Each room has its own well-equipped kitchen area so guests can cook their own food.

There are also plans to open a coffee shop adjacent to the building at the end of the year. The day to day management of the guest house is done by Baktha Singh and Vinola, a husband and wife team in charge of hospitality. They have been very successful and this is demonstrated by the forty-one '5*' reviews' the Guest House has received so far! The links to the AirBnB site for the six rooms can be found below.

Honeymoon

Suite:

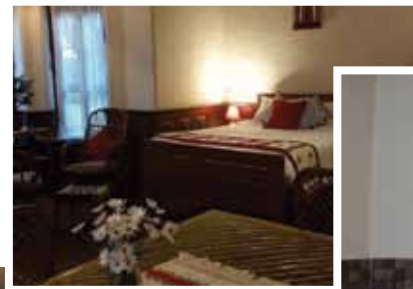
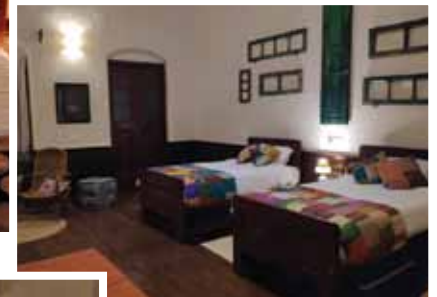
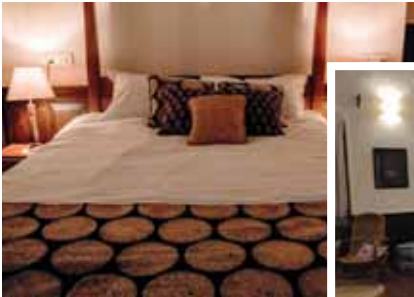
<https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/28660336>

Other rooms end

28260912 28659181
33083648 and 33202899

The Garden Suite: (NEW)

<https://abnb.me/JE6JBJqIBW>



Prayer Point

A team of seven are planning a visit in August to encourage the team working at Smyrna Home. This gives a chance to visit some of the sponsored children and generally lend a hand. The team hope to see a home built. Amazingly, £1,250 can fund a new brick-built home for a family.

If anyone is interested in visiting with a team please contact us.

