



FRIENDS OF SMYRNA HOME

bringing hope to those in need

Winter Newsletter 2021

Welcome to our latest newsletter. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

info@friendsofsmyrnahome.com
www.friendsofsmyrnahome.com

Registered UK charity no. 1150384

Greetings

Smyrna Home had a Christmas away day for all the team and organised Christmas parties for all the sponsored children with presents of clothing. Some were even able to choose items for themselves. Your £10 per month support makes a huge difference to each one of the children. On behalf of them and all of us we would like to say a huge 'THANK YOU!'.

Who's who at Smyrna?

Vinoth has been a key member of the team since he joined Smyrna Home in 1999. He and his wife Keremalli have two daughters; Anushka, who is studying in 8th grade and a talented violin player, and Abi who is 4 years old. Vinoth's main work is in the Sponsor Department where he uses his computer skills in designing newsletters, photo editing, and keeping the information data on the children. He regularly visits sponsor children in their homes to ascertain their needs and occasionally takes sponsor parents. Vinoth is also involved with the New World Centre, where children and adults come daily for rehabilitation. His task is to drive the minibus to bring the mentally and physically challenged children and adults from their homes to the Centre and then take them home again at the end of the day. The children and adults, and visiting teams from UK, are very grateful to Vinoth for his safe driving around the steep and narrow roads of the Nilgiri hills.



Travel restrictions have meant that the number of visitors to Smyrna Home has been much reduced during the pandemic, but Vinoth has been keeping just as busy by driving other members of the team to deliver food parcels and medical supplies to those most in need.

Child Sponsorship

As in the UK, the Covid pandemic has caused a lot of disruption to children's education, but Smyrna Home has continued to support and encourage the children who are being sponsored. Here is news from two of them:

Sabareesh is studying in 7th grade in Breeks Memorial School, Ooty. He likes to play football and his favourite subjects are Science and English. His ambition is to become a Mechanical Engineer. Sabareesh has enrolled in a Taekwondo class and recently won the gold medal in a competition. He has also been awarded a certificate for poster making in an event organised through Sri Ramakrishna Engineering College.



Monika had to leave School at the end of her 6th standard due to health problems. After a few years she finished her 8th and 10th grades while recuperating. She is very interested in Art and Craft work and is making scarves and caps with wool and doing other work using sugar beads. She recently participated in a craft exhibition which was arranged by NAWA (Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association), where she created a National Flag with sugar beads. Her ambition is to do a computer course, which she hopes to start when the pandemic is less of a problem.



Our History Part II

In our winter newsletter 2020 "35 years of history part I" was shared. We have been reminded that the building now called Smyrna Home was built in 1828. An area of about 200 acres was purchased by the founder of Ooty, a John Sullivan, from the Todas the tribe that was the earliest inhabitants. He paid 150 rupees, which is about £1.50 today! This area was known as Southdowns. It is interesting that many of the children supported by Smyrna Home today come from tribal families.

Although John Sullivan built the home, the first resident was the then Governor, Stephen Lushington. When he retired it became a convalescent home for the Kings Regiment. It was unoccupied for 5 years. After two other owners it was bought in the 1850s by Lord Bishop Dealy of Madras and Southdowns became Bishops Down.

From 1868 -1872 J W Brecks, the first administrative commissioner of the Nilgiris, lived in the home and in 1874. In his memory, Brecks Memorial School was founded. The Chairman of FOSH trustees, taught there while on VSO, hence our link with Smyrna Home and Ooty.

Since then, the house and the surrounding 6 acres has been a girl's school, a hotel, a Maharajah's home but, since 1985, the base for bringing hope to those in need.



The New Bakery

Since the start of Smyrna Home there has been a small bakery specialising originally in making biscuits Swedish style. This created jobs and an income. With added items, demand has grown, and biscuits buns cakes and cookies are now sold throughout Ooty. Here is the vanilla cookie recipe.

VANILLA COOKIE RECIPE

200 gms White sugar
400 gms all purpose flour
175 gms Margarine
100 gms Butter
1/4 tsp baking powder
2 tsps of Vanilla essence
1 tsp corn flour
100 gms Cashew nuts
1 tsp salt.

Directions:

Cream together the margarine, sugar, butter and vanilla essence.

Now add the flour, baking powder and corn-flour. Knead and roll.

80gms taken and 8 cookies are made. Each cookie is pressed with one cashew nut. Then baked at 190°C.



On 15th November a new building, constructed where previously the social meal was served, was opened with a new rotary oven.

