



# PLATFORM KIDS

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Newsletter

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## A Visit to Kantakapalli

By Marie Woodward



My visit to India in October 2007 was my first, and also my first visit to a truly different culture, so culture shock was inevitable. My friends will know that I had been distinctly nervous of this venture, but recognised that it had to be done, if I were ever to be of use to the organisation. I am delighted to report that my fears were groundless.

I arrived at Hyderabad airport in the early hours of Monday morning, to be greeted by Appala Raju, carrying an enormous bouquet of yellow roses. I was so pleased to see him! He had stayed with John McCulloch in my home in Colliie earlier this year and I was delighted to renew our acquaintance. He quickly escorted me to our hotel and ensured that I had all that I needed. Later that day, having caught up with sleep, he took me sight-seeing, and tried to prepare me for my visit 'to the country'. Indian people are so courteous! I was really overwhelmed.

We flew from Hyderabad to Visakhapatnam on Tuesday afternoon, where we were then met by our taxi driver and three of the older children. They certainly made me feel very welcome. Our journey to Kantakapalli was a blur! I still needed to give myself time to absorb so many differences. I stayed with Jyothi in her beautiful new home and had the great delight of having my sponsor child, her daughter, as a companion. Vijayalakshmi is a very studious fourteen year old, who nevertheless enjoys the same things that amuse our own teenagers.

During my stay, we discussed her school progress (she is a very good student!), cosmetics (she painted my nails!), and literature (I introduced her to Emily Rodda and 'Rowan of Rin').

During my stay, I was privileged to sit in on one of the children's drawing lessons:



They were all eager to show me their beautiful work. Having watched them gardening and playing cricket earlier in the week, I was impressed with how quickly and quietly they settled to work. Their teachers are very considerate and showed that they have very good rapport with all their students.

Later in the day, we had a real surprise. The parcel which I had sent from Australia some weeks before had arrived! We were able to play a game of volleyball with one of the balls, and on the following day, after Sunday School, we handed out some little bouncy balls and balloons

for everyone to enjoy.



My stay was all too short, but had fulfilled its purpose. On the following Tuesday, just one week from my arrival at Kantakapalli, Appala Raju was accompanying me back to the airport and to Hyderabad. I had met our children; viewed their learning environment; and observed them in class. The hardest part now is still ahead of me. John had asked me if I would be willing to go there to teach ESL (English as a Second Language), to prepare the children for computer lessons, so that they can use them effectively; thus giving them a good chance to get jobs in Information Technology. Hyderabad has a global reputation for being the Cyber centre of India - they even call it Cyberbad! Needless to say, this must be done at my own expense, for these children so badly need this help. How could I refuse?

I am currently trying to arrange for this to happen. Your prayers would be a great help.

# CIRCUS SPECTACULAR



The Platform Kids' Circus event held on Saturday 10 November 2007 at the Fly By Night musician's club in Fremantle was a fabulous night out AND a success - we raised over \$4,000. It was wonderful to see everyone all dressed up in theme, getting up on the dance floor or stage, and so generously emptying their pockets for the raffle!

The crowd enjoyed hours of entertainment - from juggling and aerial acrobatics to drumming and big bubble-blowing - and even tried a few circus tricks themselves. There were side-show alley attractions too - face painting, candy bar, tarot reading, and a live snake!

Thank you to the amazing organising crew for hours of hard work: Helen,

Sally, Tash, and Poida. What a brilliant team effort! Also thanks to Clare for the eye-catching invitations, tickets & posters, and Ash & Suzanne for doing lots of jobs delegated by Naomi.

Special thanks to Chris Jones for doing the raffle - he was able to get a whole range of excellent prizes donated and spent all night encouraging people to buy tickets.

We are most grateful for the support of this event by:

#### Prizes

- Stephen Chan Financial Services
- Bodhi J Health & Beauty Spa
- Onyx Hair Design
- Barbara Jackman
- Darren Wates
- Gay Riches
- Liquor Barons Claremont
- Lotus Gifts & Homewares
- Simply Gifted

#### Fremantle Markets vendors including:

- Chris Jones, Mosaic Art
- Sepia Panorama
- Richard Smyth
- Renee Parnell
- Scotty's Fruit 'n' Veg
- Mr Organics Fruit 'n' Veg

#### Entertainment

- Theaker von Ziarno - aerial artist
- Andrew Suttar  
- Dr Froth from Bubblemania
- Simon Walsh  
- Captain Quirk from Cirque!
- Ulli Keck - DJ Baba Ulli
- Murura & friends  
- Mirimba & drumming
- Clinton Woodvine - Circus Challenge
- Morris Jacobs - face painting
- Daphne Zucaro - tarot
- Gary Davies - snakes
- Jesse Giblett - broomstick trick
- John Anthony  
- 'I am only' & India photos
- Tom Saunders - stilts
- Cirque du Soleil - DVD

#### Goods & Services

- Fly By Night Musician's Club
- Island Promotions - catering
- Incredible Concepts - balloons
- Julie Salmon - fabrics
- Hampa Catering  
- fairy floss & toffee apples
- Gage Roads Brewing Co
- Coles Maddington - rolls & potatoes
- Floss & Popcorn Supply Co  
- popcorn machine
- Northbridge Continental Supermarket - nuts

## Reunited! - A Good News Story

*Email from Appala Raju to PKF Committee (Sept 2007):*

Hi Everyone. I hope you're all very fine. Weekly two times I am going to the platform. I saw two kids on the platform. I brought them to PCS and now they have gone home. Here is their story:

These two kids ran away from the school because their Teacher has beaten them. That's why they came to platform. I saw them on the platform then asked them "do you want to come to my place?" They said no. I ask them again and then they said "How many kids do you have in your place?" I said I have 25 kids. Then they said to me "OK we will come your place now".

Then I said to them if their teacher beats you, you should tell your Mum and Dad. They said "We told my parents many times, but they didn't say anything to the teacher. That's why we ran away from school."

Then I asked them if they want to go back to their home. They said "Yes, we'd like to go back to my home, and also we miss my family since one week ago". Then I ask their phone number, but they said we don't have telephone, so will give house address instead.

Then I wrote a letter to their parents. Their mother came here, and so they are very happy to go home.



# EMMA BLYTH

The artist who designed our new logo, Emma Blyth, has created an exquisite painting that represents the work of Platform Children's Society and life at Kantakapalli.

We will be using this beautiful painting on our promotional materials and website. We are extremely grateful for such a unique and generous donation of artistic talent.

*Thanks Emma!*



PLATFORM KIDS by Emma Blyth

## Dreaming of a holiday in India?

Julie Salmon has travelled throughout India extensively and can design personalised travel itineraries for anyone wishing to explore this exotic country.

She can recommend places to visit, routes, accommodation, hot spots to eat at, guides, transport and more. If you are planning to visit India, Julie's "tried and tested" itineraries save you time, money and your sanity!

Julie is donating her fee of \$350 for this service to PKF.

Julie also has available for hire the beautiful, brightly-coloured Indian cloth that we used for the PKF's Bollywood and Circus events.

Please contact Julie directly for more information by phone on 9386 7482.

## CALENDARS

Your very own 2008 calendar created by a child at PCS has arrived from India!



# Christmas at Kantakapalli

From Sue Injeti



We just got home from celebrating Christmas Day with your kids and staff. We thought it would be fun for them to have guests show up on Christmas day itself so instead of going out earlier in the week we waited for today. We took them some board / card games as their Christmas gift and then sat and taught them how to play them. I was VERY impressed....I gave them a Scrabble game expecting that they could keep it on the shelf until Marie came and then she could play with them to help their English. I was SHOCKED when I saw how quickly they figured out how to make crosswords (mostly from looking at the cover of the box) and then the words that they were using - their board was full of words and perfect spelling! Big words like "weather". I was thinking they would do cat, dog etc. They love UNO but are really too nice to each other when they play....we need to work on making them more aggressive toward each other! They love Snakes and Ladders too.

They caught on to the memory matching game quickly. I was impressed as I sat and played with them, comparing it to times I have played the game with kids in the USA. Usually everyone's lips are sealed when they realize where a match is, and they play competitively with each one on their own....but your kids were very different. There was a real team spirit among them - they were especially nice to the little kids, sometimes helping them to get a match, even though those little kids usually didn't need any help! But what impressed me the most was how delighted they were when ANYONE got a match....how they would cheer for each other and be so obviously pleased.

The game (as they understood it in their own way of thinking) was that they were a team trying to solve a mystery collectively...all working together to match up the cards. They each took their own turn and each collected their own cards but there was a different current under the whole thing than the way we play games as kids in the USA where it is everyone pouring every ounce of their energy

and skill into winning at any cost to the rest of the "losers!" It is the kind of attitude that some moms try to pour into the brains of their children ("be nice to each other! everyone can be a winner!")

I was so pleased to see that the programme itself instilled that into the kids...I am sure Appala Raju hasn't sat down like a "good mom" and thought "now I want to be sure the kids understand this particular value." It just happened because of your programme...really brings to mind the statement that 'values are caught, not taught!'



## CARDS 4 SALE

Six unique black & white photos from India have been professionally printed as cards

These stunning photos were taken by Karri Devereux while she volunteered at PCS in June 07

Set of 6 cards for \$12 plus postage  
Phone Sally to order 0407 927 477

Karri has kindly donated all proceeds to PKF

