



PLATFORM KIDS

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Newsletter

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The PCS buildings at Kantakapalli were recently painted bright green!

Trip to India

By Marie Woodward

Children:

Over the first 3 months of 2008, five new children joined PCS, four under 10 years of age. There appears to be a growing trend of very young children begging at the railway stations. Of those who left during this time, four have been reunited with families, and two of these are now training in chosen occupations that enable them to contribute to family finances.

Training:

Three older children are now training as motor mechanics; two are trainee electricians; one is being employed and trained by Appala Raju as a supervisor for the shelter. One boy has just completed his first year at Defence Academy and two children have just completed their school-leaving exams and are awaiting their results.

Memorial Service for Sarada:

At John's request, a memorial service for Sarada was held on 10th March, as she was a key contributing factor in John's founding of PCS & PKFI. The service took place in a corner of the garden, at the base of the cross-shaped garden. The area has been reserved for a memorial water garden for Sarada which John is hoping to establish there, when he returns to Kantakapalli.

Suresh's Birthday:

We held a birthday party for Suresh who celebrated his 14th birthday on 12th March. We had a birthday cake - eaten Indian style, balloons and party activities. The children had a wonderful time and Suresh was delighted with his gift - a pencil case and a new set of coloured pencils.

Day Out:

On 14th March, Appala Raju and I took the 4 youngest boys for a train trip to the Aruku Valley, a tourist area in the Eastern Ghats, 115km NE of Visakhapatnam. We had a wonderful time. We went to the local museum to see the tribal artefacts; to a botanical garden to see tribal huts and newly developed plantations; and then to see the underground stalactites and stalagmites of the Borra Caves, which form the source of the Godavari River which flows into the Bay of Bengal.

Holi Celebration:

On 21st March (Good Friday) India celebrated their Holi Festival, which is sometimes referred to as the Rainbow Festival. Appala Raju asked me to take photos of the children having fun. Unfortunately, he forgot to warn me of the implications - I still have red hair!

Easter:

I celebrated Easter by attending a beautiful old church in Visakhapatnam, accompanied by two of the PCS children. On our return to PCS, Jyothi and I gave out 'Easter eggs' - hard boiled eggs covered with Easter Shrinky wraps, and little fluffy chicks which I had brought from Australia. The children were delighted and even the adults appreciated them!

New Bore:

On the Thursday before my return, Appala Raju arranged for the contractors to come in to start the new water bore.

Visits from ex-PCS children:

During my last weekend at Kantakapalli, two of the ex-PCS children came to visit. Ramu is now working for his uncle, selling ice-cream in Visakhapatnam, and is very proud of the fact that he is able to earn his own keep. Laxahna Rao is now training with his brother as a carpenter, and is very pleased to be back home caring for his mum. Both boys have fond memories of their time at PCS and enjoy returning to visit their friends and catch up on news.

Letters to Tatiyara:

I was again able to bring letters back with me from the children to John. He is dearly loved by them and they can't wait for him to return.

