

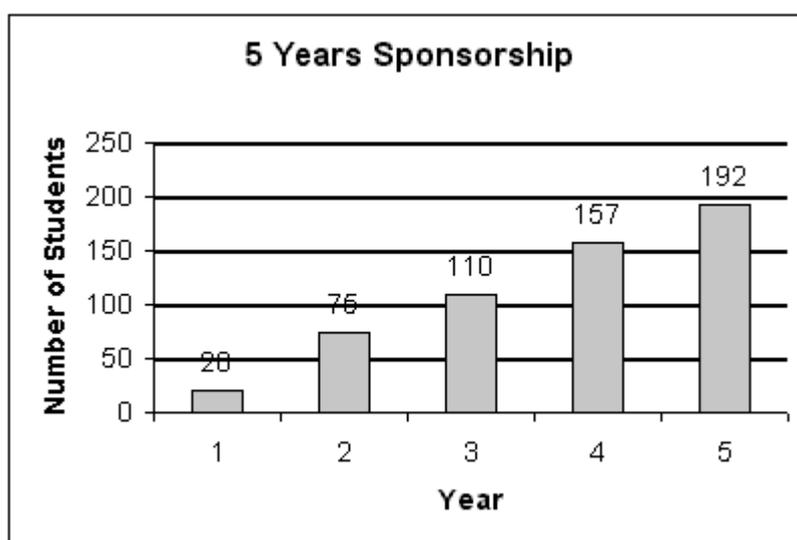
THE RAHULA TRUST

REPORT 2002-2003

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAHULA TRUST

Dear Supporters

It is very gratifying for me to be able to report to you that the Rahula Trust has completed its fifth successful year, during which our steady progress has been maintained. We were able to raise over £30,000 last year. If you look at the chart, you can see that the number of children we are sponsoring has increased year by year and we are now helping 192 children altogether, with further increases already planned.



The sponsorships are making a real improvement in the lives of these children. We have received a large number of letters and school reports from the children we are sponsoring in Sri Lanka. Most of them have been able to show progress in their studies. Some have been successful in the 5th grade scholarship, and some have passed their GCSE examinations. A common theme in so many of their letters is the expression of deep gratitude for the kindness of their sponsor, and sponsors can feel justifiably proud of the effects of their generosity.

A few children who are being supported by the Rahula Trust sat for the GCSE ordinary level examination and achieved higher grades, and are able to proceed to study for their 'A' levels. One student has now passed her 'A' level examinations and is waiting to study at the University of Kelaniya from next year.

As last year, we have continued to run extra classes for the children who are living in the Anuradhapura area in Sri Lanka where children cannot achieve higher grades due to the poor quality of schooling available. Our local representative, Mr. Jayasekera, has written a separate report about this project in Tantirimale.

Some sponsors who visited Sri Lanka managed to visit the children whom they are

supporting. They were very pleased with the progress of the children. One sponsor, who wants to remain anonymous, visited one family and, having seen the poor condition of the child's living accommodation agreed to build their house and already good progress is being made.

On his visit to Sri Lanka this year, Ven. Wimalajothi managed to visit some children whom the Rahula Trust is sponsoring in the Monaragala District.

For the second year running we are continuing our sponsorship programme in Nepal. We are happy to say that there are some sponsors who contribute to this Nepal Project. We are planning to increase the number of children in this project next year, although political disturbances are having a disruptive effect on school arrangements.

In Kenya, Nyumbani has reported a significant improvement in the educational prospects for their orphaned children. Following a lengthy and determined legal battle with the Ministry of Education it has at last been agreed that their children will be accepted by state primary schools. Previously, widespread prejudice due to the children's HIV status had meant they would only be accepted at private (and expensive) schools. Now, however, they will receive the education to which every child is entitled. Sadly, there are many children all over the world who are stigmatised and discriminated against because of their HIV status, and it is hoped that this landmark case will have widespread and beneficial repercussions. The Rahula Trust is continuing to support Nyumbani by providing equipment which is required for their own, in-house education programmes. Plans are in hand to send them a computer printer and a radio to enable them to receive educational programmes broadcast by the government. Nyumbani produces its own quarterly newsletter and if anyone would like a copy of this, please contact the secretary of the Rahula Trust.

As a fund-raising project the Rahula Trust has produced a CD of *paritta* chanted by the resident monks at the Vihara. So far we have been able to raise over £4,000 for the Rahula Trust which has more than covered our production costs and left a healthy surplus. If you buy a CD now, all the revenue will help directly the activities of the Rahula Trust.

There are some administrative changes which have taken place during the past year. Due to objections from Anagarika Dharmapala Trust (Managing Trustees of London Buddhist Vihara), we have to move our official address from the London Buddhist Vihara to the Treasurer's address in Hemel Hempstead. We would, however, like to assure you that the administration and other activities of the Rahula Trust will continue as usual. Any inconvenience is regretted. Our telephone and fax numbers remain unchanged.

We are very much aware that the success of the Trust is entirely due to friends like you. I want you to know just how important your support is to us, and how grateful we are for your kindness. We strive constantly to keep our administrative expenses to an absolute minimum so that as much of our income as possible can go to the beneficiaries. More funds are always needed and if anyone has a fund-raising scheme, we shall be delighted to hear from you.

I hope we can count on your regular support, because your help today amounts to the most precious gift you can ever make - the gift of education to children who are genuinely grateful for the assistance they receive and which will enable them to play a fuller role in

the development of their societies. Wishing you the best of health, happiness and success.

Ven. Dr. M. Vajiragnana
Chairman



Three sponsored children and their families from Monaragala, Sigiriya and Molakappupathana



(Extra Classes were conducted at the Jayanti Vihara Anuradhapura to help the sponsored children and others. Mr. Tom Kariyawasam on his visit to Sri Lanka visited these classes.)

REPORT ON TANTIRIMALE PROJECT

from Mr. W.B.A. Jayasekera

We have successfully completed the second year of operation of our programme to upgrade the standard of tuition, particularly for Rahula Trust-assisted children in Tantimale and other schools in the Anuradhapura area.

These classes were conducted at the same venue as in the previous year, which is the Jayanthi Viharaya at Anuradhapura. No payment was made by the students except for the occasional donation.

The subjects taught are Sinhala, English, Arithmetic, Science and coaching students for the Grade 5 scholarship examination.

For this purpose we engaged the same five teachers as in the previous year with an administrator to oversee the activities. These teachers are committed and talented and the progress that has been achieved is fully indicative of their contribution. It must be mentioned that these teachers, who are serving in schools in the area, have been handpicked for their ability through Mr. U. W. M. S. Udukumbura - a former Director of Education.

The classes were conducted from May 10, 2003 until the December vacation.

Some parents of these children are so enthusiastic about these classes that they too stay in the premises during the period the classes are conducted. In addition to the subject matter, discipline and moral values, which are fast being eroded in our society, are also inculcated in these children.

Due to the visible improvement in the children the parents are requesting that these classes be continued. I have received letters from the parents in this regard.

During the year classes were conducted from grade 4 to grade 11. Total attendance at these classes average 41, of which 23 are recipients of Rahula Trust benefits, while 18 children are outside the scheme. We openly encourage other children also to attend these classes to make our project cost-effective.

Visitors coming to the temple when classes are on have commended the work that has been carried out, and they in turn give the children various gifts which they value greatly.

CHILD SPONSORSHIP IN NEPAL

We are happy to say that the Rahula Trust has continued to support children in need in Nepal for the last two years. With the help of Samyak Youth Group in Kathmandu, in Nepal, our sponsorship for these children, who were not able to go to school due to poverty, has enabled them to continue with their studies. Money is distributed each month for books, writing materials and for clothes. Due to the generous support of some sponsors we are able to continue this

important work.

If you are interested in sponsoring a child in Nepal, please contact the Rahula Trust secretary for further information.

Giving a helping hand to a child. It really is worthwhile.

Shehara & Tamara Wijayasekara

Last summer we went on a long-awaited family holiday to Sri Lanka. During the month that we were there, we travelled around the country doing a lot of sight-seeing. On the last day of our stay in Nuwara Eliya our parents decided to visit Danushka, the boy whom we sponsor through the Rahula Trust child sponsorship programme.

The only information we had about Danushka was that he lived in Belipola, near Bandarawela. We realised that the best way to find him would be to go to his school and since the village was so small we thought the school would be easy to locate.

We didn't have much luck at the first school we visited. Our dad went to speak to the head teacher of the school, who immediately went and called another boy with the same name. Fortunately, he happened to be a friend of the Danushka we were looking for, and he told us the name of the correct school.

Danushka's school was a little further away, tucked away at the end of a very narrow, winding road with lots of bumps and ditches. While our dad went to check at the school, we waited anxiously to see if we had finally found him. Shortly afterwards we could see our dad returning with Danushka, his head teacher and also his class teacher. We introduced ourselves and asked him if we could meet his family. So Danushka and his class teacher joined us and we drove to his house to meet his family.

It was a long, difficult walk from the school to his house. The road was too narrow for us to take the car as it was very high up in the hills. The road leading to the house was extremely narrow and we decided to park the car and walk the rest of the way. I could not imagine having to do that walk twice a day to get to and from school. I thought of how I used to complain about my short walk to the school coach stop every morning, and quietly thought to myself that I must not complain about my journey again.

We realised, when we reached our destination, what a difficult situation this family was facing. We met Danushka's mother who was somehow managing by herself to take care of her three children. It was quite obvious that this was done with extreme difficulty and a lot of self sacrifice. She told us how she shared the money we sent between her three children, for their education so they could be in a better position later in life and how she would find it impossible to manage without the money she received every month. It is hard to believe that ten pounds a month can make such a difference, not only to one person, but a whole family. We also heard what a difficult life they led, which had been worsened by the

suicide of Danushka's father only a few months before. To supplement her income, Danushka's mother grows vegetables to sell in the village and works extremely hard to make ends meet.

I must admit that initially I was quite reluctant to make this visit; I really did not know what to expect or how to react in such a situation. In retrospect, I am glad we did go because it meant that we could help them in a more specific way. When we saw their hardship first hand, we decided to help them by improving and renovating their house so they can live more comfortably. It also makes it a lot more personal when you actually meet the people you are helping.

INTRODUCING A VILLAGE IN SRI LANKA MOLAKAPPUPATHANA (Hambantota District, Sri Lanka)

This village is situated near Tissamaharama. It is a poor area with few resources; some houses lack electricity and mains water. 20 families have no house, and some others have only temporary accommodation. Most of the villagers are farmers who rely heavily on the Weerawila Vewa (water tank) to irrigate their fields. The villagers are dependent upon the paddy harvest for their food and for any small surplus they may have to sell for cash. The demands on the water in the tank are many, which usually means there is insufficient to irrigate all the fields properly, so the yields suffer accordingly.

The Rahula Trust received an appeal from the 577 Foundation, and a personal visit to our offices from Mr. Rajah Amarasinghe, one of its representatives. This organisation works under the Ministry of Southern Regional Development for the development of villages in the south of Sri Lanka. The 577 Foundation asked for our help in assisting with the education of some of the village children who are living in extreme poverty and whose parents are struggling to make even the simplest of livings, let alone pay for their children's educational expenses. They singled out four children who are particularly deserving of our support and we have been sponsoring them since the beginning of this year. Their ages range from 10 to 13 years, and we are confident this will make a real difference to their lives.

CHANTING CD

*The chanting
CD produced in
aid of the
Rahula Trust
was a great
success. So far*

over £4,000.00 has been raised for the benefit of the children. We still have some copies left. As this money is going to help poor children in Sri Lanka and other countries we would like you to have one. If you have not already bought one, now is the time to do so. Please send your order to the Secretary of the Rahula Trust. The price is £8.00, please add £1 for post and packing if you are ordering by post.

The Rahula Trust Summarised Accounts
Year ending 30th September 2003

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2003	Total 2002
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Donations	10,506	18,766	29,272	30,315
Investment income	826	0	826	664
Total incoming resources	11,332	18,766	30,098	30,999
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Costs of generating funds	13	244	257	243
Charitable expenditure	841	15,595	16,436	13,617
	14	396	410	70

Management and administration				
Total resources expended	868	16,235	17,103	13,930
Net incoming resources	<u>10,464</u>	<u>2,531</u>	<u>12,995</u>	<u>17,069</u>

*The financial information has been extracted from the annual accounts.
For further information please ask the Secretary for the full annual report and accounts and examiners report.*

Trustees of the Rahula Trust:

Ven. Dr. Medagama Vajiragnana, Ven. Tawalama Bandula, Mr. Martin Evans, Mr. Rohan Kariyawasam, Dr. Robert Parsons, M. B. E., Mr. Richard Jones

Sri Lanka Office:

Ven. Prof. B. Wimalaratana, Mr. W. B. A. Jayasekera

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