



putting a smile back on their faces

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2006/2007

Kastda's first year saw the birth and establishment of an organization which set out to find ways to best support an initial group of children and students from all parts of Sri Lanka affected by the Tsunami on the 26th of December 2004. I am pleased to report that in our second year, 2006/7, the Charity has achieved the significant growth and expansion for which we aimed this time last year.

Firstly, we have increased the number of youngsters that we sponsor by monthly standing order to what is realistically a maximum of 106, and within that number we have been able to double the amount provided to two older students who have successfully progressed from A level study to university education. As more children advance to further education we may well have to increase the levels of our fund-raising but this will be a challenge for the future.

Secondly, we have welcomed a number of new members to our monthly meetings and a good number of new faces to the regular list of people attending our charity events. In addition we have widened the range of meetings and events, all of which have proved very popular, and we have added to our fund-raising by selling Kastda T-shirts and a range of ethnic items imported from Sri Lanka.

As I have said, the year's main events have proved both very popular and successful, enabling us to raise about £6000. The Birchington Dinner and Cultural Evening held in June was a good start to our social calendar, to be followed by two summer events held at Worth, a Family Fun Day and a cricket match between Worth Cricket Club and a Kastda/QEQM Hospital team keenly contested by both sides and followed by an excellent evening of food and socializing. The by-now regular autumn Canterbury Cultural Event was excellently organized and attended by a good number of members, friends and guests. A wonderful experience of Sri Lankan food, music and dance has certainly been appreciated by all guests to the Birchington and Canterbury events as well as impressive Tombolas and Raffles. With over £2000 also being raised by donations and sporting sponsorship the income overall from the year has been a great achievement.

The second anniversary of the Tsunami on the 26th December 2006 was marked by a ceremony of Remembrance held, once again, at the Harbour Wall, Margate. Another significant step for us on this occasion was the coverage of the event on both Radio Kent and BBC South East TV News. This, along with the year-round promotion of the charity's events in the local press and the ever expanding web site, has enabled us to reach a much wider audience.

The nucleus of the charity is a solid "family" of dedicated members whose hard work and commitment has never ceased to amaze and impress me, and whose whole-hearted support I have enjoyed, but never, I hope, have taken for granted. I thank you all deeply and sincerely. It was such a pleasure for a good number of us, including our Patron Roger Gale MP, to be able to meet as a "family" for a dinner at the Smugglers Restaurant in Birchington in the New Year to remember the year's events and to enjoy together a pleasant time of team bonding (apologies for the awful jargon!). I must at this point express my own deep gratitude and thanks on your behalf to Roger for his unstinting and valued support and advice as Patron over this momentous year.

Certainly, this has been a momentous year for three main reasons. Firstly, the revision of the Kastda Constitution was a necessary step towards our application to the Charity Commission for registration as a Charity and this was proposed and passed at an extraordinary meeting of members in the autumn. Secondly, the confirmation on the 28th November of our status as a registered UK charity, after an amazingly short period of time following our application, has opened a vital new chapter in the life of Kastda. It gives us opportunities for greater recognition with businesses and sponsors, for tax relief on interest on monies in our bank accounts, and the ability to obtain revenue on all donations and gift aids. Finally, we have set up and launched the first Kastda Lottery, registered with the Licencing Department, Thanet District Council, to be drawn at the Birchington Event in April 2008, with the first prize of 2 holidays for two people in Sri Lanka in August 2008, the second prize a meal and tour of the House of Commons with Roger Gale MP, and the third prize a case of fine wines. I am sure that this, like many of our events, will become an annual fund-raiser. Hopefully, this first lottery will raise between £10,000 and £15,000 but the task of selling the tickets is the first challenge for the year to come.

To conclude my report for this, our second year, I feel sure that we can justifiably feel proud of what Kastda has achieved this year, but we must remain mindful that we cannot be complacent, for we have shouldered the duty and responsibility to support as best we can those dear children whose lives, so tragically affected, can be improved in some measure by our endeavours.

DAVID E FLETCHER
President.

Patron: Roger Gale, M.P. President: David Fletcher Secretary: Mrs Jean King Treasurer: Dr Manoj Senaratne

THE KASTDA FUND SUPPORTS THE DARUWO – THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS – ORPHANED BY THE TSUNAMI IN SRI LANKA