

# BOYS' HOME UP-DATE- JUNE 2002



During my eight week visit to the SCHAT Boys Home in the autumn of 2001 we had fun learning how to make party masks using a combination of materials donated by businesses in Bradford-on-Avon, Bath and Trowbridge and colourful supplies bought locally in the nearby town of Tirunelveli. The boys' enthusiasm was more than matched by their imaginative style and their delight and exuberance is unmistakable in this photograph taken during one of our workshops.

When I am in India I often feel inspired to do things I would only dream of doing back home! On such an occasion I offered to teach a group of boys a dance routine for their Christmas programme. Using some money donated from the SCHAT Lottery Club, new costumes were purchased from Tirunelveli town for the seventeen boys in the group and rehearsals commenced - squeezed in between evening Tiffin and studying for school the following day. The result was a truly memorable meeting of East and West although probably more Bollywood than Michael Jackson! Here is a picture of the dance troupe posing in their new costumes.



Five of the senior boys will be leaving this summer to return to their villages, some of them having lived at the home for over ten years. They have completed their education and vocational training and, with the skills they have learnt, will return to their families able to earn a living and lead a dignified and fulfilling life. Pictured opposite are Lakshmanan, Murali (a young worker at the home who is not leaving!), Alagurajan, Perumal, Rajendran and Sankar taking a final photo opportunity with me shortly before I returned home to England. Sadly, these five boys will not be there when I visit the home next time but I am sure you would like to join with me in wishing them all the very best for the future.

A major event at the home this year was the marriage of the Senior Warden Sam Annadurai to his beautiful bride Pilomi in February. Although only in her early twenties, Pilomi has now become Mother to the 80 boys at the home which is a role she tells me she will cherish. I gently persuaded Sam to put his arm around his bride for this photograph and here they are looking slightly self-conscious but with their happiness shining through for all to see.

