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(Good Tidings)

March 2001

To the Friends of Menno-Clinic, India

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Drinking Tea in Chiluvuru

Written by John C. Murray

This past November, Doc and Olga Yarlaga and I traveled to India, to the village of Chiluvuru, to facilitate the ongoing development of Menno Clinic: India. This trip was prompted by the need to follow up on issues related to the construction of the building that will house the clinic and the legal permits for direct foreign currency exchange. While these were the matters that prompted the trip, they are not the dominant images in my mind as I reflect on the trip. What I remember most fondly is not the building or the paperwork, but visiting with people. Whenever we visited, we often drank tea together. For me "drinking tea" has become a significant symbol of building relationships of compassion and mutual respect.

These developing relationships included a tailor named Bashu and his son Shaik. Bashu's shop is next door to the clinic. His mud walled, thatched roof home is across town. Shaik, who is about 11 years old, experiences mental and physical disabilities resulting from a head injury sustained in a fall as a young child. His spirit and demeanor is filled with joy. When we visited their home Shaik kept asking his mother to bring us tea. Bashu asked why we would come to visit a poor man like him. His question provided an opportunity to declare that our actions are an expression of our commitment to live the example of Christ.

In my previous visit to the village I had been asked to pray for a young paralytic named Gorgipa. We had hoped to visit him again on this trip. It broke our hearts to discover that Gorgipa had died only a few months earlier. Ram Mahon Rao is one of five teachers at the local high school which has 520 students.. *Continued*

Contributions can be sent to:
Menno-Clinic, India
Emma Mennonite Church
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Visit our web-site at
mennoclinicindia.mennonite.net

The Menno-Clinic, India newsletter is published quarterly. If you have questions or comments about the newsletter, please contact Ben and Beth Hunsberger at:
benbeth@tln.net
or
write to us at the above address

A Word from the Board

By Ben Hunsberger

We offer up praises to our Lord for all the good gifts He brings us. I'm filled with encouragement with our mission to bring new hope and good news to a small village in India. Recently we were able to overcome a fairly significant barrier. The paper work has come through to approve our foreign currency exchange. This will simplify the process of paying our bills.

Progress continues to be made on the building. God continues to grant his grace and blessings on us through this mission opportunity. Thanks to each of you as you have been generously contributing to Menno-Clinic, India over the past 5-½ years.

I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce some new members of our Board. Dr. Weldon Friesen has accepted a 2-year term after having served as a consultant over the last year. Dr. Friesen served as a missionary in India. Gene Hartman, pastor Emma Mennonite Church, has agreed to a 3-year term. I have joined as Board Secretary.

Greg Schrock will be stepping down as Chairman. Greg has been an asset to our group and his contributions will be missed. However, the board releases him and gives him their blessings. Greg will continue to give support to the project. We trust in the Lord for his guidance and grace, and covet your prayers, as we continue the search for a new Board Chair.

Drinking Tea in Chiluvuru

Continued

He had been in the crowd of people who observed my prayer for Gorgipa during my previous visit. When he heard that we were visiting again, he made the trip across town we sat down and drank tea together. In the course of the conversation he asked about my prayer for Gorgipa. He wondered what it meant for my faith that Gorgipa was not healed but instead had died. His questions revealed his search on the path of his own spiritual journey and provided another opportunity to express our faith and commitment to follow the example in our Lord who entered into human suffering and was obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Many other stories could be told. I pray that, in some small way, the relationships we have begun to develop will be meaningful and helpful to the spiritual journey of the people in the village we have come to know and love. My experiences drinking tea in Chiluvuru have certainly nourished my own spiritual journey. I trust that these stories are an encouragement to the spiritual journey of all who are a part of Menno Clinic: India through your prayers and contributions.

Our goals in relationship to the practical issues of building and legal documents were accomplished. But even more important, I was reminded again and experienced in powerful ways what is really at the core of this project. The core of this project is not legal documents and permits. It is not about concrete and steel or the building created by the skillful application of those materials. It is not even merely about providing much needed medical services for this crowded rural village. The core of this project is developing and building relationships of compassion and respect. It is through these relationships that we have the opportunities to express our faith and enter into the joy, the suffering and the spiritual journey of others.



Financial Corner

Menno-Clinic, India

Year-End Fund Balance
January 31, 2001

Cash	\$134,743.69
Land	<u>41,900.00</u>
Total Assets	\$176,643.69

Receipts & Disbursements
Sept. 1, 2000 through Jan. 31, 2001

Donations	\$28,375.00
Interest	<u>1,242.83</u>
Total Receipts	\$29,617.83
Expenses	<u>4,742.72</u>
Net Receipts	\$24,875.11

Menno-Clinic, India is a mission program of the Emma Mennonite Church. Board Members: Greg Schrock (Chairman), Harvey Chupp; Dr. Weldon Friesen; Gene Hartman; Ben Hunsberger; Goldie Lambright, Larry Miller, John Murray, Subbarao V. Yarlagadda; Olga Yarlagadda