

# FRIENDS OF SERAMPORE

Serampore College (and University), India

Founded by Carey, Marshman and Ward, 1818

[www.seramporecollege.org](http://www.seramporecollege.org)

Secretaries Edward & Rosemary Williams

12 Penny Lane, Guarlford, Malvern, WR13 6PG

Tel: 01684 569291 E-mail: [EandRWilliams@btinternet.com](mailto:EandRWilliams@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.friendsofserampore.org.uk](http://www.friendsofserampore.org.uk)

February 2009

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much - we sent our Special Appeal in September because the College did not have funds to pay Theology staff salaries for October onwards. Thirty of you responded with gifts to a total including Gift Aid of £2300, and we sent £4000 as our annual remittance - over £350 more than in previous years, and a month earlier than usual. This last point proved particularly significant, as we sent just before the value of sterling began its fall (25% so far).

The Principal wrote: *Your timely help was so useful that we could pass the year 2008 without too much deficit (some £3,000 only). Some funds we raised from the Churches in Meghalaya also helped; yours made the major part. Thank you and please convey our gratitude to all the members of Friends of Serampore. Your support is one of our main reasons for strength and encouragement to go on.*

Now here is an interesting piece of psychology. In our newsletter last July we had written, "Can we add to our financial support? A little bit more for some of you, but could you also consider making this a substantially larger part of your giving 'to Christ and his Church'?... Do hold the College in your prayers, especially in their financial need, and consider again whether you may be part of the answer to such prayers." That appeal brought just one response, a one-off £40 from one member. Compare that with your generous response to the Special Appeal!

That's how it goes - but special appeals cannot become regular! However, our regular income **IS** now substantially less than we have been sending in recent years, so **we can only repeat our urgent appeal for increased regular giving**. Our financial situation is serious, but the needs in India are so great and the exchange rate has fallen.

**Our other plea is:** please encourage others to join.

A few days after sending out our letter last July we received the following from Dr Lalchungnunga:

*Monsoon is quite mild this year, though we have floods here and there. The Wednesday evening prayer meetings in staff houses, where teachers and some of their spouses participate, are helping us in many ways to really intercede for others and to encourage one another. [These have continued for over 40 years - they were always special.] Our teaching staff is stabilized now and we have very cordial atmosphere among us.*

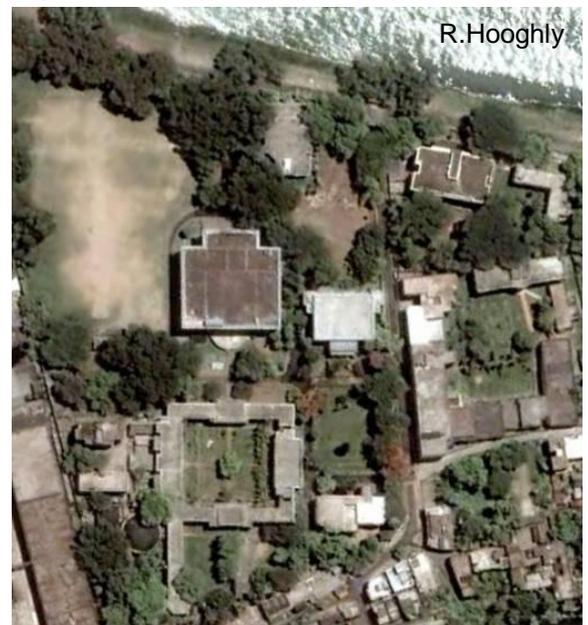
*May I share the concerns I have these days. Our expenditure having come much higher than before, we... have to bear with the leaking roofs in the staff houses, the main hall, the Physics lab and the hostels, as we cannot cope with all the repair works that need to be done.*

That was followed less than 2 months later by the letter that led to our Special Appeal.

Before writing this present letter we asked the Principal for up-to-date news, and here is his reply:

1. *Mr. Sunil Chatterjee had a stroke some two months ago. He is quite all right now but keeps to home. We hope he may come back to work or visit. He is in his mid 80's. Pray for him.*

2. *Danish Ambassador helped us to have the old paintings of King Frederick VI and Queen and four others restored. They look very good now. The Ambassador, Olaf Poulsen, visited Serampore on 6th January. He was*



R.Hooghly

The College from above, on GoogleEarth

*very pleased, and showed interest in having the St. Olave's Church restored. Its condition, especially the roof, is very bad and we have stopped holding services there. We pray that funds will come for its restoration.*

*3. We had College annual sports on 29th January where ASC and Theology students played in various athletic events. It was a good time for all sections to be together.*

*4. We plan to host a national seminar on Biodiversity on 13-14 February with the help of the Department of Science and Technology, government of West Bengal.*

*5. There will be Senate meetings and Serampore College Convocation on 4-7 February at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai.*

*6. The new extension building of the Senate Office on the campus will be opened on 12 February and there will be the meeting of the Working Committee of the Council in the afternoon.*

*7. Our teacher and students from Orissa who have been seriously affected by the recent persecution of Christians were helped out by a substantial grant (\$4000) from Hope International Church in Boston.*

*(From an email a few months earlier: More than a dozen relatives of our colleague Rev. Pratap Digal arrived; they got out of Orissa because some good Hindu neighbours helped them escape from the hands of fanatic Hindus. We will let them stay in a staff quarter which is vacant at the moment. They will need our support in many ways.)*

*8. Hliri and I are doing well by God's grace, coping with pressure of duties and responsibilities, one among them being hosting visitors from far and near which it is always a joy for us to do... Our children do well... Our son in-law Joseph is planning to join Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas to do MA in Church Music. Whether our daughter Elizabeth and their one year old Tim can join him is uncertain. They can give scholarship for him only. They plan to go as a family trusting God will provide.*

*9. We are in the initial stage of planning for a Diploma Course in Bible translation with Summer Institute of Linguistics and Wycliffe group. Pray that this will materialize.*

*10. Rev. Dr. Anugraha Behera, who has a longstanding relationship with Theology Department as teacher, professor and Vice Principal of Theology, lost his wife on 21 January. I do not know if he is known to any Friends of Serampore. He is in his mid seventies.*

*The story of one of Serampore's alumni:*

Swehlamong Chowdhury entered Serampore College in 1948, was College Captain for football and hockey, and represented Calcutta University for both these sports. After gaining I.Sc, he returned home to Chandraghona, in what is now Bangladesh. At the Christian Hospital there he trained as a laboratory technician and then as a compounder, until he was able to enter the Dhaka Medical College. He graduated MBBS in 1960 and joined the Medical staff at Chandraghona. Shortly after his marriage in 1963 he studied Ophthalmic Surgery in Glasgow, Scotland, for over a year, and then in 1965 became the first national Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, continuing for nearly 40 years. This was a task at which he excelled, especially through the troublesome "birth pangs" of the new nation of Bangladesh in 1971 and the further development of the hospital in the ensuing years; more evidence of God's provision of the man "for such a time."

*From Stepping Stones of Faith through the Years, Marjorie McVicar, a Friend of Serampore, 2007*

We give a very warm welcome to **Gill** and **Richard Crippen** and **Elliot**. Gill is Regional Minister in the Southern Counties Baptist Association and Richard is Minister at Bourton on the Water. They visited Serampore recently along with our members Nick Wood and family, and were guests of Dr Lalchungnunga and his wife in their home; they say, "We had the most amazing time and were able to share in the retreat at the beginning of their new year." Other Friends who tell us that they have visited the College are Iain McVicar, and Margaret Colville (née Wenger).

We are sorry to report the death of one of our life members, **Beryl Hammond**. She and her husband were taken to visit Serampore by Olive Rowett 50 years ago and one of their sons, Paul, is married to a Carey descendant.

**We remind you again of the great need for increased regular giving.** As usual, please send all donations to us at the address given in the heading, making cheques payable to "Friends of Serampore" - unless you have made a Gift Aid declaration for gifts of £40 or more, in which case please contact us first. We have Standing Order and Gift Aid forms, available also on the website; kindly also inform us if you instruct your bank to change the amount of a standing order.

**Thank you** as ever for your prayers, your concern and your gifts - and our warmest good wishes,