

TAMWED NEWS



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June 2010

Watch Ruth Davies's film on our Climate Change Project via our website at www.tamwed.org.

KITCHEN GARDEN PROJECT

Diana Lee, who is Tamwed's herbal medicine expert, visited South India in April to finalise plans for this project. She met representatives from the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT - www.frlht.org.in) who will act as advisors and visited the areas and communities near Chennai where the project will take place. The programme will last for 2 years and will be hosted by our partners CRUSADE.



The Organic Herb Trading Company in Somerset have nominated Tamwed and the Mooligai Thottam project in particular as their supported charity for this year. They will be donating proceeds from various events including their open day on Friday 2nd July from 4-7pm when Tamwed will have a stand.

20 women will be trained as trainers in medicinal plant growing methods. Demonstration gardens and nurseries will be set up and 220 family herb gardens established. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to this project which is costing about £5,500.



GILL'S MEMORIAL

While Diana was visiting CRUSADE she officially opened Gill Gorbutt's memorial garden which forms part of the garden in a training centre. The ceremony was attended by community health workers. Thanks to Jothi Ramalingam who arranged the memorial which was funded by some of Gill's many friends in the UK. The stone is inscribed: "In memory of Gill Gorbutt, highly respected and much loved chair of Tamwed".

PIG RACING IN CORNWALL

Tamwed combined an Indian meal with a traditional Cornish Pink Pig racing event which raised £275 towards our herb project. No pigs were harmed during the races although some of their backers could not handle the excitement!



CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT



One of our partner NGOs, Gawdesy, has set up a huge tree planting operation led by their 23 staff. After explaining about the cause and effect of climate change they encourage villagers to take action. Over 7,000 saplings, including coconut and arecanut, have been planted - mostly by families. 2,000 were issued as gifts to guests attending wedding ceremonies. Every public, business or religious meeting is marked by a tree planting ceremony (left). Gawdesy is focusing on two villages to raise awareness, introduce activities and then monitor change. Gawdesy's President, Mavadayan, says that there is a great interest in the project as people are becoming increasingly affected by a changing climate which is causing extremes of drought and rainfall.

The ISLAND Trust has been running campaigns and attending events such as the Fruit Festival in Sims Park, Coonoor to raise awareness about climate change (right). Volunteers distributed information and banners were erected around the park explaining how tourists should conduct themselves responsibly in an ecologically sensitive zone like the Nilgiris. Alphonse Raj, Secretary of the Trust, says that tourists appreciated learning about climate change and promised to take the awareness material back to their homes and tell others about the importance of the Nilgiris to India.



Ruth Davies, who works for the BBC, visited the Nilgiris in January and was impressed with the work the ISLAND Trust is doing - particularly among the tribal people. See her film via our website

HEALTH PROJECT

Tamwed is supporting CRUSADE's work on health issues for a further year. Apart from meeting a range of individual health needs, the homeopathic clinic will continue, people will be encouraged to dispose of household waste properly, sanitation will be promoted and community health workers and volunteers supported. The project aims to reach 25,000 of the poorest and most needy people with treatment, health camps, awareness-raising programmes and improved sanitation. Jothi Ramalingam, CRUSADE's Secretary says: "Despite the growth of nearby Chennai city, the villages surrounding Minjur and Sholavaram Blocks that this project is working with are backward with agriculture being the main occupation. The distribution of land is highly skewed with a few dominant caste families owning most land. A majority of the households are landless and live in small substandard homes of mud and thatch. Around a quarter of them belong to the oppressed Dalit community."

Profiles of four of the Community Health Workers are on our website. Rajeshwari (right) is 31 years old and from the Dalit community. She is married with a son and daughter - her husband is an unskilled labourer. She started the first Women's Self Help Group in her village and became a Panchayat (local council) level leader before becoming a CRUSADE Health worker covering 50 Self Help Groups in 10 villages. Through both jobs she currently works about 12 days per month. Although she likes her work but finds travelling difficult. The nearest bus stand from where she can visit other villages is 10kms from her home. She said it can take many visits before some people were ready to share or talk openly about their health and other problems.



BARN DANCE

Due to public demand, Walter Shortage and the Hosepipe Banned will be appearing at a Tamwed benefit at Nichols Hall, Lydford on Saturday 25th September at 7.30.

Tickets £5 in advance - £6 on the door.



We are very grateful to our supporters and to those who contribute towards our projects - particularly those that, unprompted, send us cheques in the post. We thank the RH Southern Trust and Osborne Samuel for their very welcome support.

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