



# PRITHIPURA COMMUNITIES

SINCE 1964, PRITHIPURA COMMUNITIES HAS ENABLED 1,314 CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE THEIR BEST AND HAPPIEST LIVES!

## WHAT WE DO

Building lives and abilities for over 50 years, Prithipura Communities works from 4 locations in Sri Lanka to provide care rehabilitation, education and work opportunities to 240 children and adults with disabilities with little or no family support.



## BACK TO THE START

I shall not forget my first visit to the hospital to let it be known that I would take care of the two children abandoned in the wards. Each step towards the authorities, I almost turned tail and fled. Only gumption, loyalty to an interior conviction, impelled me to go forward. "Have you seen the children?" the Doctor queried. "No" I said. "Don't you think you should look before you decide?" "I will take them, whatever their condition may be" I said. The look of incredulity remained in the eyes of the doctor.

The first night alone with the children. There was so much to do. Both children needed to be changed, I who had never changed an infant's garments discovered all my fingers had become thumbs. How long the job took. How often the safety pin pricked my trembling fingers. A light sea breeze threatened to put out the tiny oil lamp by which I worked. Would the dawn never come?

The dawn, cool freshness of the sea breezes, a sound of human speech, normal sounds in my ears again - and the first night was over.

Extracts from 'One night six years ago', by Dr Bryan de Kretser, March 1970

Contact us:

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Prithipura Communities  
Prithipura Infants Home,  
Asokapura & Anandapura Farms and Cotagala School  
Registered No's: GM/5/82, MSS/NSPD/R/23, L-52811 &  
WP/SSD/G/DH/2010/01  
Approved Registered Charity: 7/1638

**DINUSHI'S HIGH FLYING YEAR!**

Dinushi, who came to the Infants Home as a young baby and now attends Cotagala School, has had a fantastic year. Not only did she participate in 'Sri Lanka's got talent' and appeared on TV with her special talent of painting using a paintbrush in her mouth, she also passed the grade 5 scholarship exam – a competitive exam for all 11 year olds in Sri Lanka. Both events have attracted publicity in the news and promoted awareness about what people with disabilities CAN do.

Well done Dinushi and thank you to all those who have supported her in her journey so far!



**OUT AND ABOUT**

We recognise the importance of those who live with us getting out and about in the community and positively encourage social inclusion. Our dance groups at the Infants Home and Cotagala School have participated in events around the country including the local 'perahera' (Buddhist parade) in Prithipura village. There have been trips to cultural and tourist sights in Sri Lanka such as Pinnewala Elephant Orphanage, Water World and Anuradhapura as well as many sporting activities. Every week, residents at the Infants Home take dance classes at a local church hall and in the local election in 2018, five adults voted for the first time!



**ARUNA ART**

Aruna, who lives at Anandapura Farm, has many hobbies, one of which is creating art! His art is now available for our UK based supporters via Prithi UK, who have printed one of his designs on a t-shirt. If you are based in the UK and would like to purchase a t-shirt, please email [prithiuk@gmail.com](mailto:prithiuk@gmail.com).



**CURRENT PROJECTS**

Stichting Prithipura, based in the Netherlands are funding a number of projects across all our locations. One of their key projects is funding the planting of trees and cinnamon at Asokapura Farm in order for us to diversify our agricultural income there. With the price of rubber continuing to be low, it is important that we continue to develop our income streams as they are an important element of our long-term sustainability. 8 kind supporters also sponsored the purchase of 4 pigs for Anandapura Farm and we are looking forward to our first litter of pigs in the near future. Thanks to Stichting Prithipura and all our supporters and volunteers who have helped us with projects this year!

**Want to help sponsor a project? Do get in contact!**



**OUR AMAZING TEAM!**

Our amazing team of staff remain our greatest asset and their responsibilities are varied and demanding. Working long hours they provide personal care, therapy and education and much more besides. Their day may also involve taking a child to a hospital appointment, dressing a wound or a trip to the beach. The work can be draining, both physically and emotionally, especially when a child is unwell. Their passion and commitment, therefore, cannot be understated in a climate where much easier work can be obtained, often for a more attractive salary. Prithipura Communities is where it is today because of the dedication of this small group of people. Do show your appreciation when you drop by to visit us!

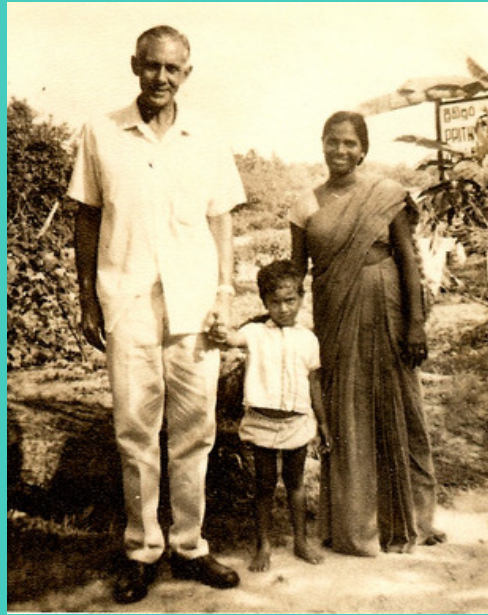


We are delighted that in 2018 we have further strengthened our therapy support at the Infants Home. Eranja, an experienced physiotherapist, is working with us part-time to help coordinate and develop the therapy we provide to those living at the Infants Home. We have also welcomed Charles, a recently qualified physiotherapist as well as Sajini, who is a speech and language therapist. It is the first time we have been able to employ a speech and language therapist and this is thanks to the kind support of a volunteer from Germany and her friends. Together with Suranga, our sessional occupational therapist, they are working hard to give the children and adults they work with the most appropriate support to develop their potential.



Due to increased funding available for salaries, we have been able to increase salaries for all of the staff team in 2018 and we would love to do this every year! We also plan to continue to develop therapy support through continued improvement of facilities and equipment. Of course, all this requires additional funding and we welcome ideas for support!

**REMEMBERING THILLAKA**



We couldn't publish this year's newsletter without a few words about Thillaka de Kretser, one our founding members, who sadly passed away in March 2018. An integral part of the Prithipura family since its inception, Thillaka continues to be very much missed by us all. Although Prithipura will never be quite the same without her, her presence remains in the lives of those she cared for; those who continue to be supported by Prithipura and those who now live independent lives.

Thillaka remains an inspiration to us all, a life of love and dedication to care for the most vulnerable in Sri Lanka – a heart- warming legacy.

**“A GREAT VOLUNTEER IS SOMEONE WHO EMBRACES EVERY CHALLENGE, ENJOYS EVERY DAY AND SEEKS NO GLORY OR ACCOLADE FOR THEIR EFFORTS”**

**Debi, Volunteer and Chair of Prithi UK**

**What do our volunteers do?**

Most of our volunteers work directly with the children and adults with disabilities that live with us and are based at one of our four locations following the same work pattern as our care/teaching teams and providing support to the work they do.

**What skills are necessary?**

Previous experience is desirable but not essential. A willingness to help wherever needed, working with care and empathy is essential. We welcome those with specialist skills such as nursing, therapy and agriculture as well as skills that will help promote and raise awareness about the work we do or administrative skills.

**Want to find out more?**

We welcome volunteers who are willing to work with us at least a month. Contact us on **Prithi@slt.net.lk** at least four months before your proposed start date and we will send you more details on what the work entails and what you need to do before you come.



**Volunteering at Prithipura has changed my life in so many ways. All I expected before I went was that I would learn to care for disabled children and adults in a foreign country, I got way more than that.**

I found unconditional love and respect for the residents and the amazing hard working people of Prithipura. I stepped out of my comfort zone and into the unknown. I made heart to heart connections and new friendships. I learnt about Sri Lankan culture first hand by living with Sri Lankan people. After a few weeks I felt I became part of the family, and even though I couldn't speak Sinhala, I still had many laughs with the people there. My tie with Prithipura has continued even after I left and I have returned to volunteer this year and have joined Prithi UK. The love that is to be found there has touched my heart and changed me for the better.

**Janine, Volunteer**

**In 2018 we welcomed 29 volunteers who have worked with our team of carers and teachers, provided specialist therapeutic support and helped us develop our marketing and social media content.**



**HOW TO DONATE**

**Donations in Sri Lankan Rupees:**  
 Hatton National Bank – City Office  
 Account number: 002010012779  
 SWIFT Code: HBLILKLX  
 Beneficiary: The Treasurer,  
 Prithipura Infants Home

**Donations in Euros:**  
 Commercial Bank of Ceylon Ltd.,  
 Pita Kotte Branch  
 Account Number: 1110010061  
 SWIFT Code: CCEYLKLX  
 Beneficiary: The Treasurer,  
 Prithipura Infants Home

**Online via Global Giving:**  
<https://goto.gg/36254>

**In the UK**  
 Account name: Prithi UK  
 Account number: 91869434  
 Sort Code: 40-01-13

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