



NEEM TREE TRUST NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2012

Thank you once again for the support you have given us in raising funds for the Boys' Home in Tiruneleveli and St Luke's Leprosy Hospital in Peikulam. We would like to thank the following groups for inviting us to speak at their meetings during the year April 2011-March 2012, raising £4230 in donations and sales.

Chilcompton Wives
The Tannery Day Centre, Street
Keynsham Home Makers
North Bradley Autumn Leaves Club
Wells Free Church Ladies Group
Longwell Green Ladies Group
Staverton Women's Institute
Worton & Marston Ladies
Coleford Tuesday Group
Freshford Women's Institute
Queens Road Ladies Group, Keynsham
Bearley House Day Centre, Martock
Salvation Army, Bath
British Legion Women's Section, Bristol
Southwick Seniors
St Lawrence Day Centre, Wells
Farmborough Women's Institute

St Peter's Church, Chippenham
Ladies Guild, Wick
Sunnyside Active Living Centre
Southgate Townwomen's Guild
Devizes Evening Women's Institute
Woodside Women's Institute, Upper Seagry
Batheaston Thursday Club
Trinity Primary School, Acton Turville
Mothers' Union, United Church, Longwell Green
Trowbridge Women's Institute
Rowde Ladies' Club
Horizon Methodist Church, Bath
St George's Primary School, Bourton
Sutton Benger Women's Institute
Midsomer Norton Inner Wheel
Sutton Benger Knitters



During the year we were represented at the following events:

Indian Evening, Dilton Marsh
Rowdeford School Fayre
Mead Nursery, Brokers Wood
St Peter's Chippenham Harvest Service

Mike & Alison's Coffee Morning, Winsley
Crisp Cowley Indian Event, Bath
Seven Stars Quiz Night, Winsley
Fair Planet Festival, Bradford on Avon

The above events generated £3163 and £1409 was generated from other miscellaneous sales.

In August 2011 we sent out our annual newsletter to supporters giving them an update on the children's progress and inviting them to make a donation to The Neem Tree Trust for the benefit of the children at the Boys' Home and the patients and children at the Leprosy Hospital. Donations from individuals and organisations for both the Boys' Home and St Luke's, including regular standing orders, amounted to £26,472.

Included in the above figure is £2,840 from the following organisations:

Projects Abroad, Goring, Sussex
The Medlock Trust, Bath
Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh
St Nicholas Church, Winsley
Stephen Clark Trust, Bath
St Laurence School, Bradford on Avon
Crisp Cowley Estate Agents, Bath
Mens Club, United Church, Bradford on Avon
St Peter's Church, Chippenham
Oakley Holidays, Rugby



We claimed Gift Aid of £2129 from the Inland Revenue on donations from UK taxpayers.

SCHT BOYS HOME

During the financial year 2011/2012 the Trust provided a grant of £21,002 to the SCHAT Boys' Home to pay for:

- Educational trips for the children.
- Assistance with welfare and rehabilitation when the boys return to their villages after leaving the home.
- Installing a safety cover over the large well on the campus.
- Refurbishment of Study Hall with a new roof.
- Replacement batteries for the generator which is used during the frequent power cuts.
- Corrective surgery on the feet of two boys.



Kathy Miller visited the SCHAT Boys' Home in January/February 2012. She stayed for three weeks and during that time observed both the improvements at the home and the development of the boys. Kathy had meetings with Dr Karuna Chelliah and his Board of Directors regarding future needs at the home. It is with much sorrow, however, that we have to inform all our supporters that Dr Karuna Chelliah died suddenly of a heart attack on 29th March 2012, just one month after her visit.

In 1976 Dr Chelliah had a serious motorcycle accident and he was not expected to live. Thankfully, he did survive but was left paralysed and confined to a wheelchair. As a way of giving thanks for his remarkable recovery he set up the home for disabled boys in Tirunelveli. Being disabled himself he knew full well the needs and aspirations of the boys and he ran the home with dedication and commitment. His example showed generations of boys that disability is no barrier to leading a full life and making a contribution to society.

The meaning of Karuna is compassion and Dr Karuna Chelliah lived the meaning of his name and was an example to all those living with any kind of disability. He was such a very special man, so kind, courteous and courageous and it was a privilege for Kathy to have met him. He made his vision of the Boys' Home a reality and kept it alive with his heart, body and soul and she felt honoured to be able to support him in his work.

The doctor's goodness was obvious for all to see and he will be sadly missed but his legacy will live on through his wife, Mrs Princess Karuna, who has been appointed Secretary by the Boys' Home Board Members.



We are sure that all the supporters of The Neem Tree Trust will join us in expressing their deepest sympathy on the passing of Dr Chelliah but we would also like to celebrate his life and the thousands of lives he touched and enriched through his goodness and sacrifice.

ST LUKE'S LEPROSY HOSPITAL

Through the Trust, a number of dedicated supporters of St Luke's have made donations towards the feeding programme set up at the hospital for the benefit of the in-patients and children as well as sponsoring individual children. A special mention must be made of Joseph Prince Chandran Dawson "Joe" who lived on the Isle of Wight with his wife Margaret. Joe, originally from Tamil Nadu, died in November 2011 at the age of 84. He was a very popular, fun loving Christian man who, together with his family, had supported St Luke's Leprosy Hospital for many years. At his funeral Joe's family asked for donations to be made to The Neem Tree Trust for the benefit of St Luke's.



During the financial year 2011/2012 the Trust provided a grant of £14,000 to St Luke's Leprosy Hospital. Dr Haebus, Medical Superintendent at St Luke's Leprosy Hospital, has deposited £10,687 into an interest bearing Deposit Account to provide income for future feeding and other patient support. The balance of £3313 will be used in the current year for children's education and general day-to-day care of leprosy patients. A further £1910 was passed to certain beneficiaries specified by donors.

Kathy visited St Luke's Leprosy Hospital in January 2012 and once again met with the patients and children. She toured both the male and female wards and saw for herself the beds which are sponsored by the donors and the ongoing work being carried out to care for the patients.

During Kathy's visit approximately 50 of the children from St Luke's had an outing to the Boys' Home on 30th January 2012. This has become an annual event which we call "Peikulam meets Krishnapuram" because St Luke's Hospital is in the village of Peikulam and the Boys' Home is in the village of Krishnapuram. All the children enjoyed a wonderful day of sport, music, drama and friendship.



Girls from St Luke's enjoying themselves on the play equipment at the boys' home

The patients who have been cured of leprosy make these colourful woven baskets. St Luke's provide the raw material, training and

marketing which enables them to earn an income and to live with dignity.

Kathy arranged for a number of these baskets to be sent to her home

in Wiltshire and she sold them to members of the congregation of St Peter's Church, Chippenham after she gave a talk at their Harvest Service in October 2011.



Rajeshwari



Rajeshwari is 21 years old and some years ago felt numbness in both feet but it was sometime before her family were advised to take her to St Luke's where leprosy was diagnosed. She has now been cured of leprosy but the damage to her feet and sensory loss is irreversible. After minor surgery, the staff at St Luke's have advised her to wear special protective footwear and to apply for a disability certificate. After finishing her studies they plan to send her for job oriented training at The Leprosy Mission Regional Vocational Training Centre, Vadathorasalur. All treatment at St Luke's is free of cost.

A NEW FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE



Recently we have joined forces with an organisation called **Recycling for Good Causes**, which helps charitable organisations raise money by recycling jewellery, old/new UK and foreign currency and mobile phones. If you would like to donate any unwanted jewellery, currency or mobile phones towards this recycling appeal please get in touch with Kathy and

she will give you a FREEPOST envelope. It doesn't have to be gold or silver - costume jewellery, watches, even damaged, broken and incomplete items can be turned into a donation for us. For more information visit www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org or e-mail Kathy at kathymiller@neemtreetrust.org.uk.



BOOT SALE TO ANTIQUE STALL

Our friend, John Kendall, is continuing to support us by searching out small antiques which are interesting and beautiful and which he considers he can sell for a reasonable price and make a profit for our charity. He is pictured here with some of his treasures on his stall at Seend Church Fete in June. Last year he raised £1,700 for The Neem Tree Trust.

INDIAN EVENING IN DILTON MARSH

Jane Brake and three of her friends, Sally, Elly and Wilma visited the Boys' Home when they were travelling around India for one month in 2009. Like everyone else who visits the home they were very moved by what they saw and they have been supporters of The Neem Tree Trust ever since then. In April last year Jane and her husband Michael, with the help of their friends, hosted a superb Indian evening for 20 people at their farmhouse in Dilton Marsh. They served delicious Indian food including green pea masala, corn bhaji, green banana and mango curry, chicken curry, lentil curry, and fresh pineapple and coconut ice cream to finish. They also held a raffle and sold items made or designed by the boys and raised a magnificent £500.



Elly, Wilma, Jane & Sally at Tirunelveli Bus Station

QUIZ NIGHT AT THE SEVEN STARS, WINSLEY

Thirty-four pub quizzers enjoyed a jolly evening at the Seven Stars in Winsley on 7 February 2012 when genial host Evan, the 'singing quiz master' presented a quiz with an Indian theme, occasionally! The lead changed hands throughout the evening with the winners, 'Naan Better', making a late burst to secure the prize, a nice bottle of Prosecco. The quizzers generously donated £121 and the Neem Tree Trust thanks them and the Seven Stars for this and for an entertaining and nail biting evening.



Glory, dressed in a beautiful gold coloured sari, and Dhina ready to depart for her family's house and the Valakappu ceremony

SOUTH INDIAN CULTURE

When Kathy last visited the Boys' Home, married wardens Glory and Dhina were expecting their first baby. In Tamil Nadu bangles are presented to a pregnant woman during her seventh month of pregnancy and the ceremony is known as Valakappu. The sound of these bangles reaches the baby in the womb and is believed to have a good effect on the unborn child. The bangles are removed only after delivery of the baby. On 28th April 2012 Glory gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Joy.



Glory displays the bangles she was given during the Valakappu ceremony

CRISP COWLEY ESTATE AGENTS, BATH

Crisp Cowley celebrated the launch of the Bath Christmas Market on 24th November 2011 by throwing open their doors to help raise money for The Neem Tree Trust. We were able to sell gifts made by the children and also wrapping paper and cards that had been designed by them. Crisp Cowley provided a wonderful Bollywood atmosphere, with Indian food and music and giant original hand painted Bollywood film posters adorning the walls of the office. The sale raised over £350 and Crisp Cowley matched the sale proceeds pound for pound so that the eventual total was over £700.



Nick Gale of Crisp Cowley with Kathy and Ken at the Indian evening

NEW NEEM TREE TRUST VAN



We bought our first Neem Tree Trust charity van in November 2006 from Ricky Fenby & Son in Frome. It was a Ford Escort Van and did us sterling service, taking us all over Wiltshire, Somerset and the Bath and Bristol area where we travelled to give talks to various groups about the charity. Alas, last March she broke down on our way back from a talk in Devizes, and she was deemed too expensive to repair. Our trustees therefore decided we should invest in a new van for the charity. It is a Vauxhall Combo, again purchased from Ricky, and he is pictured here with the van suitably garlanded, Indian style, before she set off on her first outing for The Neem Tree Trust. www.rickyfenby.co.uk.

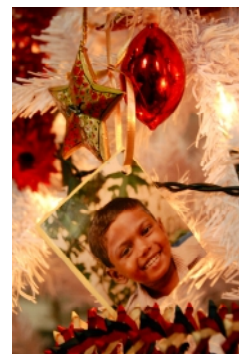
PAUL HARRIS AWARD

Bradford on Avon Rotary Club has supported The Neem Tree Trust over several years and at a Silent Auction held recently at the Leigh Park Hotel they raised over £800 and have very generously pledged to increase this amount to £1,500. At this event Kathy Miller was very surprised but extremely honoured when she was presented with a Paul Harris Fellowship by Bradford President Julian Long, this being the first time Bradford on Avon Rotary Club had made this award to a non-Rotarian. Paul Harris was the founder of Rotary and this award is made "In appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world". It has always been our aim that our charity should not only be about raising funds for the children we support in India but also be about offering the hand of friendship to them. Kathy feels privileged to be able to do this each year when she visits the children and privileged also to have been given this award by her local Rotarians.

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



In December 2011 the Friends of Holy Trinity Church, Bradford on Avon organised a Christmas Tree Festival in the church. Local charities, clubs, organisations, businesses and individuals were invited to stage a tree on a theme based on what each organisation or group does. We were very happy to be invited to participate and we dressed our tree with Indian decorations and pictures of some of the children we support. The church looked magical with 35 trees altogether and over the three days of the festival 700 visitors came to admire them. We look forward to participating in this year's event.



MIKE & ALISON'S COFFEE MORNING is turning into an established annual event for The Neem Tree Trust in Winsley. Last year's event was record breaking, raising £1,112 for the charity. As you can see, it's not a ladies only affair - everybody is welcome! This year's Coffee Morning will be held on 2nd November at 22 Late Broads, Winsley between 10.00-12 noon, do come along and support us if you live locally.



George Elder and Mike Wells enjoying themselves at the Coffee Morning last year

FAIR PLANET FESTIVAL

The Neem Tree Trust was represented at the Bradford on Avon Fair Planet Festival on 10th March 2012 at St Margaret's Hall to celebrate our interconnected planet. It was a great day that drew together a very wide range of people devoted to tackling poverty and injustice and working towards a fairer world. Over 300 people came along to enjoy the day, take a step for Fairtrade, make music, listen to stories, taste and buy Fairtrade and local foods and drinks. We sold chutneys and jams and Neem Tree Trust items and the amount raised came to just over £142.



David & Sharon with a bunch of their beautiful dahlias

DAVID & SHARON ECOB grow beautiful dahlias in their garden in Turleigh and sell them, together with eggs from their chickens, in aid of charity. The Neem Tree Trust is lucky to be one of the charities to benefit from their efforts and we received £125 from David and Sharon last year.

YOUNG PEOPLE RAISING FUNDS FOR ST LUKE'S

Established in 1919, **Oakley Holidays** is a registered charity organised on a voluntary, not-for-profit basis, and run to provide opportunities for young people primarily aged between 12-18. Holidays for up to 100 people are held at Bilton Grange Preparatory School at Dunchurch near Rugby during school Easter and summer breaks and last for one week. Spare five pence pieces at the daily tuck shop are collected by the young people in a piggy bank named Boaris Johnson and donated to the work of the St Luke's Leprosy Hospital. The collection each Easter and summer usually amounts to about £20 - it's amazing how those five pence pieces mount up! www.oakleyholidays.org.



Illyria Outdoor Theatre performed Roald Dahl's Fantastic Mr Fox at Lytham Hall, Lancashire on 28th August 2011. During the interval a Big Bears raffle was run by volunteers, Ellie Taylor, Vicky Taylor, Laura Bury, Becca Waite, Helen Bradbrook and Frances Kelly, and between the six of them they sold an amazing £300 worth of raffle tickets for the eight bears in just 20 minutes! The Neem Tree Trust was delighted to learn that the group had requested that the proceeds of the raffle should be donated specifically to the Women's Ward at St Luke's Leprosy Hospital.

NEXT YEAR WILL BE THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE NEEM TREE TRUST AND WE WANT TO CELEBRATE IN STYLE! IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP US BY ORGANISING AN EVENT TO MARK THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION PLEASE LET US KNOW.