



THE NEEM TREE TRUST NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2014



I have dedicated this newsletter to the memory of my wonderful husband Ken who many of you will know died suddenly but peacefully at home in Avoncliff on 20th October last year whilst I was in India visiting the children we support through our charity. We founded The Neem Tree Trust together in 2003, after I had been to Tamil Nadu in India for three months as a volunteer. Ken's unwavering support and good humoured enthusiasm over the past ten years helped me tell the story of the differently-abled boys' home and St Luke's Leprosy Hospital not only to local groups in Bradford-on-Avon, Bath, Bristol, Wiltshire and Somerset but also to groups further afield.

Ken is deeply missed, not only by myself, his six children and grandchildren and his many friends, but also by the children 5000 miles away in India where they knew him as "Father Ken".

After Ken died so suddenly I received simply hundreds of beautiful cards and letters from friends far and wide recalling their personal memories of him; it was like a tsunami of love. I would like to share with you the message I received from Mrs Princess Karuna Chelliah at the boys' home in Tirunelveli:

"We, the children, staff, Secretary Mrs Karuna Chelliah and the Board members of the boys' home are in a state of a shock to hear the news of the demise of Mr Ken. Our thoughts flash back to his visit to our Home, where he spent four of his precious days. That alone shows the deep love he had for our differently-abled children. His love for our children in the Home, speaks volumes of the goodness of Mr Ken. We are deeply grieved at the irreparable loss of one of the greatest supporters of our Home.

With sadness in our hearts, we briefly recall the unique and outstanding love he had for our kids. Mr Ken was the co-founder of Neem Tree Trust. He was a pillar of the organisation. His affectionate, deep and sincere involvement in our social welfare activities is highly commendable and leaves footprints in the sands of time. Our memories are fresh of his sociable nature and love. He was a Mountain of Love to all who came to know him and especially his love overflowed on our boys in the Home. We are aware that he was a very loving husband and a loving father to his children and know that all are drowned in sorrow.

You and your family must be going through a very difficult situation and we understand the sadness in your heart. Hence, this comes with loving thoughts and many prayers that you receive consolation and strength in your bereavement. As you share the loss of someone who was loved by all of you, may the strength you bring to each other give you peace and comfort. May the bond you have together help you face each new tomorrow.

Our minds are full and fresh of the thoughts of dear Mr Ken. He was such a jovial, light-hearted, well-meaning, compassionate and affectionate gentleman. Everybody, who met him took a liking to him. We will always remember and be grateful for his generosity to our boys. He improved the lot of our differently-abled boys and we cherish the days he spent with our Home children. His heart throbs with sympathy, tenderness and love. He was salt and light.

Mr Ken gave importance to human value and led a meaningful life. We are thankful for the wonderful association we had with Mr Ken."

The following groups invited us to speak at their meetings during the year. These talks raised £3,543 in donations and sales of goods. It was a pleasure to meet you all and we would like to thank you for your interest in the work of our charity and for your support.

Wroughton Vale Rotary Club
CAMEO Ladies Group United Church, Trowbridge
Tangent Group, Chippenham
Bath City Townswomen's Guild
Avalon Rotary Club
Bath Rotary Club
Saltford Mothers Union
PACE Group at Gore Hedge
Midsomer Norton Methodist Wives Group
North Bradley Autumn Leaves Club
Holcombe Ladies Club

Sutton Benger Over 60s Club
Keynsham Baptist Women's League
Oakley Holidays, Bilton Grange, Rugby
Binegar WI Federation India/Estonia Day
Southgate Townwomen's Guild Bath
St Lawrence Day Centre, Wells,
Coleford Tuesday Group
Steeple Ashton WI
St Cuthbert's Church Ladies Group, Wells
University of the Third Age Warminster
Blackland, Calstone & Calne WI

During the year The Neem Tree Trust was represented at the following events:

10th Anniversary Celebration of the foundation of The Neem Tree Trust at The Old Stables, Avoncliff
John Kendall's stalls at Mead Nursery, Nr Brokerswood & at Rowdeford School Fete
Mike & Alison's Coffee Morning, Winsley
Jane's Indian Evening, Dilton Marsh
Christmas Tree Festival, Trinity Church, Bradford on Avon

The above events generated £3,497 and £2,008 came from other miscellaneous sales of goods.

We claimed Gift Aid of £3,569 from the Inland Revenue on donations from UK taxpayers.

In August 2013 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 £32,119.

Included in the above figure is £8,149 generously donated by the following organisations.

Crisp Cowley Estate Agents, Bath
Keysham Homemakers
Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh
Oakley Holidays, Rugby
Projects Abroad, Sussex
Rotary Club of Bath

Somer Valley Rotary Club
St Laurence School, Bradford on Avon
St Nicholas Church, Winsley
Stephen Clark Trust
Wroughton Vale Rotary Club



SCHT BOYS' HOME

During the financial year 2013/2014 the Trust provided a grant of £20,000 to the SCHAT Boys' Home, which paid for:

- Assistance with welfare and preparation for employment when the boys return to their villages after leaving the home.
- Improvements to the buildings and facilities on the campus.
- A solar panel installation to provide hot water.
- Drilling of a borehole on the campus.
- Financial support for the boys who have passed 12th Std studies and going on to attend college.



ST LUKE'S HOSPITAL

During the financial year 2013/2014 The Neem Tree Trust provided a grant of £10,000 to St Luke's Leprosy Hospital. Dr Haebus, the Medical Superintendent, has deposited £9,300 into an interest bearing Deposit Account to provide income for future feeding and other patient support. The balance of £700 will be utilised for the children's education and daily care of the leprosy patients.

In 2013 I arranged for Alex Tate and Fran Jones, ex-students from St Laurence School in Bradford-on-Avon, to stay for one month at St Luke's Hospital and to visit the boys' home. On their return Alex and Fran said:

"The time that we spent in India working with The Neem Tree Trust was one of the most life changing and fun filled months of both our lives. It was amazing to see first hand the work that the money raised does to help some of the most ostracised and vulnerable people in South India. The organisations supported by the charity work non-stop to bring about real change in the lives of the individuals they work with and it was an honour and a privilege to be allowed to witness that".



Alex and Fran outside the women's ward at St Luke's



Fran and Alex with the children at St Luke's

100% of St Luke's expenses are met by donors and well wishers. These donations come from various adoption schemes set up for leprosy patients and children and a significant individual donor is The Neem Tree Trust.

There are 250 in-patients this year at St Luke's Hospital, where leprosy patients with a variety of medical conditions are treated. Non-leprosy general patients have been coming to the hospital too and are receiving necessary treatment.

FUTURE NEED

The women's ward is in need of renovation. The ward is over 50 years old, it has an asbestos sheet roof and the female patients are lying on stone beds.

Over £4,000 was donated to The Neem Tree Trust by family and friends in memory of Ken at his funeral on 6th November 2013 at Semington and more than 200 people attended to say farewell to a very special man. On behalf of my whole family I would like to thank everyone for your kindness. Ken would be so proud that the children in India will benefit from your generosity in his memory and it has given me strength and encouragement to carry on the work we both started together. I am planning to go back to India to visit the children next January.



John Kendall, pictured with Patricia Kinzett and Sue Bolden at his stall at The Mead Nursery, near Brokerswood, continues to enthusiastically support The Neem Tree Trust by buying and selling small antiques and collectables. Last year John raised almost £3,000 for our charity. Look out for John's stalls at the Mead Nursery Open Day on Sunday 26th April 2015 and at Rowdeford School Garden Fair on Sunday 17th May 2015.

The Neem Tree Trust was once again proud to display our Christmas tree along with fifty-nine other trees decorated by local businesses, organisations and schools in Holy Trinity Church, Bradford-on-Avon last December. The festival attracted 1,400 visitors, double the 700 visitors in its first year in 2011, and almost £2,300 was raised for the benefit of the church.



INDIAN EVENING AT DILTON MARSH



For the second time Jane Brake and her husband, Michael, generously hosted a wonderful Indian evening at their farmhouse in Dilton Marsh on 15th February 2014 in aid of The Neem Tree Trust. Friends, Elly, Sally and Jane produced some really delicious Indian food for 25 people and £400 was raised from the event.

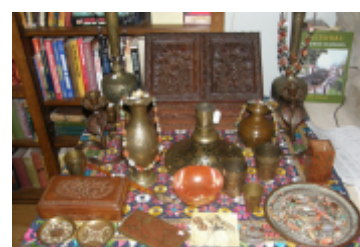
Crisp Cowley, Estate Agents, have been established in the City of Bath since 1879 and have been supporters of The Neem Tree Trust since 2011 when they helped us raise money by hosting an Indian Evening at their offices at the launch of the Christmas Market that year. At the beginning of this year I was overwhelmed when Charles Everritt and Nick Gale contacted me to say that Crisp Cowley would like to pledge £5000 this year towards the work we do for the children in India. This donation will help us realise our goal of purchasing a new vehicle for the boys' home to take them to and from school each day. www.crispcowley.co.uk.



Julie Campos of Crisp Cowley with Ken



To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of The Neem Tree Trust we had an Open House weekend at the Old Stables on 24th/25th August last year. John Kendall had a stall selling his treasures, and we also organised a raffle, with many of our friends coming along to support us. The event raised almost £800.



FUTURE NEEM TREE TRUSTS EVENTS

MIKE AND ALISON'S COFFEE MORNING



Last year's coffee morning at Mike & Alison's helped us celebrate 10 years of The Neem Tree Trust. Our friend, Mary Hewatson, baked a special cake and the event raised over £1,500, plus the Gift Aid, which we were able to claim on some donations.

This year Mike and Alison's coffee morning will be held as usual at their home at 22 Late Broads, Winsley on Friday 7th November 2014 between 10.00am and 12 noon. Everyone is very welcome to come along. There will be the usual delicious cakes baked by our small band of loyal supporters, goods for sale made by the children in India, plus a tombola.



Alison, Mike and Freda

FOOD AND WINE TASTING EVENT AT THE WEST BARN, BRADFORD ON AVON

We are planning a food and Wine Tasting event in aid of The Neem Tree Trust at the West Barn in Bradford-on-Avon on Thursday 27th November 2014. John Philpott, who lives in Avoncliff, will be giving a cookery demonstration as well as regaling us with tales of when he worked as a chef at the Dorchester Hotel in London. He will be ably assisted by Rob of Ruby Red in Bradford-on-Avon, who will supply the wine. The cost will be £15 per person, and will include the tasting of six wines plus sampling John's delicious food. This will be a fun evening and I'm sure tickets will sell fast so if you would like me to reserve some for you please phone me on 01225 865789 or email: kathymiller@neemtreetrust.org.uk.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FUNDRAISING IDEAS? IF SO, WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU AND WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HELP ORGANISE AND SUPPORT ANY EVENT YOU MAY HAVE IN MIND



REMINDER!!

YOU CAN BUY NEEM TREE TRUST GREETINGS CARDS, WRAPPING PAPER AND SHOPPING BAGS AT OUR ON-LINE SHOP ON OUR WEBSITE

www.neemtreetrust.org.uk/store

**KEN MILLER - FOREVER SMILING, ENTHUSIASTIC AND PLAYFUL
LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL**

