

NEEM TREE TRUST

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2008

From April 2007 - August 2008 our fundraising activities have involved, as in previous years, Ken and I whizzing round in the NTT charity van to give talks to various groups in and around Wiltshire. I can't recall how we spent our time before but I do know that we thoroughly enjoy these excursions and are always made to feel very welcome by the various groups we visit. Many women (and some men!) are fascinated by how a sari is worn and I sometimes demonstrate how to drape and wear a sari if I have willing volunteers! Pictured below is Anna from Chippenham & Pewsham WI looking very beautiful in the pink silk sari I dressed her in after our talk to her group.

- Bathampton WI
- Warminster Evening Fellowship
- Oldfield Methodist Church
- Chippenham Rotary Club
- St Lawrence Day Centre, Wells
- Mothers' Union, Melksham
- Mothers' Union, Bath Abbey
- Townswomens' Guild, Corsham
- Oldfield Friendly Club, Bath
- Sunnyside Day Centre, Frome
- Townswomens' Guild Batheaston
- Bennett Gardens Day Centre, Frome
- Pewsham WI
- The Tannery Day Centre, Street
- Christchurch Wives, BonA
- Mens' Club, Bath
- Salvation Army, Kingswood, Bristol
- Lovemead Ladies Group, Trowbridge
- Blacklands Calstone & Calne WI
- Salvation Army, Bath
- Mothers' Union, Seend
- Mothers' Union, Winsley
- National Womens' Register, BonA
- Box Methodist Church
- Warminster Countryside Group
- Bath Ramblers' Group
- Poulshot Farmers' Club
- Bishops Cannings WI
- Arthritis Care, Longwell Green
- High Littleton Ladies' Group
- Wiltshire Ladies' Group, Devizes
- Oldfield Friendly Club, Bath
- United Church Women's Guild, Bath
- West Ashton Wives' Group
- Mothers' Union Chippenham
- Rotary Club, BonA
- Mothers' Union, Sixpenny Handley
- Union Chapel, Combe Down
- Mothers' Union Holy Trinity, BonA
- St Philips & St James, Odd Down, Bath
- CSRF, Chippenham
- Swainswick Ladies' Group
- Chippenham & Pewsham WI
- Wine Circle, BonA
- Probus Group, Bath
- Poulshot Ladies' Group
- Batheaston Thursday Club
- Rowde Ladies' Group

Our talks since April 2007 have generated almost £4,800.



The Neem Tree Trust has also benefited from the following events during this period, at some of which we have manned a Neem Tree Trust stall. These events generated over £10,000 and we would like to say how grateful we are to everyone who organised the events for the charity.

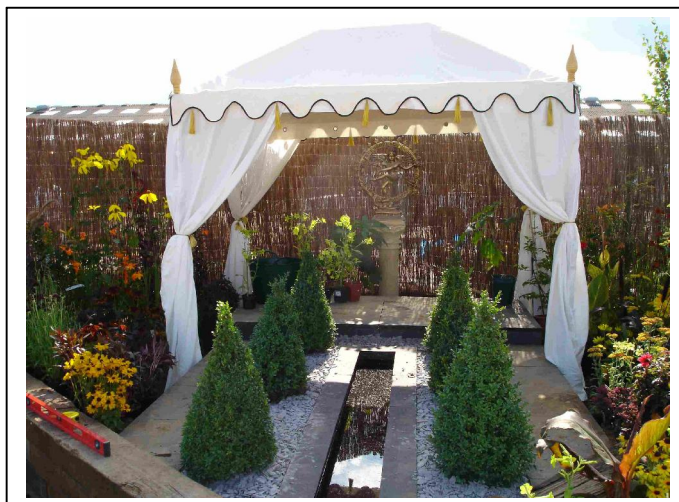
- Teas at River House, Avoncliff
- Westbury Gardens Street Party, BonA
- Woolley Festival, BonA
- Romney House Garden Party, Trowbridge
- WI Garden Party, Calne
- Westwood Flower Show
- Tennis Tournament, Ford Farm, BonA
- National Amateur Gardening Competition
- St Laurence Street Party, BonA
- Mike & Alison's 2nd Coffee Morning, Winsley
- Box Methodist Church Concert
- Winsley School Fayre
- Winsley Village Project Fayre
- Broughton Gifford School Fayre
- Bath Christmas Market
- Bath Half Marathon & London Marathon
- Kathy's 60th Birthday Celebration, Avoncliff
- Peter & Gaye Machin's Garden Party, Bath

We are always extremely grateful to receive donations from schools and organisations and would like to thank the following for their interest and support. Donations have amounted to £3,000.

- Bath Inner Wheel
- Fred Knight Construction
- Grove School, Trowbridge
- John of Gaunt School, Trowbridge
- Keyline Security, Seend
- Medlock Charitable Trust
- Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh
- Rotary Club, Chippenham
- Rotary Club, BonA
- St Laurence School, BonA
- Teaching & Projects Abroad
- Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire

GOLD AWARD FOR HELEN

After completing a garden design course at Wiltshire College, Lackham, our friend Helen Harrison won a Gold medal at the National Amateur Gardening Show at Shepton Mallet last summer and won Best in Student Class with her gorgeous garden design "An Indian Summer", which beautifully depicted a scene straight from the Raj. So many visitors to the show admired her garden and we were delighted and extremely privileged when Helen very generously donated her prize money to The Neem Tree Trust.



SCOOTERMAN GANESAN

Ganesan is disabled with polio and lived at the boys' home for many years. He has now left the home and sells insurance and gets around on this really cool pink scooter, which has been specially adapted for him with stabilisers and a place for his crutches. He came to see me last time I visited the home and took me for a spin on his scooter. I told him that I would love a vehicle like his for my trips into Bradford on Avon!!



BOYS' HOME TIRUNELVELI

One of the latest projects which The Neem Tree Trust has paid for is an outdoor recreation hall at the boys' home, which the children can now use for their activities without disturbing the work going on in their study hall. The construction commenced during my last visit and I was delighted to be able to give Dr Chelliah a cheque for £13,000 as a donation from our supporters. I thought you might like to see a picture of the work in progress and also a picture of one of the labourers having a break and catching up on the news in Wiltshire!!!



The home provides a free meal each morning for a large number of village children before they go to school. Some of them are pictured here enjoying themselves in the playground at the home.



Anyone for cricket? Getting ready for every Indian boy's favourite pastime!!



Arumugam, on the left, is one of the boys disabled by polio. Since I have been visiting the home he has enthusiastically helped me design the various fabric items which are made by the boys training to be tailors and which we sell on their behalf in the UK.

Arumugam has now left the home and is working successfully as a tailor in the local town but comes back to see me when I visit to help out and give the other boys advice if they need it.

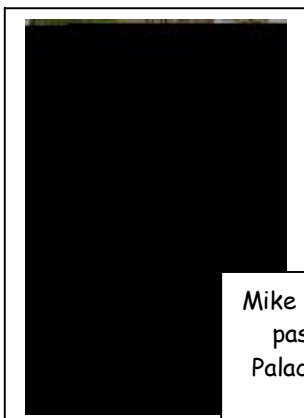
Arumugam means "six faces" in Tamil (Aru = six and Mugam = face) and to my knowledge all his six faces are always smiling broadly!!!

LEGS FOR INDIA

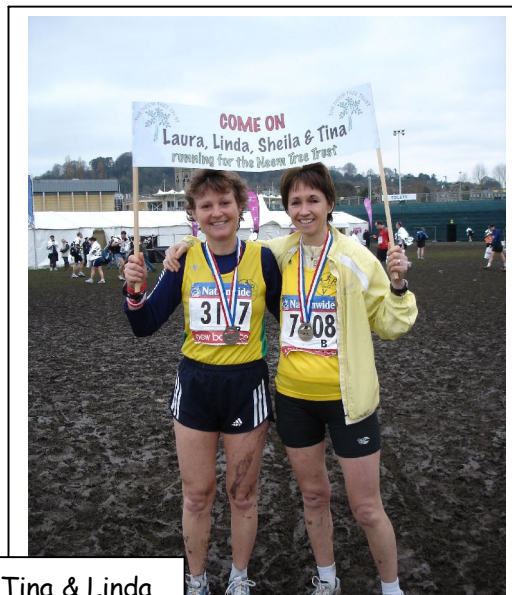
Once again we had four intrepid runners, all ladies, pounding the streets in the Bath Half Marathon this year - Laura Kinzett, Tina Vivien, Linda Ladner and Sheila Wall. The start of the race was postponed by over one hour and the recreation ground, as you can see, was a bit of a quagmire - but these four lovely ladies were undeterred and they gave it their all for the children we support in India. We also had a runner in the London Marathon, Mike Jones, and between them they raised over £1700 for The Neem Tree Trust.



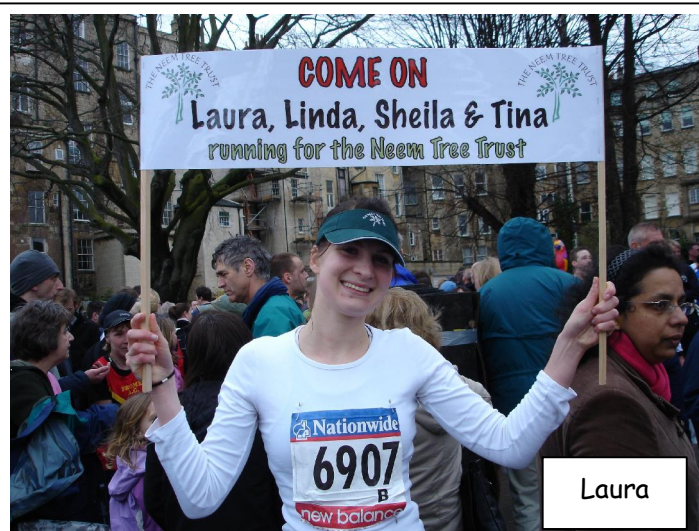
Sheila



Mike pounding his way past Buckingham Palace in the London Marathon



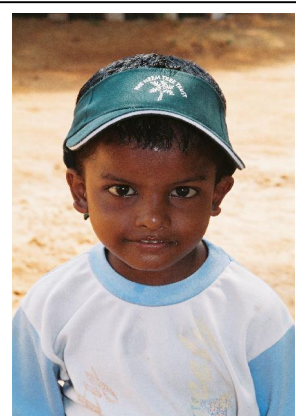
Tina & Linda



Laura

WIMBLEDON COMES TO FORD FARM

Last summer our friends Liz and Allan Brunton-Reed of Ford Farm, Bradford Leigh organised a tennis tournament in aid of The Neem Tree Trust. A really delicious lunch was provided by the participants with some marvellous raffle prizes and in spite of rather inclement weather a great day was had by all. Allan also very generously had 100 caps made with the Neem Tree Trust logo embroidered on the front. I took the caps



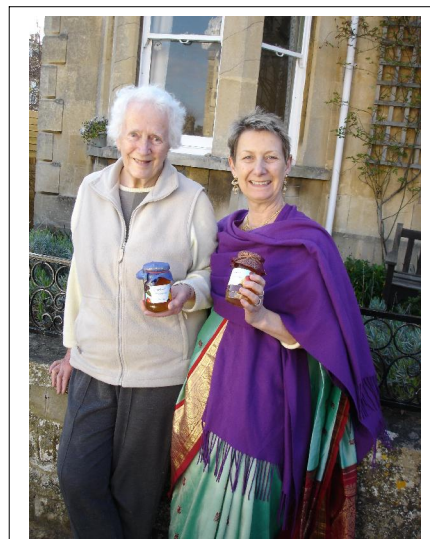
to India with me and gave one to each boy at the home. Here is one of the youngest boys, Durai Pandi, proudly wearing his Neem Tree Trust cap.

DUMPSIE DEARIE MARY

Mary has been making delicious jams, marmalades and chutneys for the Neem Tree Trust for over two years. She first contacted us after she read an article about the charity in the Bath Chronicle and wanted to know more about the work we do.

One of Mary's recipes is Dumpsie Dearie Jam, an old country recipe from Gloucestershire, which makes use of apples, pears and plums. Other favourites with our supporters are Mary's unique apple chutney, damson jam, pineapple marmalade, grapefruit marmalade, banana & date chutney and rhubarb conserve.

We sell Mary's delicious conserves when we give talks to local groups as well as at summer fayres and Christmas events. Over the years Mary's culinary efforts have made hundreds of pounds for the Neem Tree Trust and we are truly grateful to her for enabling us to raise so much money for the benefit of the children we support in India.



THE WILTSHIRE FLAG

Our friend Mike Prior is the creator and co-designer, with his daughter Helen, of the new Wiltshire County flag. Mike and his wife Phyllis have been supporters of The Neem Tree Trust for many years and this year Phyllis kindly paid for a digital camera for use at the home. Mike and Helen also design and arrange the printing of our wrapping paper, greetings cards and posters.

Here are the boys with a full size Wiltshire flag and bunting given to them by Mike. To see more pictures of the flag in India and other countries visit www.wiltshireflag.co.uk.

NEEM TREE TRUST GO GREEN BAGS

Apparently British people currently use around 19 billion plastic carrier bags every year. As part of our 5th Anniversary celebrations we are selling our own reusable Go Green bags made from recycled material, which feature our logo on the side. Our outlets are mainly in Bradford on Avon but we are looking for shops elsewhere. George Stone of Mace Store in Winsley Road is selling our bags and is easily our most successful retailer!!

To find out more about the origins of our Go Green Bags you can visit www.londonbaglady.blogspot.com. Jodie De Pascali is doing a great job promoting reusable bags and you can see The Neem Tree Trust bag on her website.



ST LUKE'S LEPROSY HOSPITAL

The Neem Tree Trust sponsors a bed at St Luke's Leprosy Hospital, Peikulam in south India. The lady who occupied the bed when I visited the hospital last year was a widow named Theresa from the scheduled caste (once called untouchables). She is 46 years old and contracted leprosy as a child. She has four children and her husband died a year ago. Because her condition was not diagnosed correctly for many years the leprosy bacteria has destroyed the sensory nerves in her feet and hands. She is being treated free of charge at St Luke's Hospital where she has had surgery on her feet and will be given a course of multi-drug treatment and after a while her ulcers will be fully cured. As part of her rehabilitation she will be given two goats to rear and she is also being taught how to make colourful woven baskets, which she can sell to generate a small income.



This is a picture of some of the women at St Luke's Hospital who are being treated for leprosy. Leprosy is curable and if caught in time the patient can recover with no lasting effects. However, the young girl third from the left in the picture, whose name is Kannigaa, has a very rare incurable skin disease called Epidermolysis Bullosa Simplex. St Luke's is caring for her free of charge, and the Neem Tree Trust is sponsoring this courageous young girl with the beautiful smile.

Jesu Raj is a former patient at St Luke's who has been cured of leprosy and has worked at the hospital as a physio technician and house warden for many years. He is the smiling face that greets all visitors to the hospital and I am privileged to have met him and honoured to be his friend. He was married last August and I was delighted to meet his new wife, Vinolia, on my last visit to St Luke's.



Some of the children who are cared for at St Luke's

There are many supporters of St Luke's who live on the Isle of Wight. Margaret & Joe Dawson and their daughter Ruth Barber raise considerable funds for the hospital by organising events such as coffee mornings, fashion shows, choir evenings and sales of goods. They also receive personal donations from individuals who have been moved by stories they have heard from Margaret, Joe and Ruth of the work which is being done to help the patients and the children. As a registered charity, which supports St Luke's, The Neem Tree Trust is able to claim Gift Aid where applicable and I take out the funds they have raised, together with our own donations to Dr Jeyabalan when I visit the hospital each year.