



## THE NEEM TREE TRUST NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2017

Thank you very much for the support you have given us in raising funds for the Boys' Home in Tirunelveli and St Luke's Leprosy Hospital, Peikulam. During our Financial Year April 2016 - March 2017 The Neem Tree Trust was represented at the following events:

John Kendall's stall at Rowde School Fete

Mike & Alison's Coffee Morning, Winsley

John Kendall's Christmas stall



The above generated £4,445 and £276 came from other miscellaneous sales.



Donations in memory of loved ones are very special gifts and are deeply appreciated by our charity. It is a wonderful way to celebrate someone's life and we were very grateful to the family of John Rickus, who was a member of his local Rotary Club in Surrey, who asked for contributions in John's memory to be donated to The Neem Tree Trust. We would also like to thank the family of Brian Mounter, who also passed away in 2016. He was a staunch supporter of St Luke's Leprosarium and his family asked that donations at his funeral should benefit St Luke's.



# SCHT BOYS HOME

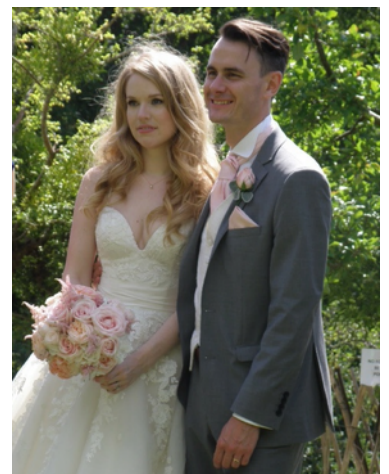
During our Financial Year 2016/2017 the Trust provided a grant of £20,618 to the SCHAT Boys' Home.

Kathy Miller visited the home in January 2017 and stayed with the children for six weeks. During her visit she asked her friend Arumugam to make these gorgeous kimono-style wraps. They were for Kathy's new daughter-in-law, Ginger, and her three bridesmaids to wear as they dressed for her wedding to Kathy's son, James, on 12<sup>th</sup> August. The kimonos looked so beautiful that Kathy asked Arumugam to make a few more. They are a limited edition, come in different colours and are one-size. We are selling them for £35.00 with all profits going to the boys' home.

Arumugam is a young man who was severely affected by polio as a child; he grew up at the boys' home and now has his own tailoring shop. If you are interested in buying one of these very special garments please get in touch with Kathy.



The girls getting ready for the big day wearing kimonos made by Arumugam at the boys' home



Ginger and James on their wedding day

## PATRICIA 'S REFLECTIONS ON two weeks of heaven...

I was fortunate enough to spend two weeks at the boys' home in February this year - 10 years almost to the day since my first trip there - and how thrilled I was to be going back to visit the place that, through Kathy, has become very special to me. New homes for staff had been built, as had an outdoor function area, but the heart of the place and the happiness of the boys had not altered at all. There were even 3 boys who had been at the home in 2007 and remembered me. Wonderful!



The boys rehearsed and performed in a number of programmes, for their families, Board Members and for Kathy and myself. They love dancing, singing and acting, and everything was staged with care and a huge sense of fun. However, I feel the most fun (at least for me) was every evening when we played games with the boys and sang songs. I never thought I would be pretending to be a crocodile under a parachute and having such a ball!

We were fortunate enough to be invited by a previous warden, Rex, to his brother's wedding in a nearby village, where a few of the wardens, past and present, were born. We were met with a warm welcome from the ladies of the village, fire crackers, a



band playing, and dancing by the friends and family of the groom, before being led into the church to meet the bride and groom. I was even asked if I wanted to sing at the

reception! We were enthusiastically welcomed into the homes of families of the wardens and ate a delicious wedding breakfast, with fresh tender coconut to drink.



It was lovely to meet some of the older boys who returned to visit and, of course, Arumugum, who we spent most days with - talking whilst he sewed and told stories. I also met some of the wardens who I had known 10 years ago: Johnson (with his wife and daughter) and Pilome and Sam with their two children, and some I hadn't met before but had heard so much about. We had a special wardens' meal one evening, where we all ate outside with delicious Indian fare.

Princess and the Board Members, showed me great hospitality, warmth and affection, presenting me with wonderful gifts which I shall treasure always. When we flew back from Tuticorin, we had a few hours to enjoy a paddle in the sea with our farewell group of Board Members, wardens and of course, Princess.



I spent a day at St Luke's Leprosy Hospital, meeting patients and enjoying the affection and generosity of the staff there, led by Dr Haebus. It was very heartwarming to meet a lovely couple: the wife had leprosy and her husband stayed with her to help and support her. This can be quite unusual. A noble, gentle couple being treated in a truly special place.

My two weeks sped by filled with fun, love, and admiration for the work of Princess, the Board Members and the wardens and workers at the Home in giving these amazing boys the very best start in life and also for the dedicated work of the staff at St Luke's. I hope I shall return to this calm, embracing oasis. xxx



# ST LUKE'S LEPROSY HOSPITAL

During her visit to St Luke's Leprosy Hospital this year Kathy met with all the patients, including Maari, who was occupying the bed sponsored by The Neem Tree Trust in memory of her husband, Ken.

Many years ago, Maari noticed numbness in both his hands and feet. He thought it was due to a deficiency of nutrients in his body and his wife advised him to take a lot of goat's milk. He also took some advice from a native doctor and tried some local medicines but there was no improvement. Since he did not know that numbness is one of the symptoms of leprosy, he did not go to a hospital and did not seek any treatment, so the disease spread even further. Leprosy bacteria destroyed the sensory nerves in both his hands and feet. Due to loss of sensation, he could not feel pain, heat or cold with his hands and feet. It destroyed the muscles and nerves too so his fingers became paralysed and deformed.



He was a shepherd who earned very little. He has a wife, Pathirakali, and two children, both of whom are married. One day he was tending his flock and as usual was walking with bare feet. A stone caught in his left foot but since there was no sensation he was unable to feel the pain of the injury and he continued to work with his injured foot. The injury became infected and he applied turmeric powder over the ulcer. But the ulcer became much worse, his fever rose high and he was unable to continue his work.

On seeing his pitiable condition, one of the ex-patients of St Luke's Leprosarium advised him to go to St. Luke's where he was admitted as an in-patient. They did a complete analysis and started the multi-drug therapy. Through a series of minor surgeries they removed all the devitalised tissues and dead bones and they gave him adequate antibiotic cover and the ulcer started to heal.

As part of his rehabilitation they have given him special protective footwear to prevent recurrent ulcers and have helped him to apply to the government to get the disability aid meant for leprosy patients.

We are very grateful to our supporters for enabling us to support St Luke's in caring for Maari and the many other patients at the hospital.

Dr Haebus, the Chief Medical Superintendent, has informed us that in the months from January to July 2017 the number of new leprosy cases was 29. The number of in-patients they have treated is 577.

St Luke's treat general patients as well as leprosy patients in their outpatient department. The number of leprosy outpatients they have treated is 1068 and the number of general patients they have treated is 3624.

**Through The Neem Tree Trust, 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 their children as well as sponsoring beds in the wards and individual children. During our Financial Year 2016/2017 the Trust provided a grant of £15,000 to St Luke's Leprosy Hospital and we are proud to be one of the hospital's major donors.**

## FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Kathy gave talks on the work of The Neem Tree Trust to the following groups:

Dallimore Mead Centre, Nunney  
Upper Seagry WI  
Larkhall Ladies Circle  
Longwell Green Ladies Circle  
Bath University Students, Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology  
Residents of Avonpark, Winsley  
Trowbridge United Church Woman's Hour

A total of £552 was kindly donated by these groups.

John Kendall raised over £3,900 in 2016/17 for The Neem Tree Trust with his antiques and collectables. Look out for details of where he will be next year and snatch a bargain.

The following organisations generously made donations to The Neem Tree Trust amounting to £539.

St Laurence School, Bradford on Avon  
Ashton Mill, Valuers and Property Clearance  
Zion Chapel Isle of Wight  
St Nicholas Parish Church, Winsley  
Oakley Holidays, Rugby  
St John the Baptist Church, Colerne

We claimed Gift Aid of £3093 from the Inland Revenue on donations from UK taxpayers.



In September 2016 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 £22,065.

The Neem Tree Trust deposits funds as they are raised into a CAF Gold account. In our Financial Year 2016/2017 bank interest amounted to £15.00.



## MIKE & ALISON'S COFFEE MORNING



Last October was the 10th Anniversary of Mike & Alison's Coffee Mornings and we raised an amazing £1,754!! Our friend and supporter, Mary Hewatson, baked us a delicious anniversary cake and the winner of our Fair Trade hamper was Rev Ann Keating.

This year Mike & Alison's Coffee Morning will be held on Friday 27th October at their home, 22 Late Broads, Winsley, between 10.00am and 12 noon. Everyone is welcome so please come along to support us!

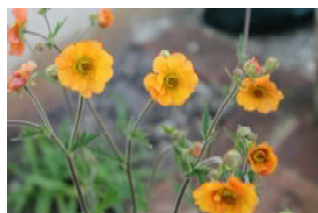


## OPEN GARDENS BYDE MILL, CORSHAM

We would like to thank Christina & Richard Cornish and Sue Bevan for kindly opening their unique gardens at Byde Mill, Corsham, in aid of our charity on 7th May this year. We are also grateful to their neighbour, Mr Paul Weaver, for providing space for car parking on his land and for displaying his vintage cars as an extra attraction for the visitors to the gardens. There were a number of stalls selling plants, books and Neem Tree Trust items made by the children we support in India, as well as John Kendall's treasury of antiques and collectables.



The sun shone brilliantly on the day, delicious homemade cakes, baked and served by our supporters were served to old and new friends and, although this was the first time we had held such an event in aid of The Neem Tree Trust, it was a huge success - raising over £1,555.



**MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HAS HELPED US WITH OUR FUNDRAISING THIS YEAR!!**