

THE NEEM TREE TRUST NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2021

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, south India.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Due to Covid restrictions during the financial year 2020/2021 most of our fundraising events were cancelled but John Kendall, Patricia Kinzett and Kathy Miller each held a Christmas shop in their homes which generated £3467.00 and £94.00 came from other miscellaneous sales.



The following organisations generously made donations to The Neem Tree Trust amounting to £1,620.00

Winsley PCC
Ashton Mill Services, Melksham
Oakley Holidays
The Medlock Trust

We claimed Gift Aid of £2897.00 from the Inland Revenue on donations from UK taxpayers.



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 would like to acknowledge donations to The Neem Tree Trust in memory of Frank and Betty Pendergast and also their dear friend, Mabel Lockyer

In November 2020 we sent out our annual newsletter for the first time by email 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 £25,406.00

The Neem Tree Trust deposits funds as they are raised into a CAF Gold account. In the financial year 2020/2021 bank interest amounted to £15.00.

SCHT BOYS' HOME

During our Financial Year 2020/2021 the Trust provided a grant of £20,000 to the SCHT Boys' Home.

From 1st July the boys who are studying IXth, Xth, XIth and XIIth standard have been staying at the campus and their subjects were taught by the staff and wardens. Last time I visited the boys' home we purchased a projector and screen for use at the home and I am delighted to say that it has been very useful for the classes when their subjects are taught by their teachers online.

The boys were especially encouraged to spend some time in the garden during the pandemic. They were interested and involved in the farming activities and now they have a variety of vegetables from the home garden. During the pandemic some of the families of the boys were suffering due to loss of earnings and the home, with the help of The Neem Tree Trust, assisted those families by offering them rice and groceries to feed their children.



On 22nd August Mr Stephen, one of the wardens who has worked at the home for over 13 years, married Miss Ramya. All the boys and staff went to the wedding and it was a memorable day for all of them. The newly wedded couple will join the home as members of staff.



ST LUKE'S LEPROSARIUM

During our Financial Year 2020/2021 the Trust provided a grant of £10,000 to St Luke's Leprosarium.

I have recently received the following message from Dr Haebus, Medical Superintendent at St Luke's:

"Dear Mrs. Kathy Miller,

Greetings from St. Luke's Leprosarium, Peikulam. We have around 125 inpatients staying in our hospital just now. We are all safe here and our hospital is functioning as usual. We have regular outpatients as well as inpatients coming to our hospital and we are running separate fever clinics and triage. Our work load has increased, both for out-patients and in-patients. We have visiting consultants for Paediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Surgery and Orthopaedics. We are not seeing many COVID patients now. All our staff are vaccinated and all our permanent patients are also vaccinated. Things are improving and hopefully we will get back to our normal lives soon. Thank you once again for all your care and concern for our cause"

100% of the hospital's expenses are met by donors and well-wishers and it is humbling that a significant donor is our own charity, The Neem Tree Trust. Leprosy has not been eradicated and I would like to thank all our supporters for helping to rehabilitate the leprosy patients at this hospital in assisting them to become independent and self-reliant.

As well as a grant of £10,000 in 2020/2021 The Neem Tree Trust was recently able to send a further £7,000 to St Luke's to assist in the cost of refurbishing and digitalising their x-ray department which is over 30 years old.

An ongoing project at the hospital is the renovation of the women's ward. The present ward is 56 years old and has an asbestos sheet roof which desperately needs replacing.



JOHN KENDALL AND MICHAEL MANSER

I have made many new friends since establishing The Neem Tree Trust in 2003 and two of the most interesting are John Kendall and Michael Manser who have supported our charity for many years. I first met them both at my friends Sue and Ian Bolden's Open Garden in Bradford-on-Avon where we were serving refreshments in aid of The Neem Tree Trust.

Michael and John showed an immediate interest in our charity as they frequently visit India and they have told us fascinating tales of tribal people in Chhattisgarh in Central India as well as friendships with many people in Central and Northern India.



John & Michael in their beautiful garden in Seend

At that time, I was running a Neem Tree Trust Lottery Club which Michael joined, making a donation each year, but as I recall he never actually won a lottery prize!

John has many interests but has a real fascination for antiques, which he developed at an early age when, as a small boy, he would frequently accompany his mother to antique shops. His interest grew when, at 12 years old, he went with his mother to an antiques shop in Swindon. In that shop he saw a beautiful Animalier Bronze by Jules Moigniez which was on sale for £5.00, well beyond his reach at the time but, one year later he had saved up enough money to go back to the shop to buy it and thankfully it was still there. Even as a young boy he had a keen eye! For many years he and his mother ran a small antiques business together and they would take a stall at the Marlborough Antiques Fair each year, which was held in aid of Oxfam.



Animalier Bronze by Jules Moigniez

John first trained as a veterinary surgeon and practised in Chippenham for 10 years, after which he trained as a teacher and taught Rural Science and General Studies for 20 years at George Ward School, Melksham, retiring in 2000.

Nowadays John continues his interest as a hobby and The Neem Tree Trust benefits tremendously from his expertise as, each weekend during the summer, he rises very early in the morning to explore four or five car boot sales in search of small antiques which are interesting and beautiful and which he considers he can sell for a reasonable price and make a profit. He does this not for his own benefit but for that of The Neem Tree Trust and the children we support in south India and over the years he has raised an amazing £30,000 for our charity. He does this with the support of Michael, of course.

Our good friends, Tony, Angela, John and Tom White of Ashton Mill Services in Melksham www.ashtonmill.co.uk also support The Neem Tree Trust by offering John items for him to sell as well as making an annual donation to our charity. A number of other sellers at Standerwick Car Boot are also very generous in giving John things to sell.

In the past John has taken a number of stalls during the year to sell the items he has bought for The Neem Tree Trust. However, due to COVID this has not been possible for the past two summers but in November and December he will turn a spare bedroom at home in Seend into an Aladdin's cave to give friends and family the opportunity to browse and buy unique Christmas presents at very reasonable prices.



John arranging the Christmas stall in the Aladdin's cave at his home

I would like to sincerely thank John and Michael for their invaluable support of The Neem Tree Trust over so many years but more importantly for their warm friendship which has both nurtured and educated me!

If you would like to visit John's Christmas shop in Seend, Pat's Christmas shop in Dilton Marsh or my own Christmas shop at Avoncliff, please let us know by telephoning Pat on 01373 822474 or emailing kathymiller@neemtreetrust.org.uk.

OAKLEY HOLIDAYS



Established in 1919, Oakley Holidays is a registered charity organised on a voluntary, basis, and run to provide opportunities for young people primarily aged 12-18. On April 8th 2021, 45 members of Oakley Holidays, of all ages, shapes, sizes and degrees of fitness, dressed up to walk or run a mile and raise funds for three charities. The Neem Tree Trust, Newcastle NHS Trust and Camfed which promotes the education of women in Tanzania, shared the total of £1150 raised.

This was the first occasion on which Oakley members had been able to meet up face to face in their own locality for over a year, so there was much laughter and catching up. Alnwick was taken over by a team of gangsters and superheroes, whilst in Lytham a dodder 1930s Alpinist and a Crayola Pencil toddled round the Lowther Gardens, accompanied by official flag-wavers. There were Pongo and Perdita, the Dalmatians, in Hampshire, Del Boy and Uncle Albert in Oxfordshire and a posse of cool dudes near Cambridge.



We would like to thank everyone at Oakley Holidays for the support they have given us over many years, especially for the work we do to assist the patients and children at St Luke's Leprosarium