

KEMPSON ENTERPRISE TRUST

(Charitable Trust formed in 1989 - Reg. No. 900126)

OUR REPORT for the year 2008 and 2009

For seventeen years, the Trust has continued giving grants to encourage enterprising activity among sixth-formers at Marlborough College and St John's School, Marlborough during their sixth form and gap years. In this, we recall the inspiration which E G H Kempson gave to so many of his pupils in such a wide range of interests, from mountaineering to printing, botany to local history. We continue to help students to do a wide range of things which will broaden their experience, build confidence, and enrich their lives.

During these two years we assisted twenty-one sixth-formers to undertake surprising and enterprising activities in four continents, and it is our pleasure to give a flavour of this diversity, based on their enthusiastic reports.

In 2008

Natasha Bell (MC), now a medical student, looked for medical work experience on the Internet and went to Madurai in Southern India with Travellers Abroad. There she shadowed Dr Ramesh (an urologist) and his wife (a gynaecologist) in their private Harley Rram Nursing Home with 50 beds, X-rays and scans, a laboratory and busy operating theatres. She attended the consultations morning and evening, learning to assist with taking blood pressures and to manage the commoner conditions, including diabetes and its complications, very common in that part of India. In the afternoons she assisted with various surgical operations, including keyhole (laparoscopic) surgery for bladder and gall stones, the doctors explaining things to her as they proceeded.

She lived in a hostel with other volunteers, looked after by the motherly Jeya, and got used to having to wash her clothes by hand and having only one working shower between two houses. She also became accustomed to the traffic, trains and busses, the risk of theft, as well as the status of women in that part of India.

She looks forward to going back to extend her travels there. 'My time in India was everything I hoped it would be' she writes. 'I managed to see and experience so many medical and surgical procedures and cases'. She thanks the Kempson Trust for allowing her to complete 'this very worthwhile and unforgettable project'

Zoë Barker and Madeline Reeves (St J) went to Cusco, Peru to help with a rural water project. They got to know the people of Huatata well as they installed reinforced concrete sinks in their homes and helped with the potato harvest. They taught English to classes of six to twelve year olds, before setting off to travel in Peru and Bolivia, trekking the Inca Trail and to Machu Picchu, Lake Titicaca and La Paz. They had many adventures, and remember especially 'the desert stars, the smiles of the children in the village school, the first sight of Machu Picchu, the insight into very different ways of life, the salsa dancing and the friendships we made'.

Charles Russell (MC) went to Ghana to coach football to teenagers in a setup just outside Accra. He found the conditions hard to start with, 'no air-conditioning, the fans did not work, there was no running water and as I tried to sleep I could see the sweat dripping down my body'. But he soon settled in and had his own team to coach, finding the boys fast and skilful and with great natural talent, but needing help with teamwork. At week ends they organised matches against other teams. He had a bout of malaria, but was quickly treated and was back in action in a week, and in his last two weeks he travelled round the whole country, finding elephants, warthogs and antelope on safari in the north, and rainforest and beaches further south. 'Overall I had an absolutely unforgettable trip and thank you so much for making it happen for me'.

In a singularly agreeable and funny report, **Lucinda Rouse** (MC) describes her journalism placement with a radio station called Fréquence Téranga in the fishing town of St Louis in Senegal, a painful 265 miles in a bush taxi up the coast from Dakar. Téranga means 'hospitality' in Wolof, the local language, and Lucinda received much of that from her colleagues, local people and especially from her host and 'glamorous steamboat', Madame Camara. Her work at 'La Fréquence', led by the eccentric Golbert started with the international news bulletins in her rusty GCSE-level French, and later, out covering local events, the town's law courts and Independence Day celebrations, co-hosting Children's' Hour, and finally having her own show, an hour-long music program, mostly in French, but one of the last ones entirely in Wolof! She found time to teach twice a week in 'Mr Brown's English Academy' and her students included teachers, civil servants and a government Minister, from all of whom she learnt much of Senegalese society and culture. She plans to return; 'My stay has certainly given me a sweet taste of Africa,' she says, 'and I can't wait to uncover more of its countries'.

In 2009

A lively group of 5 boys from St John's, **Chris Hazelwood, Tom Pollitt, Edmund Luke, Matt Connor, and Alex Ekstrom** decided to mark the summer with a bike ride from Land's End to John O'Groats for charity. The initial plan to have a support van was dropped when all five chose to ride, using Youth Hostels and carrying kit in panniers.

After problems with bikes on trains getting to the start point, the team set off at the end of June with a tail wind across Cornwall, then to Cheddar, Clun, and Chester (with a shredded tyre). Day 5 took them into the Yorkshire Dales, then to Lanark (150 miles!), on to Crianlarick in the rain, and then to Loch Ness with great views, a headwind and heavy showers. Here Tom allegedly treated his depression with 23 doughnuts. A shorter day to the magnificent Youth Hostel in Carbisdale Castle was celebrated in style, before the final hilly trip to the John O'Groats Post office by 3.30. We congratulate them on a ride of 1000 miles in 10 days, and raising about £1000 for Cancer Research UK.

There has been a link between Marlborough and Gunjur, a fishing town on the coast of the Gambia, West Africa for 28 years. The Trust supported 6 pupils, **Becky Lane, Olivia Manley and Simon Peal** from Marlborough College, and **George Cooper,**

Kitty Garaway and Polly Milton from St John's. part of a group of 12 young people going to Gunjur for four weeks at the hottest and rainiest time of the year to help build a skills centre where the young of the town, often unemployed and without skills could learn useful skills like carpentry, hairdressing, tailoring and computers.

Each stayed with hosts in a family house or compound without electricity or piped water, and became a welcomed part of that warm and loving family. One spoke of the intensity of being the only foreigners in the village, the total immersion in the culture which places such importance on relationships, the children and the old folk, the lengthy traditional greetings, the memory for names and events and the concern for people. "In this society everything comes second to friends and family". Several noted that for all the poverty, there was a happiness in this society that we have diluted or lost in the West. In spite of some illness, the enervating humidity, hard work on the building (which was completed and handed over on time), and losing the annual football match, they felt this had been a fantastic and inspiring experience. Firm friendships were formed both with the Gambians and English, and several plan to return.

Brest to Bussum, another bike ride with a light-hearted objective and a charitable aim (a breast cancer charity) was devised by **Sam Lay, Joe Mitchell, and David Burton** (St J). 900 miles in 15 days through France, Belgium and Holland in frequent torrential rain brought them hills and forests, peaceful cycle tracks and hazardous motorways, camp sites and occasional welcome hospitality from friends and strangers, a puncture, a broken chain and a lot of problems with their overloaded panniers. Clearly this resourceful and determined group had a lot of fun.

Alice Hancock (MC) went to Chennai (Madras) to do a journalism internship for three months with *The New Indian Express*, one of the major newspapers of Southern India. After a bad start at Chennai airport, arriving at 2am 'to be greeted by a sea of dark, staring eyes, a hubbub of voices, and no one to pick me up', she settled into the journalistic life ('no better way to get up close and personal with Chennai') and the way of a big city, the Bollywood films and the delicious food of Southern India. She visited the ex-French colonial town of Pondicherry and the temples of Mamallapuram, went to Madurai by bus ('dire') for her Indian flatmate's wedding, and took time on the backwaters of Kerala and the holy town of Gokarna. In this first immersion in the cultural overload of India she learnt of the constant surprises round every corner and has a great excuse for a return trip.

Ross Jennings (MC) was assisted by the Trust in making a remarkable journey with a friend from MC, down the Chinese coast from Shanghai to Hainan Island, covering enormous distances by train and bus. It was a journey of contrasts, from smoggy Hangzhou with its lake and tea museum, to Fuzhou, 14 hours south by train with the banyan trees and fruit giving it a Malaysian feel. Then by bus to the old British colonial island of Xiamen (which we know as Amoy), with, just off it, the smaller island of Gulangyu in a relaxed tropical atmosphere with its old colonial mansions, half deserted consulates and the organ and piano museum. Shenhen, near Hong Kong, originally a tiny fishing village and now the second busiest port in China, has a theme park with an Eiffel Tower, Leaning Tower of Pisa and St Peter's Square, and another park celebrating

the various ethnic minorities in China , where the Han Chinese can learn more about the vast diversity of their own country. Guangzhou (Canton) was the site of a small foreign concession after the Opium Wars with churches, old colonial houses and crowded markets. Then another long train journey to Hainan Island, ‘the Hawaii of China’ with its resorts full of Russians escaping their bitter winters and local people looking more Thai or Cambodian.

Ross notes the difficulties of travel in China, the entrance fees for everything, the karaoke, the Chinglish signage, but he clearly met a large number of local people (‘never shy to strike up a conversation and with views not as homogenous as many people think’). ‘I will forever be attached to this overwhelming country’.

*The Trustees would like to thank all those who have supported us in the past. We want to continue to give young people a chance to get a broader view of their world and more confidence in it. We have now made grants of over £40,000 to projects involving more than 160 sixth-formers. **But the recession has not helped us and the fund is running seriously low**, and if we are to continue to be able to give worthwhile grants to the increasing number of pupils with good projects we will need more support from our friends, by donations, covenants or legacies. Please contact our treasurer to help us to go on making our small contribution to a more understanding world.*

Trustees of the Kempson Trust

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