

KEMPSON ENTERPRISE TRUST

(Charitable Trust formed in 1989)

OUR REPORT for the year 1997-98

In our ninth year, the Trust continues to grow and to pursue its objectives of encouraging enterprising activity among sixth-formers at St John's School and Marlborough College. 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 things, which will broaden their experience, build confidence, and enrich their lives

During the year, we were able to support six pupils, all planning to work and travel overseas in their Gap year, one from Marlborough College and five from St John's. The range of their experience was considerable, and we have tried to give some idea of this, using their own excellent reports.

Peter Day worked for five months as a volunteer teaching assistant in a multi-cultural school of 800 pupils in Darwin, at the 'top end' of Australia. Here were both white and Aboriginal pupils, and one of his tasks (along with supervising meals, helping with games and doing the clinic run) was to teach 'Intensive English' to Aborigines. He found them friendly and appreciative, and in the process of making many friends learnt much about their laws and customs. He also travelled round Australia for three months before flying home. 'This experience' he says, 'especially coming in contact with Aborigines, has changed me in terms of my outlook on life.'

Charlotte Holmes was the only English girl in a group of volunteers when she went, with great trepidation, to a kibbutz in Israel. For two months she experienced the hard work and lively social of a kibbutz (hers was 'within stumbling distance of the largest night-club in the north of Israel'), visited most of the sights of Israel on her days off, and went on a memorable trip with all her group of volunteers to the Dead Sea. 'It was undoubtedly one of the best times of my life' she says, 'and I didn't want to leave... a kibbutz is a great place to go, especially if you have never travelled alone before'.

'An incredible experience' is how Brendon Moss describes his three months in Belize with Operation Raleigh, which he praises for their organisation and the opportunities they offer. First he was trained to live in blistering heat in the jungle, before going off to a remote ancient Myan site near the Guatemalan border to build a museum. In the next phase he helped to renew a community centre in a friendly Rastafarian village, and built over 2 kilometres of board-walk to enable visitors to cross a huge swampy nature reserve, famous for its wildlife. In the final phase, he lived on a small uninhabited island, helping a team of marine biologists to survey the coral reefs and quantify the threat from silting (a result of deforestation along the inland rivers). He completed over 50 dives, learning a wide range of skills. And overall, 'the experience of living and working with the locals in Belize was far superior to that of being a tourist visiting a country'.

Amelia Hutchison taught in Nepal for five months, living with a family in a village under the Annapurna Range where the villagers still live as they have done for centuries. Her host was a teacher but, like most Nepalese, provided for his family from his land. Amelia helped to sow maize in the tiny fields, and had to learn to wash fully clothed at a cold communal tap, to manage in a home without electricity, to pick up the language, and above all to teach classes of 60 without paper, pencils or desks! Sarah Trickey flew to Bangalore in October 1997; she was to join a small team of students for five months in a Christian organisation called Oasis Trust. She taught in a small school for children with special needs who could not cope with the state school system; it was called Ashakiran, meaning 'ray of hope'. Here she gained confidence in teaching slow learners in Maths, English, and Science to enable them to take public examinations, and she helped to plan craft activities and drama, and played guitar for much enjoyed singing in the school assemblies. She was very active in her local church, helping to produce a successful play, prison visiting, and helping with Sunday school. She even found time to help one day a week in the Oasis office, and to complete a research study on factors affecting the design and construction of buildings in Bangalore. She stayed with an Indian couple, and says 'I think that what I will cherish most was the opportunity to live in an Indian home. The relationships we built up are ones that I am sure will last a lifetime, as will the many and varied memories I have from all the different areas of work in which I was involved'.

We hope that these accounts will give an idea of the quality of experience that the Trust has helped to enable; we have now made grants of over £11,000 to 47 projects, involving more than 63 sixth-formers. The Trustees would like to thank all those who have supported us in the past. We continue to appreciate any donations or suggestions to enable us to extend this very worthwhile work.