

# KEMPSON ENTERPRISE TRUST

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

## **OUR REPORT for the year 2001-2002**

*This is our twelfth year, and we continue to encourage young people, sixth-formers from both St John's School and Marlborough College, to do a wide range of enterprising and inspiring activities. Most of these have tended to be Gap year projects overseas, but we stress that we are eager to support almost any idea, academic or athletic, long-term or brief, at home or abroad, that embodies the spirit of enterprise.*

*We have now made grants of over £24,000 to projects involving more than 70 sixth-formers. This sampling from some excellent reports gives some idea of the range of experience of those the Trust supported last year.*

**Henrietta Carnegie (MC)** spent 5 months in Ecuador with a GAP group to teach in a boys school for 7 - 12 year olds. She stayed in Cuenca, the third largest city in Ecuador, with a friendly and liberal family whose daughter was staying with Henrietta's family in England. Teaching classes of 55 boys was challenging, but, she says "it turned out to be a rewarding experience, although one thing is sure - I really couldn't be a teacher". She enjoyed two mornings a week with poor five year olds in the happy atmosphere of a kindergarten, and in the afternoons taught the violin to ten beginners in the Music Conservatorio, with the din of students practising in every corridor. She also worked in the orphanage with abandoned babies, many with illnesses like epilepsy, blindness or Down's Syndrome. It was strictly run by nuns who discouraged picking up or hugging the babies even when crying, but she came to love the babies and there were happy moments when Americans came to adopt them.

She was sad to leave; "I know it has made me a much stronger person ... and it has been a such a one-in-a-lifetime experience which I will never forget".

**Becky Polack (St J)** went with the Marlborough Brandt Group exchange group of nine people to the town of Gunjur in the Gambia which has had an active link with Marlborough for 20 years. They each stayed with a different family host in homes with no electricity and with water drawn from wells, and work on the site of a new pre-school was the highlight of the visit. All remained in good health. They visited schools and projects in the town and nearby places and, according to their interests, helped with teaching, nursing at the clinic, drumming, music and dance. In their last weekend they travelled up the Gambia River to see more of the country. They were warmly welcomed and left with positive feelings and a wish to come back to Gunjur.

**Harry Trahair (MC)** set off in January to spend six months in Nepal, Indochina and Thailand. After overcoming the shock of the sights and smells of Kathmandu, and the misery of his first night in Kirtipur, a traditional hill-top town just outside the capital, he settled in to two months teaching; he admits he found this difficult, partly because he was given little preparation and partly because he had gone with an attitude that gave teaching a low priority compared to his other travels. "I'm just sorry that the school didn't do quite so well out of me as I did out of them". But he learnt a lot about local tradition from living with a Nepali family who were kind and looked after him well. He went on to trek to Annapurna base camp and raft on the Karnali River (when Maoist rebels held up his group) before moving on to a hectic week in Bangkok and three months travelling in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

**Alice Hastings-Bass and Tania Campbell (MC)** began their 'trabajos voluntarios' in a school in a tiny village in the heart of the Mapuche Indian community of Chile where they helped repair parts of the school and built a shower, and taught the children games and hygiene. They talked to villagers in their homes to discuss their rights and health issues and found both the community and students friendly and welcoming. They went on to work in Valdivia with a charity called *Hogar de Cristo* which works with children, the elderly, the homeless and in shantytowns. Here they worked in a shelter for the abandoned elderly, helped encourage and serve food to homeless men, and then, at night and most shockingly, took food, medicine and soap to those, many of them alcoholic, living on the streets and in abandoned buildings in appalling conditions. 'We really felt we were doing worthwhile work ... an unforgettable experience recommendable to anybody'.

**Harriet Vanes (MC)** went with Raleigh International to Chile. In the scientific project she worked with three Chilean scientists amid the turquoise lakes of the Lago Jeininmeini Reserve. They were catching and dissecting salmon and trout to establish when their main breeding season was so that the fishing season could be changed by law. The next three weeks were spent trekking arduously in the remote areas of the Nef valley. The last phase was to complete the building of a stand at the football ground of a community called Villa Ortega; here they got to know many of the locals who threw a final fiesta to show their appreciation of our work.

A hostel near Durban for 80 young people with a range of learning difficulties became a surrogate home for four months for **Alexandra Jones (St J)** when she flew to South Africa in August. In her detailed and inspiring report she tells how she got to know and respect her charges as she brought happiness and difference to their lives, getting used to all the difficulties and making many friends. 'Sunfield was a loving home' she says 'which I was sorry to leave'.

In five weeks of hectic travel she sampled the contrasts of Southern Africa, 'from Johannesburg's gleaming high-rise hotels, to the Okavanga Delta's wilderness, Durban's tropical beaches, Namibia's sand dunes, Lesotho's mountains, and the scenic wonders of Victoria Falls'. 'I could not have asked for more in a country or placement'.

**Claire Oakley (MC)** got a great deal out of her experience of teaching at an orphanage outside Kathmandu. Her Nepalese family received her generously and taught her some Nepali and how to cook 'momos' (Tibetan dumplings); she ate Nepali food throughout her stay. She taught English to enthusiastic youngsters from 6 to 14, was inspired by the headmistress who had founded the school and hostel and had chosen to dedicate her entire life to others, and learned an important lesson about the values of the ordinary Nepalese. 'They are content with themselves as they are ... Yes, poverty is a huge issue, as is health and, of course, political stability... But daily happiness flourishes, and as I look around myself here in London I see a completely different kind of poverty'.

*In a more dangerous world, we feel that international understanding and wider experience improves the chance of peace in the future. The Trustees would like to thank all those who have supported us in the past and we continue to appreciate any donations or suggestions to enable us to extend this very worthwhile work.*

***Trustees of the Kempson Trust***

*Please send any donations to the Treasurer: John Robins*

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