

THE KEMPSON ENTERPRISE TRUST
(Charitable Trust founded in 1989)

OUR THIRD REPORT FOR 1996-97.

The objectives of the Trust remain to encourage sixth formers at St John's School and Marlborough College to pursue enterprising activities in any of the many areas, both outdoor and academic, in which E G H Kempson, who died in 1987, was interested. Fortunately his skills and interests were so broad that we have over the years since 1990 been able to support a large number of young people pursuing a huge range of adventures from mountain journeys and parachute jumps to archaeological digs and chances to travel and teach in many parts of the world.

Eleanor Bernard from the College went with SPW to Nepal. She worked with the Joint Initiative for Environmental Action (JIFEA) which, in a country suffering all the effects of de-forestation and with 60% of its population below the poverty line, encourages people to share in every level of conservation, teaching schoolchildren, promoting smokeless stoves and solar cookers, and raising awareness about the dangers like pollution, so that local people can help themselves. After travelling with a Nepali counterpart to see conditions in many different parts of the country, she settled to teach in her placement area in the mountainous Solukumbu region of the Sherpas, six days trek from the nearest road.

The Trust also supported a group of 16 students and 3 staff from the College who in July 1996 travelled all over Vietnam, visiting the Mekong Delta, the Central Highlands, coastal villages, Saigon (now Ho Chi Min City), the present capital Hanoi and the old imperial city of Hue; they travelled by bus and train (the Reunification Express) to visit ethnic tribal groups and sites made famous during many years of war against France, USA, and China; in the North they also attempted in appalling weather conditions, and unsuccessfully, to climb Vietnam's highest mountain, Fan Si Pan. The group gained fascinating insight into a beautiful country of friendly and determined people, now beginning to heal the wounds of its recent turbulent history.

David Miller went to Paraguay with GAP and taught English at the *Colegio St Timothy's* where he was the only foreigner and had classes of 18 year olds and 14 year olds, as well as substituting as needed for absent teachers; several of his pupils got 'Distinction' in the English exam, as well as learning how to play 'British Bulldog'. "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in Paraguay. I just hope there are a few more young Paraguayans who enjoy and want to learn more English now".

Another student, Kate Darley, spent three months in Belize with Raleigh International. After learning the skills needed to survive in the jungle, she and her group of 18 went to a deserted island, Coco Plum Caye, where they built their camp before starting diving training to carry out scientific surveys of the effect of pollution on the reef. During this stage she was bitten by a bat and had to be evacuated for a course of anti-rabies injections, but soon returned to join the others gaining skill and confidence in the complex diving work classifying the coral and its pollutants. The next phase was spent working with archaeologists from the University of Texas, cutting paths through the jungle in the North of Belize to find signs of Mayan settlements, tough work in the high humidity of the sheltered forest environment with washing water limited to half a bucket a day. Finally her team were working overtime to complete the building of a craft workshop/museum in a village in the South of the country. "It was incredible" she wrote "to think how much we had done with so little equipment and guidance. I love the country, the climate and the people with their huge diversity of culture...going on expedition was the best thing I have ever done in my life".

These experiences are typical of all the young people who have already been helped to make good use of their sixth-form holidays and gap year by grants from the Kempson Trust. We want to continue to encourage not just large gap-year undertakings, but more enterprise in selecting from a wider range of projects: large and small, adventurous and academic, in Britain as well as abroad, but all offering a challenge and a broadening of experience. The Trustees would like to thank all those who have made this possible, and hope they will continue to support this valuable work.