

KEMPSON ENTERPRISE TRUST

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

OUR REPORT for the year 2005-2006

The work of the Trust continues into its fourteenth year giving grants to encourage enterprising activity among sixth-formers 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 things which will broaden their experience, build confidence, and enrich their lives.

During the year, 13 pupils received grants which helped them find adventure and human experience as far afield as China and Cornwall. Their striking reports reflect the intangible benefits that can flow from this.

Harry Mossop (MC) went to teach English in Madagascar with the Dodwell Trust. After a couple of days in the capital, Antananarivo, he and a friend went in a fantastically crowded minibus (taxi brousse) to Ampefy, a hot, dry little town by a lake in the beautiful highland spine of the country. Nobody in town spoke English, and every day they cycled to school to teach English to pupils and teachers as well as to local hotel and restaurant owners; difficult at first as they did not speak much Malagasy. They also designed and built a 14-foot sailing dinghy with the hope that the local people would learn to make their own to replace traditional dugout canoes on the lake. At half-term they explored the extreme south, and when the holidays began they headed off to the old pirate isle of Sainte-Marie off the east coast where they dived amid the chatter of humpback whales. 'A fascinating country and frankly still a well kept secret. We would be back here as soon as time and funds allowed.'

Fay Parsons-Hann, Candice Adamson and Lewis Randle (St J) spent a busy and varied month in Kenya at the end of the monsoon. In a group of 20 school leavers they started on a fine sandy beach, clearing undergrowth for new buildings where women could sell local produce near the visitors centre, and counting wildlife in the adjoining sacred forest. After a short safari (very rainy) and a visit to a Masai village, they went to the village school in Makongeni where they taught English, made desks and laid the foundations of a new nursery school. 'I felt I achieved a lot here' says Fay, 'and I hope that one day I may be able to go back to see how it is all going'. Lewis and the boys built new goal posts for the school pitch and nearly beat the local team. After working at an elephant sanctuary and learning how to make paper out of their dung, they set off for Mount Kenya. It was a hard climb and near the top, Lewis had to go down with

altitude sickness; but the girls made it wearily but triumphantly to the Point Lenana peak.

Another group from St Johns, **Ben Turgoose**, **Tom Burkin** and **Will Twigger**, in need of an adventure, decided to ride their bikes the 325 miles round the Cornish coast from Bude to Plymouth. The first steep, windy day took them to Tintagel, then on through Rock and Padstow to Perranporth, and a third long day to Lands End. A hard wet day to Coverack, then 53 miles to a welcome stay with Will's uncle at Truro, a slightly shorter day to Fowey through lovely villages like Mevagissey, and finally smaller steep roads which brought them, tired and sore, into Torpoint. It had been a thoroughly successful and enjoyable trip which got good publicity in the local press and radio and raised £3000 for Cancer Research.

In a long and lively report which reflects her love of the mountains, **Gabriella Watson** (MC) recounts her adventures while polishing her climbing skills in the Swiss and French Alps. Lugging a 32kg bag (containing a black ball gown) she arrives first in Arolla for a week of intensive snow and ice training; and there is crevasse rescue practice on some steep glaciers, together with a few peaks, which leaves her with severe blisters. After a recovery spell with friends in Vienna (where the ball gown *is* needed, but falls apart), she meets her father in Chamonix for another week of climbing which stretches both of them, then to Leysin and the International School of Mountaineering. At first things look dubious, with a party of four other girls and a grumpy Swedish guide, but they meet up with some far from grumpy New Zealanders and the climbing is good, culminating in a successful and exciting ascent of Mt Blanc de Cheilon, 3869m. 'I thank the Kempson Trust greatly for helping me in pursuing one of my great loves'.

Matthew Yates (StJ) spent 6 months in South-east India in two placements, working with disabled and orphaned children. At an old rural village called Kondam, the Peoples Craft and Training Centre looks after mentally handicapped children who would traditionally have been abandoned or killed. Here they learn to walk, speak and gain skills, and Matthew helped this by making a set of sensory aids which would stimulate the child's senses; a sensory tunnel with whistles and bells and different textures; a feely box with objects the child can feel but not see; play boxes, sensory balls and a light that cast different colours as the child rotated it. As a second project he designed an outdoor area with a vegetable plot, play space, maze and sheltered hut; this has been finished since he left and is now being enjoyed by the children.

For his last three months, Matthew moved to an orphanage near Chennai (Madras) looking after 120 children aged 3 to 16, teaching mainly English, Maths and games. He learnt many skills, patience, how hard teaching is, the utter resilience of the poor. 'My time away has been the best time of my life, and if you have ever thought of visiting India, go for it.'

Philippa Harking (MC) spent four months teaching in a girls' school in Busembatia, Uganda where she found all the problems of third-world education, huge classes, learning by rote, and poor English, but she loved her pupils and was delighted when she found the teaching getting through. She soon got used to living with occasional electricity, water collected in a jerrycan, cooking on a kerosene stove, a long-drop toilet 50 metres away and the ubiquitous rats and cockroaches. At weekends she travelled round the country in crowded minibuses and got a chance to go to Lake Bunyoni and trek up to see, unforgettably, a group of 13 gorillas. Later she found South Africa tame and over developed; for her Uganda had been 'the *real* Africa'.

Nine months of Asian travelling is not easy to summarise, but **Victoria Lupton (MC)** writes of this eventful epic with great gusto and enjoyment. After three months learning Mandarin in Shanghai, and a few weeks travelling round the 'big sights' of China with a school friend, she had a month's solo travel round the wintry northern regions and another month working in a foster home near Beijing. 'My final three months were filled with exploring with another school friend the incredible regions of southwest China, Tibet, the Everest Region and a month in Nepal and India, trying to understand how the cultures of China, Tibet and the subcontinent compare, clash and influence each other. We finished up doing voluntary farm work on an inorganic farm near Jaipur. This year really was the most incredible experience an 18 year old could have.'

Nina Brown (MC) was the friend with whom Victoria completed her long journey in Tibet and the subcontinent, but before they met up, Nina had her own adventures in Italy and China. Determined to travel independently, she found on the internet volunteer work on two organic farms in Abruzzo and Tuscany. It was hard work picking fruit and gathering olives, but she met friendly and skilful people and made many friends. In rural southern China she found a place helping in a school in Yangshuo. It was a fascinating experience of the differences in education, the drive of the teachers, the incredibly polite children and the enthusiasm to learn. She has written a splendid account of her experiences here and on her journeys in Tibet and India, a considerable achievement.

Adam Hicks went to the northern Fijian island of Vitu Levu. With a group of volunteers he learnt to identify 250 species of fish so as to be able to carry out a survey of the protected coral reefs in one of the best diving areas in the world. Each volunteer had an adoptive family in the adjoining village and would visit them regularly, and each fortnight they would visit a different local village to get to know the area and also for a larger population to become aware of what they were doing. Although Adam is doing architecture at university, he intends to maintain his interest in coral conservation after this unique experience.

Hannah Tarrant and **Seb Frysol** went first to Sri Lanka and taught in two schools in the south of the country, Seb teaching English at a boys' school, and Hannah helped at a school for the deaf. Some of the pupils were older than them, but they enjoyed their placement and were well looked after by their host family, and their local coastal village, rebuilt after devastation by the tsunami, welcomed them at weekends. They travelled round the famous sights of Sri Lanka, and Hannah went on to Nepal to work in a residential school for mentally handicapped children in Kathmandu. This was initially daunting, but she persevered; 'I got to know the children for the wonderful people they are and they taught me some important life lessons... My trip changed my life without a doubt. I have never been so challenged before and I cherish all the memories.'

Trustees of the Kempson Trust

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