



The Sebastian
Hunter
MEMORIAL TRUST
Creativity, education & leadership.

Newsletter • Autumn 2011

Dear Friends

Belgravia Gallery and the Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust are pleased to announce the first edition of our quarterly newsletter. We look forward to keeping you up-to-date with all the wonderful projects that are going on in Southern India.

Ten years after Seb's death and the creation of the Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust, there are now numerous worthwhile projects affiliated with The Trust.




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The Joshua Brearley Higher Secondary Science Block



On the 30 March 2011, the Joshua Brearley Higher Secondary Science Block (in Arni) was officially opened by Mr and Dr Brearley. The joyous celebrations included moving speeches by two bishops, both former pupils of the school, and a speech by Margaret Brearley in well-received Tamil.

Stephen and Margaret Brearley donated and raised funds for this block, in loving memory of their son Joshua Brearley, a friend of Seb's.

The new science block is part of the Sebastian Hunter Secondary School in Arni, and includes three classrooms, a staffroom and separate physics and chemistry labs, plus a preparation room for the teachers to organise experiments.



The Sebastian Hunter Higher Secondary School, Arni



The Sebastian Hunter Higher Secondary School, opened in 2007 by Anna Hunter, educates 600 boys and girls aged from 10 – 16 years. The students mostly come from the surrounding, deprived rural areas.

Construction on three out of the four building blocks is complete (the fourth to be completed by 2012) and the school now comprises a

block of airy, well designed classrooms, a science laboratory and a computer lab complete with 20 new computers, generously donated by Goldman Sachs.

The first section was built in 2007 by The Trust and a third donor has built an additional classroom block.

With the completion of the three buildings, The Sebastian Hunter School in Arni has been upgraded to higher secondary status, and now provides the necessary infrastructure and teaching support that will give the students further opportunities for higher education.



MBKG Pannai Orphanage & King's School



The MBKG (Mudhiyor Balar Kudumbar Grama) Orphanage and King's School are located in a beautiful rural area on the outskirts of Vellore.

King's School is now a fully fledged matriculation school with higher secondary status, educating over 700 pupils (in English & Tamil) from the MBKG Orphanage as well as the children from the surrounding rural areas.

Many of these rural communities are segregated by religion and/or caste and have very little communication with each other. King's School plays a vital role in encouraging the children to interact, play and learn together without the pre-conceived prejudices they face at home.

The facilities and quality of teaching at the school continue to improve. Most recently, three graduate students from Vellore Institute of Technology volunteered to teach the children at Kasam basic computer skills, touch typing and internet use. The children have loved the enthusiasm and wonderful teaching of the graduates - Naman Chaurasia, Raunak Sharma and Likhith Mandali – who are now planning to continue their studies in the USA.



The MBKG orphanage offers a stable home for many children as well as displaced women of all ages. Currently, 80% of the children are sponsored by private donors. There is a thriving bakery providing freshly baked goods for the school and surrounding institutions. The bakery earns the orphanage some much needed cash. A garment making unit provides the less academic girls with jobs and they are often contracted to make hospital garments for the Christian Medical College (CMC).



Since our last update, the orphanage has continued to thrive. Hygiene in the kitchen has improved and healthier eating habits are being encouraged. Multi-vitamin tablets are provided daily to all children (generously donated by Micky Astor) and fruit is supplied three times a week.

Sathish Kumar Srinivasan, who grew up at the Orphanage from the age of six months, is now coming to the end of the first year of his PhD in biomedical engineering at Miami State University.

Sathish completed his BSc and MSc degrees at a university in India. Along with colleagues from his MSc, Sathish holds a patent for a nanotechnologies nerve cell. His is a real success story.

Reflections on Volunteering at Kasam



“Earlier this year I spent two months at MBKG Pannai in Kassam, volunteering at the orphanage and King’s School. The experience was one I’ll never forget and I am so looking forward to getting back out there again soon.”

Being a volunteer, you become one of MBKG, living day-to-day with the children and staff, sharing meals together, engaging with the day students, playing games, helping with studies, generally being involved as a member of the team and living as part of the family. From the moment I arrived in India I was made to feel so welcome.

The accommodation for volunteers at Kasam is basic, but comfortable and private. The food is predominantly vegetarian with chicken served every Sunday, and the ingredients are all fresh and local. I personally loved the food and have been trying to coax secret recipes from Helen, the cook, ever since!

Day-to-Day, I would breakfast with the children and head up to the senior school to assist in the offices or take classes. I’d never taught, or even thought about teaching before, but the children simply love the interaction with the volunteers so there’s no real pressure to impress with elaborate study plans or exercises. As long as you can speak English, you’ll be fine! In addition to the senior and junior schools, there is a nursery at the farm and the young children and babies absolutely LOVE having visitors come and play. Be warned, you will be used as a human climbing frame!



Life at Kasam can seem quite insular for the children, who rarely get to leave the site until they reach teenage years. But despite this, no two days are the same for them, they love to pray, they love to study, they are devoted to each other and seem very happy. And this is due to the amazing work that the staff at MBKG do, the support that organisations such as the Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust offer and volunteer programme that they run. I cannot recommend volunteering at MBKG highly enough.”

- Julie Bettridge, June 2011

Devalois Higher Secondary School



Located opposite the Kasam Orphanage, the Devalois Higher Secondary School is a new addition to The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust. Devalois is a government school and lacks the funding that King's School thrives upon. However, the Gift Aid reclaimed from the generous donations made to the Joshua Brearley Higher Secondary Science Block has been put towards the refurbishments at the Devalois School.

The refurbishments will include; white washing the school buildings, providing furniture for the school rooms - at present there is none - as well as making vital repairs to dilapidated buildings.

The children who attend Devalois are from exceptionally poor and deprived backgrounds, many being orphans. It is hoped that in the future, amongst other things, these children can be fully trained in advanced agricultural practices and techniques.

Devalois is an excellent example of how Gift Aid can increase the value of any charitable donation by allowing charities to reclaim basic rate tax. The scheme has been incredibly helpful in helping The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust fund further projects in Southern India.



Please make donations through Gift Aid - it is astonishing how much can be reclaimed.

Seb's School, Senji Mottur



Seb's School in Senji Mottur opened in 2003. It now educates 130 children aged 5-10 years in five classes. The school is located in a poor agricultural village which has suffered badly from drought.

The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust has funded the school infrastructure and supports a teacher and his further training as well as individual cases of poverty in the village.

A new church and community centre was opened by Anna Hunter and her son James in October 2010. The villagers had a three day celebration in honour of their new church which replaced one that had been built 100 years ago and featured very large holes in its ceilings. The new church is larger and more contemporary. It has a specially built ramp and platform for a villager, Daniel, who is disabled and has to use a special wheelchair.



DREAM & Sustainable Livelihoods, Thattankuttain & Thandayankottai

Thattankuttain & Thandayankottai are two of hundreds of villages in the isolated tribal area in the interior of the Jawadhi Hills District of Tamil Nadu.

This region of Tamil Nadu is prone to landslides and flash floods, making it difficult for children from these villages to reach their nearest schools – often 5km away. As a result, Thattankuttai Primary school was established in 2009 and now educates 60 students.

In India, most professions require English as an essential skill. The DREAM project, new to the Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust, helps schools apply new interactive and creative ways of teaching English not only to the children, but to the teachers as well.



Very few Non-Governmental Organisations reach these villages in the Jawadhi Hills due to lack of accessibility and facilities. Life in these villages is not easy; health and sanitation awareness is very poor, many villagers suffer from alcoholism as well as many other diseases. The Sustainable Livelihood Project works with the women of Thandayankottai village in order to educate college students about the cultures and traditions of these tribes and the socio and economic challenges that they face. This in turn pulls in some much need income to be saved for school and hospital fees and for feeding their families.



The Schieffelin Institute of Health – Research & Leprosy Centre, Karigiri



The Schieffelin Institute of Health in Karigiri provides support for the community affected by leprosy. Built in the 1940's as a Leprosy research centre, Schieffelin Institute functions today as a general hospital providing medical care to the surrounding villages as well as Shanthigramam, the neighbouring Leprosy Hospice. Many of Shanthigramam's residents are blind and have been excluded from their villages.

The workshop at the Institute makes thermoplastic artificial limbs for those affected by leprosy as well as diabetes. It also engineers a light rubber for the soles of specially made medical shoes, customised according to the patient's disability. The Maria Marina Foundation has generously donated sufficient funds for 1,000 pairs of shoes for the patients a Karigiri.



When the hospital opened, 60% of its funding came from western donors. Now only 12% comes from foreign sources. As leprosy has almost completely disappeared from countries in Europe and North America, people in the West do not recognise its grave affect on people elsewhere. The hospital sees over 2,000 leprosy patients a year; though this is only a small proportion of those thought to suffer from the disease. Further funding for leprosy research is still needed – how leprosy is contracted is still unknown.

Special Thanks

Peter Ellis, a former director of Belgravia Gallery, sadly passed away in March 2011. He bequeathed a substantial sum to The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust and we will keep you updated on the exciting new developments that will result from his bequest. Use of Peter's bequest will reflect his love of sport.



The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust would like to send a special thanks to Tharyan and Emma Koshi, who organise all the building works and manage all the projects locally. Without their invaluable input and efforts, the work that we do would not be possible. It was Emma who conceived the idea of working in the Jawadhi Hills and she has worked extremely hard for the women and children affected by poverty there.

Many thanks to Margaret & Stephen Brearley, who have put an incredible amount of time and energy into fundraising for the Joshua Brearley Science Block. Through charity concerts and donations, their work has become incredibly important to the Sebastian Hunter Trust.



Geraldine Wilcocks began as a volunteer in 2008. Since then, Geraldine has become a valuable part of the projects affiliated with the Sebastian Hunter Trust. Many thanks to her continued support and work.



Special thanks to Christopher Holder, for supporting the leprosy hospital through the MariaMarina Foundation and Mr. & Mrs. Andy MacDonald for their generous support with Seb's School in Senji Mottur.

Thanks to Owen Hereford and Goldman Sachs for financial support for the computers at Seb's school in Arni.
Vatsala Vijayakumar, for her wonderful support and care for so many children at Kasam.
Ratna Chandran, for all her work around Kasam.
The Bishop of Vellore, Rev. William
The builder, Mr Maria Raj, for his wonderful ideas and quality of workmanship.

Thanks to all the other wonderful headmasters and headmistresses, staff and teachers at all of Seb's schools.

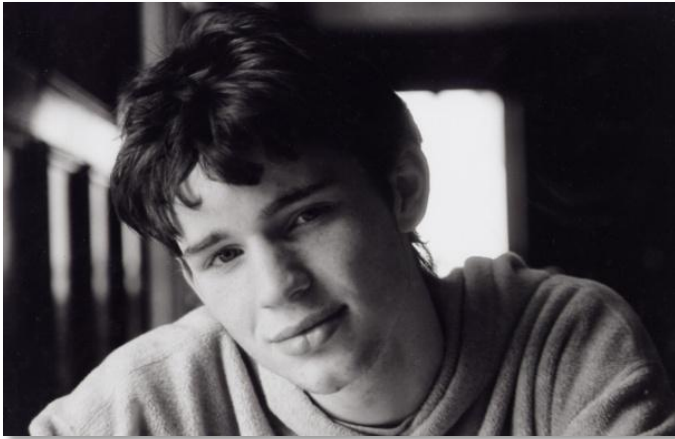
Thanks to volunteers and visitors, some of whom continue to return to Tamil Nadu to lend their valuable time:

*Eve Kirby
Hattie Compston
Cailin Broere
Sam Brearley
Bharti Hindocha
Koko Weyers*

*Matthew Willett
Julie Bettridge
Katherine Woolf
Lorraine Anderson Sampson
James Hunter
Laura Walford*

*Adam Walford
Allison Scott Allen
His Hon., Judge Christopher Compston
Mrs. Caroline Compston
Emma Wingfield*

Donations



The Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust continues to raise funds for the important projects going on in India. If you are interested in donating or just curious as to what else there is to do, here is a list of ongoing projects.

Please contact info@sebsschool.org for more information.

Devalois Primary School

Shoes for students:	£500
Computer Room:	£10,000
Library:	£10,000

Joshua Brearley Science Block

Equipment for the labs:	£3,000
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Karigiri Leprosy Hospital

Funds for plastic artificial limbs	<i>Any</i>
Research funding	<i>Any</i>

Kings School & MBKG Orphanage

Toy Fund:	<i>Any</i>
Clothing Fund:	<i>Any</i>
Medical Fund:	<i>Any</i>
Lunch for one day student:	£20 p/y
Meal Donation	£100-150
School Fees Sponsorship:	£200 p/y
Orphanage Child Sponsorship:	£20 p/m
Grandparent Sponsorship:	£20 p/m

The Sebastian Hunter Higher Secondary School

Fourth block w/sports & art facilities:	TBD
A new dormitory:	TBD
Girls toilet block:	£10,000

Seb's School, Senji Mottur

New uniforms/ supplies:	£5,000
Toilet block:	£10,000

Volunteers

We would like to invite volunteers of all ages who are interested in any area of our work to spend time in one of our programs in India. Subject to suitability, accommodation and food will be provided.

The cost for a volunteership depends on the length of stay and requirements of the volunteer. Please contact info@sebsschool.org for more information regarding what programs are available.