



The Mountain Trust

Trustees' Annual Report for 2007

Registered Charity Number : 1112841

Introduction

2007 has been a slightly quieter year than usual to the extent that none of the UK Trustees visited Nepal during the year. Nevertheless, Trustees and Friends have continued to work on developing our network of contacts and supporters, helping with fundraising and delivering tangible results on the ground. By the year's end, we had accumulated around 100 contacts for our mailing list.

Progress

This year, we've made progress in the educational and medical fields (as well as raising our profile) in Nepal.



Our colleagues in Nepal have established a smart new Office in Pokhara (courtesy of a monthly donation to cover the rental from Mr Biplab Paudel). Biplab also provided its furniture. With a broadband connection, an elderly PC gifted by the Trust & a printer donated by Bryan Connelly, our Trustees, Staff and Volunteers are now able to meet at the office and to maintain contact with the outside world – surfing the web to carry out research on their particular areas of work / publish findings abroad. The Mountain Trust Nepal has taken on a part-time employee (Bandana) who assists with keeping our accounts and with funding applications, etc. Her salary is £540 pa which is roughly double the average in Nepal since she is skilled.

In the office, we are also selling hand-stitched T-Shirts with the Mountain Trust logo on (made locally) at a modest profit to raise funds and displaying images of where the Trust has worked in Nepal. We have also posted notices on transparency and good governance.



In the educational sector, we have finally completed the construction of the new main class room block at Belbariyha School in Rupendehi. (The previous structure had been condemned as structurally unsound.)

Here you can see the two classrooms we built on the first floor (right) and the early phase of the main two storey block whilst still under construction (left). The villagers contributed their unskilled labour by dismantling the old block, cleaning bricks, collecting sand, mixing and carrying cement and so on.

The main two storey block is now complete and in use.



In a first for the Mountain Trust, we funded the purchase of a cow for Swobodh Sadhana Kendra Orphanage in Karkarbhatta (far Eastern Nepal).

This was to provide the children with free milk daily, following the construction of their new school block, the provision of fresh water and sanitation (plus furniture and other equipment) which were funded by W.E. Reeve and the Mountain Trust.

In addition, the Trust provided school furniture to Prithivi Primary School, in Gulmi and also sponsored the following children's costs of education :

Imanath Adhikari
 Imanath Paudel
 Two sons of Netra Subedi
 Sumitra Baral
 Anita Thapa

The Trust funded the full costs of broadcasting the School on Air programme for a further year on Annapurna FM. This entailed re-recording the mainstream lessons delivered by the best available teachers in the FM radio station studio (since the syllabus had been updated to incorporate more creative thinking) and broadcasting lessons for 30 minutes each evening, 6 days a week to between 20 and 30 of the 75 districts nationwide – ultimately addressing some 82,000 school children. These lessons are pitched at (though not exclusive to) students in the last two grades of secondary school as a primer for the SLC – or School Leaving Certificate (which is the main gateway to a decent job or tertiary education in Nepal). The programme was favourably reviewed by Flame an Anglo-Pakistani NGO registered in both countries and which has contributed more than £1,000.00 to the costs). It has also been the topic of discussion on national Nepali TV, regional FM radio, national newspapers and on radio in the UK. We hope to expand geographical coverage and intend to generate publicity to encourage a wider take-up over time.

The Trust also paid 50,000 NRs (via the Progressive Women's Group of Padhampur) for the four orphans' annual maintenance following our building a modest home for them in Rupendehi.



The Trust forged closer ties with senior medical and surgical staff at Manipal Teaching Hospital, Pokhara. We have an agreement where patients unable to afford their own treatment and without family or friends to support them receive free treatment. Besides a small emergency fund, each case must be agreed by the Trust in the UK in advance.

The Hospital provides free medical and surgical staff time and the Trust covers the costs of consumables, drugs, transport and accommodation. In 2007, we assisted the following patients :

Netra Subedi (MRI Scan, DHL of scans to Cambridge for a Consultant Radiologist's free 2nd opinion).
 Shova Aryal (operation to remove brain tumour, training in tailoring & purchase of sewing machine).
 Kapil KC (medical treatment & medicines).
 Bishnu Baral (medical treatment, surgery & consumables for severe burns after her stove exploded).
 Prem Pariyar (operation on foot at Manipal Hospital).
 Durga Neopani (treatment at Manipal Hospital).

Fundraising

On the advice of a qualified UK accountant we have revised the accounts of 2006 to include the costs of travelling from India to Nepal and within Nepal for Mountain Trust Trustees specifically on Trust business. Since there were two visits that year and the cost which would otherwise have been born by CM-B was added as a donation, the total funds raised in 2006 were fractionally above the figure for 2007 (when no visits took place) of £14,563.91 (compared with £15,438.19 in 2006). By October 2008 we were back on trend with funds raised growing to £24,236.75 (including £6,923.62 of Gift Aid Relief owing since early 2006 but excluding interest to be calculated by HMRC).

This year's 'star prize' for fundraising goes to Bernice Turnbull who raised a whopping £1956.00 through talks and sales of her book, 'Gran Goes to Nepal'. We are delighted that she has agreed to become an Ambassador for the Mountain Trust. Miette Lauwers who raised £1351.19 to sponsor children through education and is based in Crete has also agreed to become an Ambassador for the Mountain Trust. Tessa Reeve continued her generous support for the Trust with another donation of £1000.00. Karen and Eric Turburfield have also raised the handsome sum of £770.00 for school scholarships.

The Trust joined forces with Rosie Panell of World at Your Toes (formerly of FLAME) and Daisy Wood – who between them raised £857.47 from selling greetings cards using the photography of other supporters such as Mark Chivers. Steve Peacock collected no less than £663.00 from his Half Marathon ordeal in 2006 and even persuaded his company, Budget Group Ltd., to add a further £100.00. Besides the Budget Group, we also raised £200.00 from the Dixon International Group Ltd. in 2007 and are hoping to develop our sources of corporate revenues in the future.

Anne Connelly (one of our Honorary Trustees and a long time supporter) raised £550.00 in 2007. After some of the initial collection boxes were dropped and broken in outlets (since the weight of coinage was too much for the transparent acetate / perspex containers to withstand) we reviewed the idea of placing collection boxes in local outlets and concluded that we should proceed to develop the idea but using a more robust design. So we retired the old rectangular transparent boxes and bought 40 new cylindrical plastic tubs with chains for security plus stickers to ensure that no one would be tempted to half empty the box at the outlet prior to collection. These new boxes have proven to be much more robust and Phil Pearlman has kindly printed new stickers to decorate them on the outside, gratis. These new boxes are proving to be a modest but regular revenue stream for the Mountain Trust. During 2007, they generated £330.98 and having redistributed them amongst the better performing outlets, they have since increased their overall contribution to the Trust's funds.

CM-B gave a talk to Year 6 students at Great Shelford Primary School who went on to raise £210.00. Overall through this, designing websites and other personal donations, CM-B contributed £2,957.91 in 2007.

In addition, we have recruited more supporters who are willing to make a monthly standing order which albeit on a modest scale, will soon begin to build up and which gives us some predictability when it comes to planning ahead. In 2007, we received monthly donations from Mark Chivers, Munizha Ahmad-Cooke, Bronwyn Allen and (from June) Frank Kirk. Together they raised £407.00 in 2007.

Other News

Natasha Malcolm-Brown has been recruited as a Trustee, Anne Connelly has agreed to be an Honorary Trustee and both Miette Lauwers and Rosie Panell have agreed to be Ambassadors of the Trust.

The 2007 Mountain Trust Cocktail Party seemed to go down well – with about 40 guests attending. As usual, the purpose was not to raise funds but to thank everyone who had helped raised funds.

The Mountain Trust also formally became a Member of Cambridge University's Humanitarian Centre in 2007 – which has proven to be a highly valuable source of volunteers, informed ideas and other useful contacts. The CUHC also organises the University's International Development Course and CM-B was invited to give a talk on the transition from conflict to post-conflict in Nepal at the last conference. This was followed up with an interview on Radio 209.

The Humanitarian Centre are producing two or three briefing papers each year on what they regard as the most creative or innovative projects in order to publicise the ideas to a wider community and they have selected the Mountain Trust's Radio Guru project (ie radio education) as one of their first studies.

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