



St Lazarus Charitable Trust Newsletter

NO 5: JULY 2019

In this issue:

From the Chairman

The Leprosy Mission

*Samburu Trust
telemedicine project*

*St Lazarus Charitable
Trust – new trustee
appointments*

Camino pilgrimage

And finally...

From the Chairman

The St Lazarus Charitable Trust has as one of its principal objectives the relief of leprosy, recognising that the origins of the St Lazarus Order are in the Leprosy Hospital dedicated to Lazarus that existed outside the Gates of Jerusalem before the time of the Crusades

In recent years the Trust has made donations to The Leprosy Mission totalling some £ 100,000 over 3 years and directed to the work they carry out in West Bengal. The Trustees, with others, were invited by TLM to visit this work and in November 2018 Jonathan Prichard, the Trust's Treasurer and I duly set off.

From Heathrow via Delhi we arrived in the early evening at Ranchi airport and from there had a hair raising car journey to the TLM Mission Home and Hospital at Purulia arriving late at night. The following morning, after breakfast, we attended the daily service in the beautiful chapel attended by most of the staff and were welcomed by the hospital's Superintendent, Dr Uijwal Hembrom. We were given a warm welcome with the traditional ceremony of colourful garlands being placed around our necks. After this we spent the day seeing at first hand the amazing work, meeting both patients and the doctors and nurses who look after them. Over 30,000 patients a year travel from all over West Bengal for treatment. The hospital offers a wide range of treatments to all who wish to take advantage of its services. Leprosy treatment is always free and other services are charged based on a patient's ability to pay. The strategy of extending the hospital's services to non-leprosy sufferers is partially fundraising but also to eradicate the stigma that is so often attached to the disease. The hospital is set on a 75 acre site and is currently constructing a new outpatients centre. One of the interesting areas of work is the construction of artificial limbs and footwear and the workshop produces some 5,000 pairs of these sandals each year. The hospital also provides a long term refuge for those leprosy sufferers who would otherwise be homeless. The day ended with a buffet supper at the Guesthouse which all the medical and administrative staff attended and which gave us all great inspiration.

The following day we travelled by road to Bankura (see below) and there visited the Mercy Centre, where some thirty or so sufferers are permanent

residents. Again we were warmly welcomed with colourful garlands by Mr Gabriel Pani, the superintendent of both the residential home and the Vocational Training Centre. The home is clearly a very happy place and the residents who would otherwise be living on the streets are well cared for.



Residents at the Bankura Mercy Centre

After lunch we visited on a separate site the VTC. This provides one year of residential training for young people affected by leprosy or disability which will enable them to become financially independent and integrated into mainstream society. The courses offer training in computer technology, welding, sewing and tailoring, mechanics and in 2019 for electricians. After the year of residential study one year training placements are found for the graduates and this in turn should lead to the offer of permanent paid work. The enthusiasm of the students was clear to see and fully justified the grant of £ 84,00 over three years to support this important and vital initiative of TLM.

On the Wednesday we travelled by train from Bankura to Calcutta - a colourful five hour journey - and were greeted at probably the busiest railway station in the world by staff from the Premananda Hospital and taken to our hotel in the centre of this amazing city. On the Thursday morning we were again warmly greeted by the superintendent, Dr Helen Roberts and her staff at the daily morning assembly. SLCT had funded a Phacoemulsifier in early 2017 which enables quicker and safer cataract surgery with a shorter recovery time. We were privileged to witness two operations using this equipment. The hospital treats some 5,000 patients a year. One-fifth of these are affected by leprosy and others are from other disadvantaged groups. Additionally the hospital ensures that access to treatment is available in over 200 Outreach camps providing some 6,000 consultations.

In the one week we spent in West Bengal we were greatly moved by the appalling conditions many poor people have to suffer and not least those afflicted with leprosy and the stigma still attached to it. We were moved by the Christian commitment of all those working in TLM operations.

Surely with the Leprosy Mission go “ a band of men and women whose hearts God has touched” (1 Samuel 10.26)

The Leprosy Mission – Bankura and Champa vocational training centres

We have recently received a further encouraging report from The Leprosy Mission's vocational training centres in Bankura and Champa, West Bengal, one of the sites visited by the Chairman.



A key focus of the centres is on providing high quality training for leprosy affected, disabled and female students, and encouraging local employers to create more accepting workplaces. Most students move on into good jobs: 70% of Bankura graduates now

report being employed under fair labour conditions. 92% of last year's students from Champa and 74% from Bankura have gone on to access graduate placement support to help them access and succeed in work. Spiritual growth is also an integral part of the culture of these centres, with daily prayers forming part of the timetable. Students and staff at Bankura joined local World Leprosy Day services this year, helping to increase awareness and fight discrimination.

You can read more about the work of the VTCs on our website

(www.stlazaruscharitabletrust.org.uk)

Samburu Trust Telemedicine Project

Dr. the Chevalier David Woolf KLJ writes:

The telemedicine collaboration between the Order of St Lazarus Commandery of Wales and the Samburu Trust, under the direction of Mr Daniel Morris CMLJ, has been running for two years. During that time the concept of telemedicine has been proved. Indeed, it is most pleasing to note that as a direct consequence of this scheme the Leprosy Mission has now established a telemedicine project (part funded by our Commandery) in Nepal.

The Commandery support for the Samburu Trust has also extended to funding the supply of medical supplies used in the treatment of cases prioritised by telemedicine in the field hospitals.

Daniel Morris has written a fifth report detailing the current telemedicine work being undertaken in Samburu funded by the Commandery of Wales, which you can read on the Trust website. **Please note, this is NOT for the squeamish - it contains very graphic images of some distressing cases.** However, this is the reality of front line field medicine. It is a great privilege for a Hospitaller Order of Christian chivalry to be involved in such work.

**The St Lazarus
Charitable Trust**
Registered charity no
286918

Chairman:
David Powell KCLJ
Hon. Treasurer:
Jonathan Prichard
KCLJ
Clerk:
Dame Val Hiscock DCLJ

Camino pilgrimage

Congratulations and thanks are due to Peter and Diane Woolf, from the Commandery of Wales, for their magnificent effort in tackling the 300km. Camino pilgrimage recently. Their appeal raised an amazing £3,000 for the Trust, to be equally split between the Leprosy Mission and Help for Heroes, acknowledging both the hospitaller and military character of our Order.



The St Lazarus Charitable Trust – new trustee appointments

At the recent Annual General Meeting, we were pleased to welcome Ivar Grey OJ and Charles Betz OJ, who join the team of Trustees in place of Chev. David Knox KJ and Fr. John Eldridge SChJ, whose terms of office had come to an end. We were also glad to welcome back Chev. John Reid KCLJ after a year's absence.

And finally...

A date for your diaries:

We are pleased to announce that a chamber concert will be held at St Paul's Knightsbridge on Thursday 21 November, to raise money for the St Lazarus Charitable Trust. We are very grateful to The Revd Alan Gyle for allowing us the use of this church, with its splendid musical tradition, for this event. The programme includes a rare performance of the Piano Trio in D minor by the English-born composer, Henry Charles Litolf, who is mainly remembered today for the sparkling and light-hearted 'Scherzo' from his Concerto Symphonique No. 4, op. 102 for piano & orchestra (1852). We are delighted to welcome back pianist Simon Callaghan, who will be joined by Ben Gilmore (violin) and Ashok Klouda (cello)

Full booking details will be available soon.

You can find our website at www.stlazaruscharitabletrust.org.uk