

Quarterly Bulletin of the Maya Childcare Trust

Dear Supporter,

Thank you for taking time to read this, our first quarterly bulletin, keeping you up to date with the Trust's work. You will find in it details of our recent activities and plans for the next few months. There is also an introduction to our Trustees, details of a few fundraising events and some very sobering facts about Guatemala. I hope that in reading these articles you will feel as strongly as we do about the value and the necessity of the Maya Childcare Trust.

Thank you for your continued support,

The Founder & Trustees

Progress Report from Rachael

Over the past three months the Trust has made considerable progress, largely due to the generous support of many individuals and several organisations. Our fundraising efforts have got off to a great start. Some of these are detailed over, but we would like to express sincere thanks to all those who have supported us with so much kindness and enthusiasm. This project really wouldn't be possible without you!

We have submitted our application to the Charity Commission and they have responded positively. We have to supply them with a few more details to help the process of registration but we look forward

Plans for next three months

We are hoping to continue to raise funds to support the project in the coming months. The Mulberry Bush School, where Rachael currently works, has been extremely supportive and is planning a significant fundraising effort before she leaves. The School is also hoping to establish lasting links with the organisation in Guatemala through their World Trust to exchange ideas and provide mutual support.

Rachael is traveling out to Guatemala at the end of August. Full time work to

to being a fully registered charity soon.

We have maintained regular contact with Patricia Sarat, our Guatemalan Project Consultant. She is very enthusiastic about the project and has responded warmly to the Trust's provisional invitation to her to take on the role of Director of the Centro Infantil Bellota once it is established. She has already begun the legalisation process in Guatemala, and although it is uncertain how long this will take to complete, the work she is already doing is extremely helpful.



establish the Centro Infantil Bellota will begin in September. Many things will need to be put in place before the Centre can open its doors to welcome children, but during this initial period of legalisation and establishment, Rachael and Pati hope to work closely with the existing day care provision offered by Nuevos Horizontes. By offering further training, resources and support, they hope to enhance the limited pre-school care that is already available and to build strong links with this well-established organisation.

So there are many exciting things ahead and we look forward to reporting our progress!

Zoe Rose (Chair)

I spent three months in Quetzaltenango several years ago and was struck by how people with so little can be so generous, and how so little in terms of funding can go such a long way in Guatemala. I am very excited to be involved in the trust and to be doing something positive for the wonderful people of Guatemala.

Having worked for two years as a solicitor in London, Zoe recently swapped commuting and long hours for a role as an in-house lawyer at a Cambridge technology company. This leaves more time for more rewarding pursuits such as working for the trust and on the allotment! She is also hoping to brush up her Spanish in the hope of visiting Guatemala again at some point.

Jennifer Jones (Treasurer)

Before embroiling myself in accounting issues I enjoyed volunteering for a number of children's projects including with street children in Mexico and teaching in Romania. I am looking forward to helping to build a trust that will make a direct impact on Guatemalan children.

Jenny worked for over four years for PricewaterhouseCoopers in London while qualifying as a chartered accountant and specialising in charity audit. She now works for ActionAid International, an international NGO, in the finance department.

Andrew Ker (Secretary)

I became involved with the trust not just because I am Rachael's big cousin but also because I see this as a unique opportunity to help, in a very direct way, a group of people who would otherwise not be getting any help.

Andrew is married to Nuala and has three daughters, Kathryn (13), Michelle (12) and Rachael (7). He works for an American Insurance company as a Computer Software Engineer and enjoys cycling the nine miles into Belfast to work each day as long as its dry!

Tom Edwards (Website)

I'm delighted to be involved with the Maya Childcare Trust. Four years ago I was lucky enough to spend three months working in Quetzaltenango. My time there is still a fresh memory, a valuable one as well. I worry about the children and families who were so kind to me. Helping to provide opportunities and support for their communities is something that means a great deal to me. I wish I could do more.

Tom is a Physicist working at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. He thrives on sunny days and wishes he could find enough time for visiting his friends who have all had the sense to move somewhere sunny. Tom can often be found consuming fruity malt loaf at weekends while watching the refreshing Scottish rain.



Barn Dance in the Belfast Central Mission



On the evening of Friday 18th March, Grosvenor House – home of the Belfast Central Mission – was bouncing to the strains of country and western music while eighty people tested the strength of the foundations as we do-se-doed and reeled the night away. Mr Bill Patterson had the unenviable task of trying to teach us all the right steps in all the right order – a task he accomplished with great success and even greater good humour. A well-earned supper was provided by Deirdre and her band of helpers which gave us the energy we needed for the last few dances. It was our first major fund-raising event for the charity and it raised over £1,400. Thank you to every one who helped to organise it and to everyone who came along to support it.

Belfast Marathon Walk

Congratulation to Kathryn Ker who walked ten miles of the Belfast Marathon on May Day and raised £106.50

Table Quiz in Sandy Row Methodist Church, Belfast

Our thanks also to those who organised and took part in the table quiz in Sandy Row Methodist Church that raised £250 for the trust.

Thank You!

Without your help and generous support we would be unable to turn the Trust's plans into realistic action for children in Guatemala.

Our warmest thanks are given to all those people who have helped to make the first few months of fund raising so successful.



QUETZALTENANGO

Quetzaltenango, known locally as 'Xela', is one of Guatemala's largest urban areas and is situated within one of the poorest regions of Guatemala.

The Guatemalan Poverty Assessment Program* (GUAPA) reports:

- Poverty in Guatemala is very high.
- About two thirds of all Guatemalan children live in poverty.
- Poverty is significantly higher among the indigenous.
- Guatemala is a multi-ethnic society with some 23 different ethno-linguistic indigenous groups (21 of which are Mayan).
- Malnutrition among Guatemalan children is extremely high - among the worst in the world.
- Guatemalan literacy is not only below average in Latin America, it is *far lower*. With an illiteracy rate of 31% in 2000, only Nicaragua and Haiti rank worse.

*Report No. 24221-GU, World Bank, 20th February 2003

You have received this Bulletin because you are listed on our database as a supporter of the Trust. The Trustees believe that this quarterly communication is an important way of letting you know how your donations are being used. If you would prefer to be removed from our mailing list please either email us at: info@mayachildcare.org or write to our Secretary, **Mr Andrew Ker, 24 Ravensdale, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim BT36 6FA.**