

THE Sylvia Wright TRUST

Registered Charity No. 326139

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www.sylviawright.org

Dear Supporters,

18th March 2016

Charles Wesley advised his followers to “do all the good you can, wherever you can, however you can, for as long as you can” and Sylvia has followed this to the letter. She always says that no one knows the future, which is quite true and her achievements have rested on a simple mix of faith, determination and hard work.

The school continues to give excellent pastoral care and a first class education to deprived deaf children. Numbers have gone up a little with an extra intake of older children who had been making little progress in the state system and some who have transferred to do their A levels in the absence of 6th form facilities elsewhere.

Dianne Ward has worked hard to ensure that all the new 2015 infant intake and some other, older new arrivals, have also been fitted with good quality hearing aids, leaving just two more classes to go.

Computer studies are going from strength to strength with huge enthusiasm from the children and the staff. The school website is now up; it is full of interesting material and is well worth a look at www.rmsdtvm.org.in

The Nursing College is running smoothly and continues to deliver another 20 caring nurses, every year, for work in Sylvia’s hospital and elsewhere. The authorities have reduced the course from three and a half to three years which may free up space to expand the numbers a little.

The Day Centres continue their remarkable and humbling service and, at last, the replacement Education and Therapy building is under way. The foundation stone was laid on Sylvia’s birthday, the 21st January and the building will be completed by the end of the year. It will accommodate 20 more children – 100 in total - and provide wonderful facilities and extra therapies. The children will have access to a small pool and to new physiotherapy, art and music rooms, kindly funded by Rotary.

Sylvia’s hospital is still busy and continues to give compassionate treatment to large numbers of poor patients.

However, many changes are in progress in the hospital itself and – at last - in government provision.

A new, large state hospital has now opened in Thiruvannamalai and the government itself now funds around a third of Sylvia’s hospital running costs. When Sylvia arrived in 1982, there was little or no medical provision. She has been bridging the gap which is at last steadily closing; a major success story.

In the medium term, the Trustees believe that the needs of children with disabilities and hearing problems will continue and eventually become greater than the need for our medical services.

At the same time, the Trustees are encouraging Sylvia to secure her legacy by improvements in local governance, by strengthening management and by planning for future succession.

We are also encouraging her to simplify her organisation and split it into two separate bodies – one educational and one medical.

Sylvia has had more visitors than ever in the last year, including Trustees, Gap Students, Student Nurses and other interested supporters. All have enjoyed the experience and become witnesses to the huge amount of good which is being done and the example which is being set. Visitors are always made welcome whether travelling with the Trustees in November or independently at any other time.

Sylvia herself will be visiting the UK in the second half of July and again we will be arranging a few small get togethers, offering a chance to talk to Sylvia more personally and hear her views on the future. During her visit, Sylvia still has a few slots remaining where she can visit and speak. If you would like to invite her, please contact our secretary John Howley who is looking after her schedule. Tel 0113 2673936

The Trust and our Action Group – SWAG - continue to give Sylvia both moral and financial support and we are fortunate to have so many loyal supporters and so much help from churches, schools and other groups. New members of SWAG are always welcome. The group meets in Leeds three times a year and is a great resource for many of the tasks which keep the Trust running smoothly.

Our speakers have been busier than ever with twenty talks in 2015 and with eleven more already booked for 2016. More engagements to spread the word are always welcome. There is no charge and no commitment. Please contact Anne-Marie Rose. Tel 0113 2685423

Bernadette Barnes, from Ripon, has joined the Trust with a special interest in promoting our links with schools and in educating and informing young people.

Sadly however, John Faulkner, former Trustee, Treasurer and Chairman passed away last month. John visited India several times with Margaret and worked tirelessly to develop the Trust and its links with his own church, St Andrews URC in Roundhay, Leeds. Many will remember especially John's fund raising climb of Kilimanjaro to celebrate his 60th birthday.

Sadly also, Frances Macaulay has also passed away. Frances and her husband Dennis were founder members of the Trust and Dennis was a most active Trustee and Treasurer, wisely and energetically steering the Trust during its formation.

May they both rest in peace.

Our next newsletter – with the usual photos will be out in June – in the meantime, do look at the SWT website which is always up to date and packed with information. www.sylviawright.org

In the meantime, a Happy Easter and as always my grateful thanks for your patient and loyal support

Tony Allinson (Chairman)