



# Old Leicestrian Newsletter



## Trinity 2011

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## From The Editor

SIMON REDMAN

Welcome to this first OLs newsletter for 2011. The articles cover a broad range of topics but as ever focus on the activities of ex pupils, be they professional or philanthropic. As an organisation we continue to support OLs in their global fundraising endeavours. This will continue, despite the pressure that comes with ever-increasing numbers of applications. We are also delighted to see the continuing academic, athletic, political and corporate successes of a number of our alumni.

In terms of events the past couple of years have been quiet, but a fundamental change in our structure means that this will soon change. Ron Berry is to develop a permanent role as Schools Liaison Officer, so we will have a permanent and dynamic

force generating interest and participation from the full spread of past year groups.

We have reached a point where there are significant numbers of pupils and imminent OLs with diminishing ties to – and recollections of – the old Peacock Lane site. This should not contribute to older past pupils drifting away and losing touch; year on year our community grows and using new technologies we intend to better connect this national and international social and professional collective in much the same way as longer established schools have been able to.

Please keep abreast of our events programme and look out for us on facebook and twitter.

## New OL School Liason Role

The School is pleased to announce that Ron Berry will be taking on the OL School Liaison role from September 2011. Ron is keen to get involved and is looking to build the standing of the OLs, with one of the first things being to put on an 2012 OL Dinner, which was such a success in the early years of the OLs. We are also looking to organise a get together to take a look round the old LGS St Nicholas building,

now St Martins House, now that it has undergone its dramatic transformation. You can read more about this project in Louise Oldridge's article, later in the newsletter. If you think you'd be interested in attending an OL Dinner or if you have any other ideas for events, please get in touch with us – [oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk) – we look forward to hearing from you.

Cowper Griffith Architects is based in purpose built offices near Cambridge. CGA prides itself on its ability to provide bespoke solutions to a brief, often reusing or responding to structures of historic significance.

Our diverse portfolio includes school and university buildings, offices, visitors' centres and a unique, highly regarded collection of substantial, one off residences, from the vernacular to the strikingly contemporary.

If you have a project you would like to discuss with us, contact us on Cambridge (01223) 835998 or email [simon@cowpergriffith.co.uk](mailto:simon@cowpergriffith.co.uk)



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## 2011 Events

### OL XI v 1st XI – Thursday 7th July 2011 – 2pm - 6.30pm



Not quite The Ashes but a chance to show your cricketing expertises against the School 1st XI. If you'd like to be involved email [oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:oldleicestrians@leicestergrammar.org.uk).

Or bring a picnic and spend the afternoon in the sun watching the match!

### Old Leicestrian Carol Service – Monday, 19th December 2011



Following on from the success of the service in December 2010 we will be

holding the Carol Service again. All OLs, their family and friends are invited.

Wine and mince-pies will be served in the refectory afterwards.

### Careers Convention: Thursday, 13th October 2011

Calling all OLs! Are you able to help us? Our last Careers Convention, held in 2009, was attended by over 60 exhibitors and we intend to build on that success this coming October. We would be delighted if your company or organisation would be able to join us for the evening or maybe you would consider representing your field of work and answering questions from students on your profession? The convention is open to students from Year 9 onwards so in some cases it is a first look at what is out there for students as they start to make decisions with regard to options, GCSEs and then A Levels.

If you are able to help out or would like any further information please get in touch via [englandk@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:englandk@leicestergrammar.org.uk). In exchange we can offer tea and an opportunity to have a look round the new site if you've not been before!

### News from the Music Department: Events Database

The school is setting up a music database which will enable those of you who are interested to be kept up to date with any music events. As you know there is a varied programme throughout the year and it would be great to see you and catch up with what you're doing. If you would like to be included on the mailing list please supply your email address to the Music Department Secretary, Patricia Pegg, at [peggp@leicestergrammar.org.uk](mailto:peggp@leicestergrammar.org.uk).

## Thanksgiving for Frederick Ernest Berry, 10 March 2011 at 3.30 p.m.

St. Cuthbert's Parish Church, Great Glen

*Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places."*

When Fred retired from his post as Leicester City Council Personnel and Management Services Director, the then Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Arch Berridge, said, "Fred has, and I expect always will have, a strong personality with very decided views on that function in local government he knows best – that of Chief Personnel Officer." This chimes with much of our knowledge of Fred, personally, professionally and in associations and friendships. He knew people's gifts. He summed them up. He placed them in their daily work in the hope and desire that they should flourish and find cohesion with others and fulfilment. In his 43 years of professional life, Fred opened for others doors to a multitude of rooms in the mansions of public service. Many must be grateful for his experience, his shrewdness and insight.

Fred began his Civil Service career in 1938 at the Admiralty in London, where, although they both hail from Plymouth, he and Sybil met for the first time. At the start of the Second World War, Fred's Admiralty Section was moved out of London to Bath. He volunteered, was trained in the Fleet Air Arm, and became a pilot. Soon he was withdrawn from that Service and posted to Washington D C to assist in setting up the British Admiralty Delegation there. During that five year spell, Fred and Sybil married in the Bethlehem Chapel of the Cathedral in Washington D C as most of the rest of the glorious building was still under construction. During this time Fred saw history being made when he was seconded to Winston Churchill's personal staff for the first meeting with President Roosevelt after the United States of America entered the war effort.

Returning to the Admiralty in London after the War, Fred subsequently joined A E G Portland in 1954. In 1960 he went to the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority as Senior Officer and was eventually

promoted to Head of Efficiency Services. He was placed to use all his gifts to the full – his attentiveness towards people of all kinds and all ranks coupled with the opportunity to get the best out of them individually and as an organisation. Fred then came to Leicester in 1967 as an Assistant Town Clerk, and was appointed to his final senior post in 1974. A "Leicester Mercury" newspaper article on Fred's retirement in 1981 tried to make political capital about "A senior officer serving Labour-controlled Leicester City Council to take up new post running a fee-paying school's business affairs". Fred commented on being appointed Bursar for the new Leicester Grammar School: "It is an exciting prospect – getting it off the ground and making a success of it. I like to pioneer and this was an opportunity to make use of my talents and experience that they would find helpful."

Just in the public handling of that situation, we can see the immense quality and complete integrity of the man. This was a pioneering task to open doors for others to enter and enjoy many rooms of education and fulfilment – a development task of ambition and expansiveness on a small budget, held, no doubt clearly and tightly, by Fred for the good of both schools, Leicester Grammar and Leicester Junior Grammar, and to provide a secure developmental basis for the professional success of all students, staff and colleagues. As well as "providing many dwelling-places" through his work on earth, Fred understood and put into practice another strategic concern of Jesus and his disciples: he set the direction of individuals and organisations, answering St. Thomas's famous question, "Lord, we do not know where we are going. How can we know the way?" Maybe because he had trained as a pilot, Fred always steered himself, others and organisations in the right direction. This skill may have started at an earlier age when, as a youngster, he found himself caring for his much younger sister, making sure she arrived at school on time and got home safely. His love for family and children grew and grew throughout his life. Our hearts go out to Sybil, Richard, Sue and their families in their sense of loss coupled with thanksgiving.

Fred was very interested in sport, playing table tennis to a very high standard, and surfing in Cornwall. He followed the fates and fortunes of Leicester Tigers, was into gardening, Do-it-yourself, music, opera and theatre. Sybil reports that, never previously having time to cook, Fred became very expert in providing delicious meals in his retirement. In his associations Fred was a Probus Club member, and at one time a Committee member of the Foresters. He was also an enthusiastic Freemason, a Past Master of the Gartree Lodge, a member of Temperantia Chapter in Leicester, a Past Provincial Senior Grand Deacon in the Province of Leicestershire and Rutland, and in Mark Masonry, a member of the Knights of Malta Lodge and Knights of Malta Royal Ark Mariners in Hinckley, and of Simon de Montfort Royal Ark Mariners in Leicester. The members of Masonic Orders are dedicated to bringing happiness and improvement into the life of their fellow human beings – and in this Fred was loyal, expansive, generous and thoroughly at home with the world.

In the same vein, throughout his working, home and volunteering life, Fred's great distinction lay in his love of other people. His professional life was dedicated to seeing into and, at times, through people, for their good and the welfare of organisations and society. In all his relationships, friendships and encounters, Fred would evince the closest attention to others and bring the best out of people and

prospects – a man with power not for his own account but on behalf of the welfare of others. There is real and abiding humility here, before God and before his fellow human beings – an immense spiritual gift which Fred shared so amply with all. Fred possessed a down to earth acceptance of reality and a determination to work with it to bring about freedom and integrity – true enabling for people's working and personal lives. I would call his determination, combined with openness to others, "humility with attitude". And it paid dividends in making a difference to many people's lives.

In the Letter to the Ephesians in the Christian New Testament there are words attributed to St. Paul that speak of this godly ambition. I thought of them when visiting Fred in his incapacity in hospital where, from extreme weakness and vulnerability, his affection, integrity and resilience shone brightly: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

May Fred Berry rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

*Canon Michael Wilson*

## Old Leicestrian XI v First XI

Thursday, 8th July, 2010

Following on from the success of the cricket last year we were again able to field a side to take on the 1st XI. Despite a strong opening innings the OLs were unable to defend their win from last year and were outscored. The OL team was kindly assembled by Michael Potter and it was good to see some new faces including Mr Geldard making his first return back to LGS.

Thank you to the OLs who played and to the small band of OLs who turned up to support.

If you'd like to play next time we take on the 1st team then please drop me an email and we'll contact you nearer the time.



## Bike Ride

FAB ROSE (OL '06)

In 2008 at 20 years old I was living in Slatina, Romania when I suffered from a Subarachnoid Haemorrhage or a bleed on the brain. I collapsed in the park and when I eventually came round had no speech or sight and was completely paralysed, essentially a barely useful brain inside a useless body. I remember being lifted dead weight into an ambulance and I was taken to the local hospital. To cut a long story short I was eventually taken on the 3 hour drive to the capital, Bucharest in an ambulance. My family descended, although my dad had to get back from a boat in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean so he missed most of the action! The only option was to operate giving me a 50/50 chance of survival. During the 4 hour operation they shaved all my hair off (with a bic razor...), found the artery that had burst due to the aneurysm and placed two metal clips across the hole. They stapled me back up and I spent the next 10 days in intensive care and on the ward.

Fast forward 9 months and I am at university studying for a Nursing degree when I collapse. After various tests, procedures and hospital transfers we are told that I have another aneurysm but this one is a giant fusiform on the mid-cerebral artery (MCA). Clipping was not an option but surgery was necessary. After a lot of research and second and third opinions we found Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge with Mr Kirkpatrick and his team. Within a week I was on a ward waiting to go in for bypass surgery where they would remove a vein from the length of my lower leg, attach it to the common carotid artery in my neck then bypass to a part of the MCA that was healthy. This was not an easy ride. The first bypass did not work which meant 2 days later I had to go in again for another bypass using a vein from the other leg. This also failed and eventually it was left to the radiologist to finish the job with everyone crossing their fingers that the collateral blood supply in my brain could cope with my MCA being cut off completely. As I am female I think my body was quite happy to accept platinum coils filling up my MCA so it decided to play ball and finally the problem was



solved. Mr Higgins and Mr Kirkpatrick went above and beyond in treating me and I know how lucky I am to be here to tell the story.

I am telling you all of this because on 21st May 2011 along with my sister and brother-in-law, Sylvie and Justin, my parents and 8 other people I will be doing the Century Cycle Challenge (<http://www.centurycyclechallenge.co.uk/>). We will be cycling 102 miles from Nevil Holt to Brancaster in ONE day! We are all at different levels, some of us haven't been on a bike for years, others do spinning twice a week or have replaced the car with the bike and one of us has had brain surgery 3 times in the past 3 years....but who's counting!! We are all coming together to do this no matter how fit we are or are not! How we managed to rope this many people into it I'm not sure but there was a fair amount of peer pressure, some might say bullying! Rest assured that this will continue in the form of training suggestions and nutritional advice over the coming months!

We are raising money for Addenbrookes Neurosurgical Ward (<http://www.act4addenbrookes.co.uk/>) to contribute to a portable CT scanner. It can currently take up to one hour for a staff member to take a very sick patient down to the static scanner. The portable scanner can

be used at the bedside in a ward, in theatre or in intensive care. It is urgently required. We would love for nobody to have to go through what we've all gone through, but that's not achievable. What is achievable is to make the team's job easier so that they can diagnose and treat quicker.

You already know where this is going, yes, it's another begging letter which I'm sure

that you all have a pile of. This time I'm not going to apologise for asking because it is so close to my heart (and brain!?). We have set up a Justgiving Page and would ask that you take the time to visit it and any contribution, big or small will be greatly received: <http://www.justgiving.com/themenstrualcycles/>. If you have any questions then please feel free to email me on [ffabrose@aol.com](mailto:ffabrose@aol.com). THANK YOU!

## Everest Base Camp Trek 2010

JOE POSTLE (OL '09)

In my first term at Exeter University I applied to participate in the Everest Base Camp trek for Macmillan Cancer Support. I fortunately got a place on the team consisting of 11 other students and myself. Our aim was to raise over £15,000 for the charity by doing the trek, which meant we had to get fundraising fast!! We did everything from holding buckets in city centres, bag packing at supermarkets and selling tickets for club nights. As well as these we all wrote personal letters to businesses, family and friends in order to get as many donations as possible. The OL committee very kindly donated some money, which is already doing so much for people suffering from cancer.

After exams were over we soon headed to Kathmandu, Nepal and then to Lukla, which has a runway at a 7-degree angle and a 2000ft drop at the end! Here we met our guides and porters and started the 2 week trek! Day after day we walked through valleys and up mountains, constantly climbing one side of a mountain, only to descend down the other side to gain maybe 100m in height. Even though we were there in the monsoon season we were really lucky with the weather, only walking in rain twice! It was cloudy however, but when the clouds cleared and revealed the most awe-inspiring views it felt much more rewarding, and we even saw Everest twice, which can't be seen from that many places surprisingly as its masked by other mountains! The effects of the high altitude and thinning air soon started to show with almost everyone, including the guides! People suddenly would feel really sick and



lightheaded and wouldn't be able to carry on for a short while. Fortunately though no one became too ill to have to stop the trek.

We reached Everest Base Camp on the 11th July and luckily had it all to ourselves, a very rare occurrence according to our guides. However it was so cold that we could only stay for 40 minutes. So cliché I know but we all felt such a strong sense of achievement and pride for making it, with the months of planning and fundraising it suddenly felt well worth all the hard work and effort to get there. Thank you so much to the OL society and from teachers and students for their donations! The current total is £14,500, however money is still coming in and we will hopefully make our target before our presentation evening with MacMillan later this year.

## St. Martin's House

LOUISE OLDRIDGE (OL '02)

A £3 million refurbishment of the old school St Nicholas building is now approaching a December completion date. As part of the wider Cathedral Square project the building is now known as St Martin's House, in association with St Martin's Cathedral, and will be used for conferences and events, community involvement and as a new diocesan and Cathedral offices. Readers may be interested to hear that the Bishop of Leicester, the Rt Rev Tim Stevens, will hold his personal meetings in our old Latin room 9! An artist's impression shows what the room will look like.

As a former Leicester Grammar School pupil I was delighted when my employer J H Hallam (Contracts) Ltd was awarded the contract. Founded in 1922 we are a family owned and run regional construction firm and are very pleased to be part of the team involved in remodelling this very prominent building at the heart of Leicester's heritage. Managing Director John Hallam reports that "As a local company, we were extremely happy to have been awarded the contract which in the current financial climate will help to safeguard the employment of our local workforce". Hallam Contracts previously completed refurbishment works on Thatcher Hall in 1987 and are currently working on the sixth form centre at the new Leicester Grammar School site.

The new, contemporary face of St Martin's House is designed to reflect its outward mission. Diocese Project Director, Reverend Peter Hobson told me that "There are three key values behind the overall project: generous hospitality, transforming relationships and attentiveness to God. As one way of addressing these there will be a purpose-built Outreach Centre, supporting work with asylum seekers and with young people. The building will also house around 50 members of staff who work for the diocese and Cathedral, and as well as a place for our own community and activities, St Martin's House will contain



space for other community groups and businesses to lease and work from".

Architectural practice Pick Everard has designed St Martin's House to blend existing buildings with a modern extension, providing a welcoming glass entrance as its focal point. The refurbishment nature of the development involves little structural work and the building will retain key architectural features including the wainscote panels and doors, with the Great Hall changing very little. Partner Duncan Green has worked closely with the Diocese to commit to a highly sustainable design approach. A range of eco-friendly features which include a heat recovery system have been accompanied by a keen recycling effort during the works. Stone, wood and furniture have been recycled elsewhere in the parish and St Martin's House itself, such as the stone window frames.

Reverend Peter Hobson is also keen to maintain the school's historic links with Leicester Cathedral. In the future it is hoped that we will once again be able to meet for a reception in what is now to be known as the Grand Hall after our annual Old Leicestrian Carol Service. St Martin's House should be in use for the community by the end of January next year, with the official opening due to take place on 10th June.

# OL starts Consultancy in City

AARON YATES (OL '05)

In November 2004, whilst playing the LUCAS "guess your future" game, my father helped make my University choice much simpler by taking an AA road atlas, drawing a hundred mile circle around Leicester and identifying, in no uncertain terms, that I wasn't allowed to live within it for the next four years. In a roundabout manner this led me to the University of Plymouth in September 2005 to read for a degree in Multimedia Production and Technology. Having survived fresher's week,

more inline with what I wanted to do, subjectively based on a total lack of math and 9am lectures. Four years later I graduated with a 1:1 (BSc Hons), a year's industrial experience in London (Telephony in Broadcasting - Sky One, MTV, Channel 5 etc), many great friends, and a tonne of commercial and academic experience under my belt.

In June 2009 I was exceptionally fortunate to roll straight out of University and into an

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hello@berea.eu

**As businesses face a further downturn in the economy, here's a few questions to ask yourself.**

- Do I want my business to make savings and increase turnover?
- What small changes can I make to quantifiably increase the profitability of my company?
- I was sold a web site, but I don't know how it's actually supposed to benefit my company?
- To what percentage am I reliant on the Internet for the profitability of my company?
- Are the marketing agencies we use committed to bettering our bottom-line?
- Do we have the experience and knowledge required to instruct our marketing agency?
- Is there a trusted company out there that can really help me solve these problems?

**How can we help your business?**  
If you ticked any of the boxes on the left, you should be contacting us immediately. Berea are a business management consultancy specialising in Online Marketing, and we're available 24/7 to answer all of the aforementioned questions and many more.

**Who have we worked with?**  
Berea have had the pleasure of working with a number of well established Leicestershire companies such as Spearing Waite Solicitors, Qdos Consulting, Cawrey Homes, Plink Estate Agents, Lions Rampant Clothing and the European Safety Bureau, among many others. Please see our web site for testimonials.

**What to do next:**  
Call us today on 0116 2873600 for an informal and entirely confidential chat on how we can help your business. Alternatively, visit our web site for further service information, testimonials and more.  
<http://www.berea.eu>

P.S. THE DIRECTORS WOULD LIKE TO THANK U.S FOR A GREAT START IN LIFE, AND SEND THE BEST OF LUCK TO EVERYONE HEADING THROUGH THE NEW CAMPUS.

I was informed at my induction lecture that, every Monday morning at 9am, I would have to climb a 7-storey building for 2 hours of math. I dropped out of the course within 30 minutes, tuition fee cheque in hand, and found the nearest pub to figure out my options - very close to the point of deciding University might not have been the best route for me. A cheeky couple of pints later, Dutch-courage for the inevitable phone call to the parents, I bumped into some friends from Halls of Residence whose course, Digital Art and Technology, sounded much

incredible position as a Digital Strategist with one of Leicester's quickest growing marketing agencies. For 13 months I had the great pleasure of working with and advising PepsiCo UK brand such as Copella, Monster Munch and Scott's Porage, besides a raft of other wonderful clients. During these 13 months, my main observation was that marketing agencies are great for large businesses; everything fits together at their economy of scale. Small to medium sized companies, however, were trying new tactics on a monthly basis, with no systems in place

to quantify ROI and no accountability or responsibility for the different marketing projects underway. With this realisation in hand, I established Berea Associates in July 2010, a marketing consultancy dedicated to restoring sanity in digital (online/internet) marketing for SMEs, our sole objective being to demystify the industry and help these organisations grow – quantifiably – through advice they previously couldn't afford without hiring their own digital marketing manager. Just to plug here, our main services to this end are our Audit/Strategy product (providing instant marketing cost savings, increasing enquiries, and providing a bespoke strategy for utilising social media, besides many other benefits), our Digital Project Management capacity (where we can act as an outsourced digital marketing manager – all of the experience and none of the employee overheads), and Social Media Consultancy (where we advise and train

companies on how to use social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter to expand brand awareness and further grow sales). This brings me to November 2010, where we've proven some great products and acquired some amazing clients. Looking back, the last half a decade has been brilliant, though quite different from the future the LGS Careers Department forecast for me as a Golf Green Keeper. If anyone has ever found out how repeatedly drawing a squiggly line determined your profession, or if you've actually ended up in the one guessed for you, I'd be really interested in reading your story! Either way - if you'd like to know more about how Berea can help your business grow (at special OL rates), please feel free to look us up at <http://www.berea.eu>, or call us on 0116 2873600 and ask for Aaron.

*Aaron Yates, Managing Director, Berea Associates Ltd. November 2010*

## Trip to Kenya - August 2010

ALISON FAIRE (OL '07)

In August this year I, along with 20 other students from Cardiff, Warwick and Manchester University's, set out to undertake a two week program in Kisumu, Western Kenya with the charity 'Kenyan Orphan Project' (KOP). Having each reached our individual fundraising targets; running, climbing, cake selling, bag packing and even bungee jumping, we were to be given the huge privilege of visiting the projects and meeting those supported by the charity. KOP was set up by three medical students in 2001 and currently supports two primary schools, two feeding centres, VIMA; an organisation offering home-based care to 37 orphans, and HOVIC; a day centre for street children. Kisumu is Kenya's third largest city and is in its second poorest province, Nyanza, 15% of the population have HIV/AIDs (over double the national average).

During the first week we visited several of the projects in small groups. One memorable day involved a trip to HOVIC, which caters for over 120 of Kisumu's 2000 street children; providing them with two meals a day, education, counseling and health support. Within minutes of entering we were surrounded by very welcoming and enthusiastic boys, all of which were so keen to talk, share experiences and learn about our culture. I was shocked by the knowledge of some of the younger children who were asking my views on topics such as politics and abortion! Later on in the week our student team was thrashed by the younger



boys from the centre in a very entertaining football game, much to the amusement of our Kenyan spectators!

All of the medical students on the trip were also given the opportunity to visit Kisumu's provincial and smaller district hospital; both of which were a stark contrast to our hospitals in the UK. Patients must pay for treatment, although the hospitals are government run, with prices clearly displayed by the entrance and throughout the wards. The doctors and nurses appeared to do a fantastic job with the resources available although space and equipment were very limited; the majority of patients were sharing beds. In the district hospital we saw numerous cases of Malaria and malnutrition, all of which could have easily been prevented with cheap mosquito nets and basic food; a very mellowing experience.

We spent the second week in Kunya Primary School; the project specifically supported by

money raised by Cardiff students. KOP supports a feeding program in the school; which provides over 600 pupils with two meals a day. The school grows as much as possible in its own sustainable garden and sources all other food and staff locally to help boost the local economy. Over the week we taught the older classes on subjects such as nutrition, HIV and gender equality in order to broaden the community's knowledge of such issues. Regardless of the school's external support conditions were still basic; the youngest children are taught in mud buildings and therefore must learn outside in windy weather; a five year old was killed

recently when a nearby school's classroom collapsed.

Although class sizes can reach up to 100 the children remain incredibly willing to learn and are extremely well behaved.

Whilst in Kenya we also enjoyed a day of Safari at Nakuru National park and a visit to the impressive Kit Mikayi rocks as well as plenty of time to socialize with each other and KOP's inspirational project partners. The experience was extremely enjoyable and at times incredibly humbling. I would like to thank LGS and The Old Leicestrian's for helping me to fund such an eye opening experience.

## Zambia 2010

ROSIE CAVILL (OL '09)



The most striking thing about the Zambian landscape, at least in the north near the copperbelt region round Ndola, is both how flat it is, and how this very flatness sits so strangely against the huge outcrops of rock which occur every now and again. I know this because I saw a lot of it. The journey from Lusaka, Zambia's bustling but boring capital to Ndola, its more industrial second city, took us 5 hours along surprisingly good roads.

This summer I spent a month in Zambia, working for two weeks at a charity in Ndola and following that travelling for a further two weeks. The grant from the OL fund helped me to pay for this, what was one of the very best experiences of my life.

Our first two weeks in Ndola were very busy. A group of people from my university church went to work with the Jubilee Centre, a partner of Christian charity Tearfund. The Jubilee Centre was incredible. They work through a series of partnerships with a lot of churches in the region, helping to facilitate and upkeep feeding projects, schools, pastors' businesses, youth work, churches themselves and support for people with AIDS. They also run a child sponsorship programme and work with more national

partners too. The organisation itself is quite small, with only a handful of full time workers. However, they have many volunteers and the pastors who they work with are so willing to give up time and energy.

This was one of things that struck me most about meeting these people. The way in which they were ever willing to be generous with everything they had. One pastor and his wife could only see each other every 3 months because she had to live in Lusaka earning money for them to live off because his ministry in one of the poorest communities in the area earned nothing. Another pastor who'd been given a grant by the charity to set up a business so that his large family had an income told us how when people came for encouragement in times of need to his house, he, knowing he had bags of grain (the only thing bringing any money to the house, and their food source) in the other room, would give it out to his congregation. We went into a village one day for the whole day and helped to cook a traditional meal and, though we were probably more of a hindrance than any sort of help (none of us were good at stirring the nshima - maize meal, a dietary staple), they still offered to share their food and even pray for us at the end of the day. Everywhere we went we were welcomed particularly at the churches.

People at these who we met during the week were mostly unemployed and often ill or hungry. Yet looking round the church on a Sunday you would never have guessed. The worship in those churches was the loudest and most exuberant I've ever seen and there was such a sense of joy. I had the privilege of preaching at one church on the joy of God's grace, and it was such an infectious happy atmosphere. It was definitely one of the

highlights of the trip for me, standing up in front of this congregation and really feeling that we all had something to celebrate regardless of our day to day lives.

There were of course some sad aspects of the trip too. We spent one day at a feeding project playing with the children, a lot of whom were surprisingly good at English. They were amazing at just being children and playing and it was so much fun, but a lot of them were orphaned by AIDS and had TB or were starving. They were only on the programme because they were classed as vulnerable children in the first place. You would never have known seeing them dance and sing and watch our appalling puppet show and songs with actions, but there were sad stories for all of them.

Another day we met a woman suffering from AIDS. She was too weak to work and her husband was dead, but her and her 7 children and 2 grandchildren were being supported by the centre and, on the drugs which the government give free, she was

recovering. We all found our conversation with her very powerful. She was so trusting the Lord's provision, and so grateful for the Jubilee Centre's help. I always assumed that AIDS was a hopeless situation, but there in that house we saw that this wasn't the case at all. It was so encouraging to see such sickness, and poverty and trouble in other areas and yet to still see so much hope.

That is what I will most take away from this trip; a strong sense of the resilience of humankind, and an even stronger sense that spiritual wealth is far preferable to all the money and possessions in the world. I met so many people who had so little but were so willing to give up even that. I saw a huge amount to fill me with joy. There was a lot of sadness, but an overpowering joy and trust in God which really challenged me.

I want to thank the OLs for giving me a grant which enabled me to fund this trip. It has been a really important time in my life and I will never forget it.

## Medical Elective, Australia

CAITLIN SCOTT (OL '06)

The most eagerly anticipated part of medical school is undoubtedly the opportunity to study medicine abroad as an Elective. With funding assistance from the OLs, this summer I embarked on my elective to Australia for three months. The first couple of weeks I spent living and working in a remote Aboriginal community called Indulkana, located just off the Stewart Highway in the north of South Australia. The community had a population of around 250 people, with a clinic staffed by one doctor and two nurses. The remote location meant that the clinic would manage a whole variety of complaints, from trauma and infections, through to chronic disease and psychiatric complaints. Anything requiring more intensive management would be evacuated to the nearest town of Alice Springs via the Royal Flying Doctors Service. I found living in Indulkana a rewarding but very challenging experience, as the standard of health and living in general was so much lower than would be expected within a wealthy developed country like Australia. I not only learnt a lot of medicine during my time there, but also a lot about the socioeconomic, political and historical influences on the health of the Aboriginal population. For the second part of my elective, I ventured to Australia's capital, Canberra. The experience of medicine here, in a busy university hospital, was a stark contrast to that of Indulkana.



After I completed the clinical aspect of my elective, I was joined by my sister, and fellow Old Leicestrian, Angharad, and we went off to explore some more of Australia. We loved the busy vibrancy of Sydney, with its quintessentially Australian laid-back character and sunny climate. Also the (much wetter) city of Melbourne, which has an eclectic European-style café culture, combined with a strong Asian influence in its restaurants. Other enduring memories for us include watching the penguin parade at Phillip Island in rain so torrential we could hardly see the penguins, and almost getting swept off to sea along the Great Ocean Road by similarly inclement weather. Despite an extremely long 24 hour flight home sat next to two toddlers and significant jet-lag for the next week, Australia is a place we will both be visiting again in the future.

I would like to thank the OLs for their generous support with funding.