

A YEAR OF PROGRESS AT THE HOME

After three years of greater or lesser disruption due to the Covid-19 epidemic, life at the Home returned to something like normality in 2023. That does not mean that there have not been other challenges, as you can read in News from the Home, but the Home has benefitted from sound leadership from a competent and committed local Committee.

There have been few surprises for the Trust this year, and its business has run smoothly under the control of our Administrator, Katharine. Since the sad death of Annabel Buchan three years ago, we have been only four Trustees,

whilst our constitution allows for up to nine. In past Newsletters, we have often asked you, our donors and supporters, for an expression of interest in becoming a Trustee. We repeat that request here. We very much want to add one or two new Trustees to provide their insights and judgement to help us in our two fundamental roles: representing our donors and providing support, and advice where appropriate, to the people responsible for running the Home.

The Trust has no employees, so everything involved in its running is carried out by the volunteer Trustees and Administrator.

The time commitment for the Trustees is not great: we aim to hold two formal meetings each year, as well as informal contact when needed. Particularly since Covid, we are more familiar with holding meetings online. This means that we are less concerned about finding Trustees who either live in the London area or who are willing and able to come into London for meetings. There is no particular skill set that we are lacking, but clearly experience in disability issues would be of great value, and knowledge of corporate governance, finance or information technology is always useful.



NEWS FROM THE TRUST

It has been a busy year for the Trust and there has been a lot of involvement by the Trustees. We have dealt with Trust business mostly through informal communication by email or online meetings. When a formal Trustees' meeting has been called for, we have met face to face, but with one or two Trustees attending online.

We take care to exercise oversight, on behalf of our donors, of the use of their donations by the Home. Ideally, this would involve a visit to the Home, but none of the Trustees has been able to visit this year. We have, however, kept in regular contact with the local Committee, as well

as reviewing the detailed monthly financial reports they send us. The Chair of Trustees and the Treasurer have held Zoom meetings with the Committee every three or four months. These have been well attended by all the Committee members, who are very open in exchanging information with us.

Trust made an extra donation of \$1000 to the Home last December to help them pay for Christmas celebrations and gifts for the residents and staff. We shall do the same this year. We have tried to keep friends and donors informed about the Home through the News page of the website <https://www.anitagoulden.org/>



FINANCE

The Trust has no employees, and the Trustees and Administrator are all unpaid volunteers. Except for some small costs, such as bank, auditing and printing charges, all the donations we receive go toward meeting the costs of the Anita Goulden Home. Since the Trust has no large endowment to provide investment income, we rely exclusively on regular donations and legacies. The Trustees do aim to retain sufficient funds in reserve to provide some assurance that we will be able to continue supporting the Home for the medium term, despite inevitable fluctuations in donation and legacy income. Recent increases in interest rates mean that we have been able to invest some of these reserves to provide worthwhile additional income.

The Committee in Piura has done an excellent job of raising local support and donations in kind now cover a large proportion of their requirements for food, other supplies, medicines and medical treatment. Local donations in cash, however, are extremely low. For those items that must be paid for in cash, such as salaries, taxes and services, the Home depends almost exclusively on the Trust. In the current inflationary environment, it is probable that the Trust will need to increase the amount that it donates to the Home. Our Donors can be assured that, without their continuing support, the Home would be unable to survive and provide a home and therapy for its, often severely, disabled residents.



Christmas presents

NEWS FROM THE HOME

There is now more stability in the management of the Home. The current Manager, Maria del Carmen Moscol, has been in post for more than two years. Her appointment followed the departure of the former Manager in difficult circumstances in 2020, followed by a period under an interim manager. There is no doubt that the management problems had a great deal to do with the extreme difficulty of keeping the Home running during the Covid pandemic. Lockdowns, travel restrictions and residents and staff falling ill with Covid severely disrupted working schedules. There may be some issues with payment for out-of-hours working still to be resolved.

Whilst 2023 raised no Covid-related issues, some serious challenges were thrown up by the weather. A threatened cyclone early in the year eventually by-passed Piura, but heavy rains across the region caused rivers to break their banks and produced widespread flooding, including in Piura itself. Fortunately, the Home is outside the area affected by flooding and the structure of the Home is sound and withstood the downpours.

The disruption to transport, with a good part of the country's network of motorways, had a serious effect on the local economy. Despite this difficult context, the Home continued receiving donations in kind, although less than before the weather events.

The El Niño phenomenon continued to cause flooding in Northern Perú through the middle of the year and a collateral effect of this was an outbreak of dengue fever. Seven residents and some members of staff suffered dengue, as did the accountant who prepares the financial statements. Happily, they all recovered.

The Committee has been seriously concerned about the political situation in Peru and the risk that it poses both to the economy and to security in the country. Following the removal of President Castillo in December 2022 there was a widespread and violent popular uprising, including in areas close to Piura. The unrest had a serious

impact on the economy, particularly the important mining and tourism sectors. The violence was eventually controlled, but the government, under current President Boluarte, was accused of having used excessive force. Political instability looks likely to continue for some time yet.

The principal impact of this on the Home has been from rising inflation, particularly in food and other essentials. This has raised running costs and has given rise to demands from the staff for salary increases. The Committee met salary demands in part by making a one-off payment to all staff in April, but we believe the issue to remain unresolved and that there is a risk that they will lose good staff who will be difficult to replace. As an example, one of their best therapists resigned for a better paid job in the middle of the year.

We had learned from the Trust's representative who visited the Home in late 2022 that there was a need for investment in domestic and medical equipment and in the fabric of the building. The Committee has been able to raise some local monetary donations and has made excellent progress in meeting these needs. They acquired a solar energy generator to reduce electricity consumption and they have replaced the old and unreliable washing machine, acquired scales, basins, medical mattresses and orthopaedic footwear and installed some security cameras. They had wanted to import a motorised hoist to replace the manual one that is used for moving immobile residents. Instead, they have upgraded the existing hoist by adding electric power. The building is still in need of repairs, particularly to the roof. A budget for this has been prepared and one of our donors has generously made a special donation to help with the cost.



On the way to visit Piura University

Following the end of Covid, the usual routine of outings for the residents and visits of volunteers to the Home has been resumed. Father Garnique, a local priest, provides spiritual support to the residents and, with young volunteers from the University of Piura, visits them regularly to entertain them and raise their quality of life. Students from other local colleges also visit the Home to help with the residents.

There is also, once again, some turnover of residents, with some returning to



Birthday celebration for Esperanza and Gefferson

families and others entering the Home. New residents include a girl of 13 and a 5-year-old boy with a hydrocephalus shunt valve. Two residents were taken out by their families, who preferred to have them at home and collect the 300 soles every two months of assistance provided by the government in exchange for outpatient treatment. There are 14 current residents, all of whom have their own, personal orthopaedic equipment, such as shoes, wheelchairs and anti-pressure-sore mattresses. The nearby Santa Rosa hospital continues providing transport when residents need to be seen at their facilities. The two residents who are able to attend a local special school had to interrupt their attendance during Covid and received some instruction from a teacher who came to the Home. They are now attending the school again.

The Committee came to the end of its 2-year mandate in September and a new Committee was elected from among the 20 or so members of the charitable Association that runs the Home. Great credit is due to the outgoing Committee and especially to its Chair, Sra. Lola Santivañez, for having successfully dealt with many difficult issues during their tenure. The new Committee is led by Sra. Rocio Aguinaga, a banking executive. The



Students visit the Home

Chair of Trustees and the Treasurer have already met with them online and were impressed by their energy and obvious commitment to the Home. The meeting was also attended by Sra. Anita Mollet, our long-established adviser in Piura, who had worked closely with Anita Goulden over many years. The new Committee has professional experience in finance, administration, accounting and social work and is looking forward to further improving controls and administration.

SPREAD THE WORD

When you have read this newsletter you might like to pass it on to your neighbours or friends who would be interested in hearing about the Trust and its work in Piura. Further copies can be obtained from the address below.

WILLS

We benefit greatly from legacies so do consider mentioning the Trust when you make or update your Will.

GIFT AID

You can download a form from our website very easily. You can also send a donation via the website through our new system called Charity Checkout. Do please use this method of sending donations as it is so easy.

Please let the Administrator know if your income tax circumstances change which might affect Gift Aid donations.



Jhon receives a new wheelchair from his "madrina", a local supporter of the Home



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