

Welcome to our winter edition of The Esperanza Trust (Argentina) newsletter. I expect, for most of us in the UK, thoughts have now turned to Christmas and the busyness that goes with this time of year.

As we approach the end of 2017 we wanted to take the opportunity to look back over the year. It was a significant year for us as we celebrated 20 years as an organisation. It has been encouraging to reflect on, and take stock of what we have been able to achieve in SdE. with your generosity, and an abundant helping of God's grace and kindness.

Claire and Laura Griffiths took another trip to SdE and have shared tales and pictures from their adventures. And here in London, we have just had our final fundraising quiz of the year with what many agreed, were some of our toughest questions yet!

Wherever you are and whatever you are doing this Christmas, we wish you all a joyful time and a happy and healthy new year.

From us all at The Esperanza Trust (Argentina)

Celebrating 20 Years

Our founder and trustee Rodney Bennett the son of missionary parents was born and raised in Santiago del Estero, in the North of Argentina. It was some 37 years after leaving before he returned. On revisiting the province, he was shocked at the poverty he found. Motivated by this and knowing that he had to do something, he along with other family and friends created The Esperanza Trust (Argentina). This year The

The first one took place way back in January in Cobham Village Hall in Surrey and was very kindly organised by several friends of the Trust. Around 60 people joined together to enjoy traditional Argentine music, dance, refreshments and see and hear more about the work in SdE. It was a truly celebratory occasion.

Our second event took place in April and in Richmond. We were thrilled to be joined by trustees past and present and many folk who have supported our work from the beginning. Friendships were refreshed and new bonds created. We heard from our chairman Robert Lucas about why he first became involved in Esperanza so many years ago and has remained involved for so long. Robert spoke of his visits to SdE in Argentina in 2005 and 2010. He saw a country with so much potential if only a decent education could become available for more of the young people. He continues to believe that Esperanza is making a difference and is thrilled that so many children have received scholarships which will enable them to make a difference.

We heard from Norman, one of our current trustees about his long relationship with Esperanza. Norman too had the privilege to visit SdE and like all those who take the long journey, he came back warmed by the generous welcome and convinced of the importance of



the work being carried out there by The Trust.

Laura and Claire shared with us their particularly strong bond with the area and people of SdE, and the family connections with Argentina and Esperanza which makes the work so meaningful to them. We feasted on both British and Argentine cakes and gave thanks for God's faithful provision over the years.

We are always excited to get updates from our friends in SdE and we are equally excited when our friends and trustees from England and Northern Ireland can visit the province and bring back news of the work there.

This summer Laura and Claire made another visit together to the province and brought back news and greetings which we are pleased to share with you.



Trust celebrated its 20th anniversary. 20 years of supporting projects, supporting children through school and building a supportive relationship with a part of Argentina that is often forgotten. In recognition and thankfulness for this we had not one but two celebrations, one for each 10 years!

News from Santiago del Estero

Brea Pozo school has been supported by The Trust for many years now. On visiting Laura spoke of the wonderful welcome received from both the teachers and children.

"What a very special place with the most endearing children. While the classrooms are small we never failed to notice verses of scripture brightly displayed on the walls. The Christian ethos throughout the school is so strong which is wonderful. I was moved to tears as I listened to all the children reciting the bible verse of the week, right at the start of every day, before lessons commenced! How encouraging to know that The Trust not only helps with the education of the children but also to know that the love of Christ is shared with

them! It was good to see the "tinclado" roof completed which will provide a fabulous, protective outdoor area for the children when the temperatures soar in the summer time. We left with glad hearts knowing that young lives are being nurtured in faith and knowledge"

Several children attending The William C Morris school are helped by scholarships provided by The Trust. During Claire and Laura's visit they spent time talking to 4th and 5th year students (16,17 year olds) about why they were in SdE, their family connection to Argentina and about the history and ongoing work of The Trust. The students were engaging and inquisitive asking lots of questions. At a meeting The School Principal was moved to tears as she shared how grateful she was to be able to work for another year in the school when she thought she would have to retire. Visiting the nearby nursery school in the town, Laura reported how encouraging it was to see the good and necessary improvements that were being made to meet the needs of those children who have disabilities.

Although the Colegio Alfredo Furniss was

closed for mid term break when Laura and Claire visited they had the opportunity to meet and chat to many people connected with the school and local churches. Wherever they went they were made to feel welcome and felt assured of the difference that Esperanza has made.

"One lady told us that her son had received a scholarship to attend the Alfredo Furniss college and she was very grateful to God and The Esperanza Trust for the opportunity he had been given".



The Esperanza Quiz

Twice a year now, for quite some time we have held a quiz in Richmond as a way of raising funds for The Trust. It is always popular and has become quite competitive amongst some of our regular attendees. Rodney is our capable quiz master and despite challenges from the floor on some of the more obscure questions, he

remains unwavering throughout. Our winners this time went away with the ever-popular Dulce de Leche and tins of Dulce de Membrillo. Thanks to those who came along making this another fun evening.



Don't forget!

As you embark on your Christmas shopping, don't forget you can support The Esperanza Trust (Argentina) with your online shopping by visiting www.givingabit.com. Many major retailers are available through this website and with every online purchase made a small percentage will be donated to the charity of your choice. It is easy to register and make The Esperanza Trust (Argentina) your chosen charity. Thank you!

And finally...

As you cosy up in front of the fire this Christmas spare a thought for our friends in SdE who may well be seeking a fan or a shady spot to shelter from temperatures, which can be as high as 40 degrees in December!

Heartfelt thanks from all at the Esperanza Trust for your on-going generosity during 2017, and from the people in Santiago del Estero whose lives continued to be touched by your support.

Christmas blessings to you all.

THANK YOU