



the Charlotte Jones Memorial Tsunami Fund

Char's Fund is a memorial tribute to 23 year old Charlotte Jones, beloved daughter of Alan and Liz Jones and sister to Vicki who so tragically succumbed to the Asian Tsunami on December 26th 2004. A memorial statue stands at the headland of Siam Bay beach on the island of Ko Racha Yai, Thailand and there is a memorial tree and garden in the grounds of the Cittaviveka Buddhist Monastery in West Sussex. We will never forget her.

CHAR'S FUND NEWSLETTER, NOVEMBER 2008

Welcome to *Char's Fund* ninth quarterly newsletter. The Charity continues to support 13 school children and college students, aged between 13 and 18, with long-term educational bursaries at Muang Phuket School and Phuket College, Thailand. We have now raised £86,125 and the school has received directly into their bank account £10,675 in total so far. Each month £405 is sent and then apportioned amongst the children, giving them a monthly allowance to spend on school fees, books, school uniform, materials, transport and the like. Unfortunately the international financial crisis is now even affecting the Charity as the UK pound has fallen by some 20% in value this year against the Thai Baht.

Becky reflects on Char

Another one of our Trustees, Rebecca Bate, has now reflected on why she is a charity Trustee. This has been really really hard for Becky as she was with Char on Siam Bay beach that terrible day when the Tsunami struck and is thus a survivor of that terrifying catastrophe. This is what she has written: *"I've been asked to write something for the newsletter explaining why I'm a Trustee. To be honest, I'm not entirely sure. There's not one specific reason. Charlotte was my best friend, so I guess that's the main one. We both wanted to work for charities when we came back from our travels. Unfortunately it didn't quite work out the way we expected. I'd like to say that the Charity is the positive that came out of the negative but sadly it's not that easy and it doesn't make it hurt less. I also help organise Onionfest and the monies raised through that go to Char's Fund. It's very emotional but thoroughly enjoyable and it's wonderful to see friends and family pulling together, giving up their spare time for such a fabulous event. Once that's over, people get back to their lives until next summer but, being a Trustee, I'm involved deeper where decisions are made and I have a say. I absolutely love helping raise the money and then seeing where it goes and whom it helps. It's a bizarre feeling – being elated to have done so well but so sad remembering why we're all doing it. By no means is being a Trustee a way of keeping Charlotte's memory alive. Charlotte will never die in my heart and will always be my best friend. However, she'd love the fact that there's a charity named after her and it does exactly what she would have wanted. Charlotte would have flipping loved it: Onionfest and the Charity!"*

Fundraising activities in 2008/9

As 2008 comes to a close, we now look ahead to charity activities coming in 2009. Alan and Vicki and her friend Kate will be running the *Reading Half Marathon* on the 29th March. Becky and some 8 friends will be doing a sponsored parachute jump on April 18th/19th with Skyline Promotions. *Onion Fest 2009* is now confirmed for Saturday 25th July. Looking back at this year, the Trustees would like to say a huge thanks to all those who have helped with fundraising, particularly the Onion Fest 2008 'committee'. Do please note pickies of *OF08* are now on the website. And just to let folk know that 'fresher' runners Tanya and Abby came in at just over 2 hours in the Great South Run and raised over one thousand pounds between them! And Alan finished the Windsor Half Marathon but ran his slowest time ever. He says this was because of the exceptionally warm weather that day... And at the Charity's AGM, the Trustee's did agree to explore in 2009 the possibility of Char's Fund also becoming active within the UK.

Thailand & Buddhism

Thailand is a strongly Buddhist country and its people are generally most wonderful. They also love their Royal Family and the sadness being felt over the death of the King's sister will be real. Liz, Vicki and Alan will be returning next month to meet the children once more and will be on Siam Bay beach for the 26th December. Several Buddhist monks very kindly performed a ceremony in these waters where Char died, when Liz went looking for her in the chaos of January 2005. The kindness of the nuns and monks and the Abbott at Chithurst Buddhist Monastery have also been of great comfort to the Jones family, especially during the early period of mourning. Buddhism is a way of life that perhaps more people would benefit from learning more about. Understanding and knowledge of the Lord Buddha's Five Precepts and Four Noble Truths could certainly be worth exploring at this time of great uncertainty.

We are making a real difference to young lives in Thailand. Do please continue to support us. Thank you.

The Charlotte Jones Memorial Tsunami Fund. Charity Reg No: 1116217

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