



Kanchenjunga at Christmas



DR GRAHAM'S HOMES KALIMPONG (UK) - DGHUK

Charity Registered in Scotland SC 050985

Annual Newsletter

For the Year Ending 31st December 2023



The Occasional Obstacles



.... To Be Faced On Our Journeys Up To



..... The Homes!

Dr Graham's Homes Kalimpong (UK) - DGHUK

Charity Registered in Scotland SC 050985

Registered Office: Abercorn House, 79 Renfrew Road, Paisley, PA3 4DA

drgrahamshomes.co.uk

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AGM and Curry Lunch

The Royal Scots Club, 29 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh EH3 6QE

(planned for) Wednesday 15th May 2024 (date tbc)

We invite all our Members, Supporters and Friends to join us for an informative day of fellowship in Edinburgh at the DGHUK's Annual General Meeting and Curry Lunch

Coffee served from 10:15 ahead of AGM at 11:00

Curry Lunch at 12:45

You are very welcome just to turn up for the AGM, but please reserve your place for the lunch afterwards through our Committee Secretary, Frances Dent.

e-mail: secretary@drgrahamshomes.co.uk Tel: 01382 668700

Lunch cost £15 payable on the day

Frontispiece – Kanchenjunga at Christmas

Honorary Presidents

The Moderator of the General Assembly
The Church of Scotland

The Primus
Scottish Episcopal Church

Honorary Vice President Rev John G Webster

The Board of Trustees 2022–2023

Chair	James Gibson* 44 Aytoun Road, Pollokshields, Glasgow G41 5HN Tel. 0141 423 8290 e-mail: chair@drgrahamshomes.co.uk
Vice-Chair	Matthew Pears* 277 Crompton Rd, Macclesfield, SK11 8HB Tel. 07725 188643 e-mail: vicechair@drgrahamshomes.co.uk
Committee Secretary	Frances Dent 12 Glamis Drive, Dundee DD2 1QL Tel. 01382 668700 e-mail: secretary@drgrahamshomes.co.uk
Treasurer	Gordon Coupar* Braeriach, South Kingennie, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 3PA Tel. 07763 941036 e-mail: treasurer@drgrahamshomes.co.uk

Other Members of the Board of Trustees

Frank Dunn	Aileen Fraser	Anne Hoggan**	Shona Hume
Michael Jefferson	Esther Anne McCabe	Margaretta Purtil**	
Ian Russell	James TF Simpson	Patricia Simpson	

* *appointed May 2023* ** *retired Autumn 2023*

Committee Officers

Joint Sponsorship Secretaries	Ian and Anji Russell Hazelgrove, The Common, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8NS Tel. 01483 272108 e-mail: sponsorship@drgrahamshomes.co.uk
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External Appointments

Independent Examiner	MILNE CRAIG Abercorn House 79 Renfrew Road Paisley PA3 4DA	Solicitors	GILLESPIE MACANDREW 163 West Regent Street Glasgow G2 2JJ
	Bankers	BANK OF SCOTLAND 75 George Street Edinburgh EH2 3EW	

Editorial – Still Looking to Overcome Concerns; Still Looking to The Future!



We wrote in our last editorial piece of the on-going concerns of DGHUK at the many crises with which The Homes are faced – continually heightened by the fallout from pandemics and lockdowns – but now very much centred around lack of funds, pay disputes amongst teachers and other staff, decaying buildings and infrastructure. All of these, and more, place in jeopardy the future of The Homes, adding to the pressure on all concerned. Although these concerns were partially offset by better news about such matters as restoration of the Chapel, of classrooms and of cottages, the issues of concern are still very much with us all. The encouraging news today, however, is that at last we are beginning to see the fruits of the labours of the Joint Independent Review Committee assembled mid-summer last year to address the Recommendations set out in the earlier Independent Review Report. You will read in our pages of the steady progress being made by the JIRC particularly now that this team has expanded in personnel to include representation not only of DGHUK, GO and the Kolkata Board but has now involved the entire Membership of that Board; a voice – and a responsibility. If only the entire group could also embrace those whose voice is still at odds with that of the majority, then, surely, we could all go forward with even greater confidence!

Turning to matters practical, although it has not been possible to include a report on the progress of Chapel restoration in this Newsletter, things are moving forward on that front. The permanent steel strapping designed to secure the entire structure against future damage from earthquakes has now been installed and new roof cladding and timber repairs have, together secured the shell against ground movement and monsoon rain penetration - the building's two greatest threats! To further combat the very real threat to the building from the weather, the schedule of works includes "Reinstatement of the Windows". But that is really a "restoration" operation rather than one of a mere "reinstatement". We've spoken previously of the historic importance of the stained-glass and have made our concerns known to those in charge that window preservation is seen as an important matter of heritage as well as of practicality. There are signs that they are listening but it may well be that a temporary solution must be put in place whilst a longer-term plan – and extraordinary funding – is considered. We're hoping to bring you good news of the Chapel being back in operation and in full swing at its true role, as the beating heart of The Homes, by mid-summer next year.

You will also read of various appointments and changes amongst our Trustees and indeed of the retirement of two former Chairs of DGHUK. Thus we have re-run the Notice we placed in our Annual Report last winter inviting applications from anyone with a heartfelt interest in the work of The Homes to put themselves forward as potential Trustees. That invitation remains in place; do please consider joining our team and help look after the very needy children for whom our founder, Dr John Anderson Graham, "saw the need" a Century ago.

Now it is almost Christmas, so we are delighted to greet all supporters of Dr Graham's Homes and to wish you and your loved ones a Very Happy Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Jim and Pat Simpson - Editors
Trustees DGHUK

Message from New Chairman of DGHUK, Jim Gibson



I am honoured to have been elected as Chair of DGHUK and pleased to be able to offer some thoughts after six months in post, during which a lot has been happening behind the scenes. I have handed over the responsibilities of Treasurer to our newest Trustee, Gordon Coupar, and am continuing to liaise with him as further “loose ends” appear. We remain incredibly grateful to our faithful supporter base and I pass any Treasurer-related mail to him as soon as I receive it; could I ask supporters to send money-related communications direct to Gordon at the address noted on page 4.

As Chair I am following in large footsteps and I wish to extend my grateful thanks to Anne Hoggan, who has retired, having been Chair of our Board and in that capacity has, with great tact and sensitivity, steered the DGHUK ship through some troubled waters.



A good team spirit

The DGH Board has met three times since the AGM in May, twice by Zoom and once in London, in addition to which there have been meetings of subcommittees and of the Joint Independent Review Committee (JIRC). That Committee, of which three of our Trustees are members, is blessed with people who have great energy and dedication and is now starting to see progress in tackling the various tasks which are required to bring about improvement at the Homes.

Many of us were able to be present at John Webster's 90th birthday celebrations in June at the Khukuri restaurant near Haymarket in Edinburgh and it was also good to see some of our supporters joining us for tea and cake after our Board Meeting in London on 31st October.

We have been particularly grateful to have the input of Ian and Anji Russell at our Board meetings; their combined experience as teachers and educationalists both in UK and abroad has been invaluable. It was particularly sad that their planned visit to India in October and November had to be postponed because of monsoon damage to the roads and we look forward to hearing from them when they return from their annual visit to The Homes, now rescheduled for next spring.

Focussing on our core purpose

As I look ahead to the tasks before us, I reflect on our Core Purpose and Objectives; our Articles of Association state that our Charity is established for the following purposes:

to relieve the poverty of under-privileged, disadvantaged, and needy children through provision for their education and for their accommodation, upbringing, safeguarding and general care and welfare at Dr Graham's Homes, all in continuance of the legacy of Dr John Anderson Graham.

and,

to support the ongoing career development of young people, following completion of their time at Dr Graham's Homes, by providing for their maintenance, accommodation, and general welfare in Kolkata, or elsewhere, for a period of further education, apprenticeship, or training.

We hold to these Objectives, recognising that despite occasional obstacles we have a tremendous opportunity to make a difference to the lives of many young people.

It is said that the only constant in life is change, and that is just as true for DGHUK as for everyone else; these are some of the challenges with which we are faced:

Looking forward to challenges ahead

- We have a proud legacy from the past but that is no guarantee of a successful future
- Our supporter base is incredibly faithful, but needs impetus from a younger generation
- We need to think afresh about how best to raise funds and support The Homes in the UK, given that India has been able to put a rocket on the moon and is no longer a developing nation
- The infrastructure of the Homes campus is in constant need of maintenance and improvement
- Improving ways in which we can ensure effective liaison on sponsorship matters with colleagues on the ground at the Homes.

Given this background we have agreed to increase our support for our sponsored children, recognising that what we have been paying in recent years has fallen behind the "going rate". Accordingly, there is an onus upon us to increase our fundraising - and upon the BOM to maximise efficiency and improvements at the Homes, working alongside the JIRC and GO, the Alumni Association. Once into the New Year we will be sending more information about this.

In all these areas, we should be neither unduly optimistic nor pessimistic, rather, be realistic as we focus our efforts. Thank you all for your support.

Jim Gibson
Chairman, DGHUK

"..... Homes campus is in constant need of maintenance and improvement"



(Homes campus – not Machu Pichu!)

Our New Trustee Appointment

With our former Treasurer, Jim Gibson, taking on the role of Chair of DGHUK, your Committee has appointed **Mr Gordon Coupar** as our new Treasurer. Both new appointments – Chair and Treasurer – were approved and confirmed by the Membership at our 2023 AGM held in May of this year.



Gordon Coupar: “In May 2023, I accepted an invitation to join the UK Board of Dr Graham's Homes in the role of Treasurer, although it was 1st September before I picked up the reins. As a Chartered Accountant recently retired from private practice and with many years of experience in working for, and with, a variety of charities and not-for-profit organisations - several of these being youth-related - I believe that I have the skills required to serve our Charity in this role.”

“Although not aware of DGHUK before, my attendance at this year's AGM and subsequent Trustee meetings has confirmed the good work of which I had read and heard. Unlike many of my fellow Trustees, I have not yet had the privilege of visiting The Homes, something I would hope to rectify soon to deepen my understanding of the work of our Charity.”

Frances Dent

Committee Secretary, DGHUK

Message from Principal, Neil Monteiro



2023 turned out to be a better year not just for all of us at DGH but for Educational Institutions all over with academics and activities returning to almost normal after emerging from two years of the Pandemic. The Homes' year began with the Inaugural Service on Sunday, 12th February and the new academic session commenced the very next day.

That same month, our 2022 pupils sat their ICSE and ISC Board Examinations as usual, coming out with flying colours.

I am happy also to report that amongst the Prefects who were invested for the year 2023, were sponsored pupils Glenda Rosario, Christina Olive Samuel, Sanjay Gurung and Tum Yang.

Apart from academics - the core of the children's daily experience at The Homes - our students participated in a wide range of activities at different levels throughout the year. May Fair, held on Saturday 13th May, was a huge success with the highlight being the Maypole Dance after which Shelja Jain the School Captain was crowned May Queen. Abina Lepcha, a supported child, was one of the five Finalists.

Ever since the Council in Delhi launched the National Games, our Senior Volleyball Team has done extremely well. This year, too, they won at State Level and moved forward to play at the Nationals. Three boys, Nawang Thinley Bhutia, Ayush Chettri and Drishya Pradhan represented the CISCE Team at the National School Games at Indore earlier in the year.

DGH was also well-represented at the Inter-School Relay hosted by St. Augustine's School, our teams including sponsored children Nikita Fleming and Sharon Modi on the winning Girls team, whilst on our Boys team, which came in second, were Rohan Nazary and Rishab Sonar.

At the Platinum Jubilee Tournament, our Under-7-Years Basketball team lifted the Runners-Up Trophy. At the same event, Manuel Dungdung, John Roy, Joel Bhuiya, Steven D. Purkait, and Sylvester Brooks, more of our supported children, were on the School team, as too was Adrian Wells who was awarded Most Promising Player of the Tournament.

Dr. Grahams Homes is very proud of its National Cadets Corps (NCC) and, unlike other schools, The Homes has both Boys and Girls NCC Battalions. Marline Tiwari of Class 7 attended a very important NCC camp in Namchi, Sikkim, and we are very happy that she was judged Best NCC Cadet out of many hundred students. Marline also did well in the Inter-School Quiz.

Finally, I am extremely happy to report that Dr. Graham's Homes was honoured at The Telegraph School Awards for Excellence. DGH received The Ambuja Neotia Award for Excellence in Maintenance and Eco-Friendly Initiatives. Two of our students, Drishya Pradhan and Nawang Thinley Bhutia, received The TTEF Award for Excellence in Sports. Both of them represented the state of West Bengal and Northeast India at the National Level.



Now we are moving towards the winter vacation and the Yuletide Season, signalled by the red poinsettia - our "Going Home" plant - in full bloom across the campus and I take this opportunity to wish all our supporters a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I finish with the added good news restoration of the Chapel is nearing completion and early in 2024 we hope to see that building back at the heart of The Homes!

Neil Monteiro
Principal, Dr Graham's Homes



Our Homes' Pipes and Drums Entertain on Sports Day

(photo Pat Lomax)

DGHUK Committee Secretary's Report



Since the last Newsletter in May, there have been some changes amongst our Trustees and in their roles on our Board. Those of you who managed to come to the AGM in May will remember that Anne Hoggan stepped down as Chair, Jim Gibson moved from Treasurer to Chair and Gordon Coupar joined us as Treasurer and as a new Trustee. Since then, Matthew Pears has become the Vice Chairman and, more recently, Aileen Fraser has become our Safeguarding Trustee.

After stepping down as Chair, Anne continued as an active Trustee with special responsibility for Safeguarding. In October, however, she decided it was the right time for her to retire. She has been a Trustee since 2007 and Committee Secretary for eleven of those years, then Acting Chair and Chair for the best part of two years thereafter. We will all miss her efficient, friendly, and devoted service to DGHUK. Her motivation has always been to improve the lot of the children whom we support at the Homes and I'm sure she will still be doing that in other ways. Certainly, she continues in her loving support for her sponsored student, Rebecca, who will shortly be completing a post-graduate degree at college in New Delhi before embarking upon a career in Business Administration next summer.

Jim Gibson has been a most efficient Treasurer for eleven years and has made an apparently effortless transition into his new role as Chair. Our new Treasurer, Gordon, comes to us from a background of accountancy in Dundee, including working with several other charities. He has not visited India yet, but we hope that that can be rectified before too long. The Treasurer handover has been sufficiently seamless as to be virtually un-noticed by fellow-Trustees!

We have followed our usual pattern of meetings: Edinburgh in February and in May with our October meeting being held in London. This works well as Trustees are scattered from Stonehaven to Surrey. Any additional meetings are by Zoom. After the October meeting at St Columba's Church in London, we enjoyed getting together with several DGH supporters.

In addition to the full Trustee Meetings, Sub-groups meet to discuss Safeguarding, Sponsorship, Governance, and Financial matters. The Sponsorship Secretaries are working constantly to look after 'our' children and students; it was disappointing that circumstances meant they had to cancel their planned trip in November.

The JIRC (Joint Independent Review Committee) is working with BOM and GO members, often with weekly meetings, to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review.

With best wishes for Christmas and 2024.

Frances Dent

Committee Secretary, DGHUK

News of Your DGHUK Trustees



Since our May 2023 Annual Report, two long-serving Trustees and supporters of Dr Graham's Homes, **Anne Hoggan** and **Margaretta Purtill** – both former Chairs of DGHUK – have stood down as Trustees and retired from “active service” as Members of our Committee. Their fellow-Trustees, and indeed all in the greater community of The Homes with whom they have interacted over the years, offer them their good wishes. Suitable articles will appear in our next Annual Report.



Trustees of DGHUK as well as other members of the wider Homes community offer their congratulations to two of our other Trustees.



Shona Hume who, jointly runs Arran Friends of Kalimpong, accompanied her husband, Alistair, along with their two children, Niall and Amie, to be present at the honouring of Ali with an MBE, to mark his forty-seven years of service to the Arran Mountain Rescue Team.

The investiture was conducted at Windsor Castle by HRH Princess Anne.

(Photo Shona Hume)

Michael Jefferson, One of our Trustees, a great-great grandson of Dr Graham, was recently married to Lisa. After the wedding, held near Inverness, they jetted off to spend their honeymoon in Latin America,



Machu Pichu – (not Homes campus!)

visiting Peru and Panama. The highlight was having the opportunity to visit Machu Picchu. Unfortunately, timings of marriage and DGHUK's recent London Meeting clashed so he now looks forward to catching up with everyone in the New Year.



There is a lot going on! I hope you enjoy reading about it in the rest of this Newsletter.

Frances Dent

Committee Secretary, DGHUK

Sponsorship Secretaries Report



“The Golden Thread of Hope”

As we listen to the news, read it in the paper, or watch it on television, we are not always encouraged! Some of what we hear is very scary - but we need to take heed of something that Martin Luther is reported to have said:

“Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree today.”

We all know that Dr Graham ‘saw the need’ all those years ago, and he certainly faced troubled times in the world during his lifetime when it looked as if the world might go to pieces. However, he was undeterred, and his commitment to improving the lives of the children he met meant that he planted more than an apple tree – he built a whole school, even a whole village; a “City in The Hills”!

The purpose of the DGHUK Committee, as we see the needs of the young children who are chosen to attend the school, is to work hard to ‘meet the need’, whatever challenges we may face. Some of these difficulties are world-wide, some are much more local. Our aim as we work together is to give all the children in our care ‘**a future and a Hope**’.

Everyone has a future, be it measured in days, months or years. But not every future has **Hope**. We want to make sure that our children are truly able to face their future - with **Hope**.

For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.’ ” — Jeremiah 29:11.

The Golden Thread of Hope¹ runs through the life of a DGH child thanks to the support of many people:

Dr Graham's Homes → Tertiary Education → The World of Work

This Thread of Hope, and all that it means, would not be possible without your support along with the children's own desire and commitment to succeed.

The value of such support, and commitment, in each child's life is too great to be measured.

¹ The Golden Thread is an idea or feature that is present in all parts of something, holds it together and gives it value.

--- HOPE ---

Our Children at Dr Graham's Homes

All children at Dr Grahams Homes are given an education, a home, fresh air, beautiful surroundings, new friends and people to care for them while they live away from their family home for most of the year. The vast majority of our children make the most of this amazing opportunity given to them. However, at times some children find it harder to adapt to their new life, especially as they get older and sometimes more rebellious! These children often need a different kind of support.



When children reach Class 10 they take their Indian Certificate of Secondary Education examinations (ICSE). Then, as children reach Class 12, they prepare for their Indian School Certificate (ISC) examinations which are taken just after they have graduated from school.

The eleven children in Class X who are supported by UK sponsors were all successful in their ICSE exams, their results ranging from 87.6 marks to 51.4, the overall average being some 70 marks, or thereabouts. All these girls and boys moved forward into Class XI for the 2023 school year.

Similarly, eighteen Class XII pupils, also sponsored through UK supporters, gained marks ranging from a remarkable high of 90.25 through to 55.5, the overall average being some 72 marks. Once the results were published in early summer, all these youngsters then set about the next stage in their careers, either through gaining a place in college or other training establishment or by opting to go straight into employment.

When the results of the ISC examinations are finally published in the summer of that year, then our children can begin to apply to colleges or other places for their tertiary education and begin the next phase of their journey of Hope.

--- HOPE ---

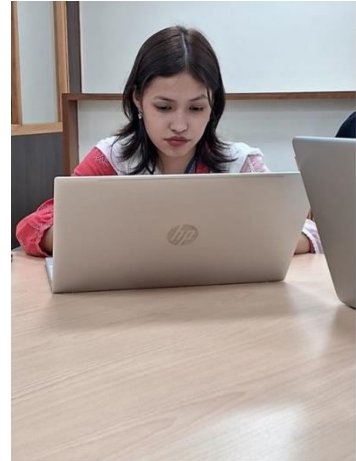
Our Students in Tertiary Education

Congratulations to the ISC 2023 children (now known to us as 'students') who have gained places for tertiary education and a new Hope for their future.

Tracy is one of these and she tells us about her experience of leaving the safe world of DGH and arriving to live an independent life at college:

"I am currently pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Computer Science Hons (BCA) from Christ University Bengaluru. The reason I chose this university is because it is the no. 1 college for BCA and I wanted to get the best education I could, in order to achieve certain goals in my life. Just the thought of living in a huge city alone brought shivers down my spine at the beginning, but now that I'm here it does not seem that bad. I was honestly pretty much looking forward to this independent life although there is no doubt I was a little scared. At the same time, I was super excited to explore this new phase of life. I still remember the day I was accepted into this college! I'm glad I chose to come and explore this life.

The people out here are diverse - not just from India but from other countries too. The knowledge we are able to gain, and the skills of communication, are unique here.



I can never be more thankful to the UK committee for the opportunity I received. If not for them I would not be here living a life full of surprises today!"

Kelly is another of our 2023 school leavers; she tells us of her experience moving to Kolkata this summer where she is studying for a Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) degree at Bhawanipur College. She writes:



"The last few days of one's school life are always the most memorable ones with our hearts filled with joy, excitement, sadness and nervousness all at the same time.

Similarly, I too was overjoyed to complete my school, but at the same time I was deeply saddened to leave school since I had spent thirteen wonderful years in this institution and had created a family with my friends and teachers. As much as I was going to miss the days spent in Dr Graham's Homes, I was also really excited and nervous at the same time to start a fresh new life at college.

Indeed, leaving everything behind and starting fresh was difficult, but through the constant love and support of the DGHUK committee, I was able to settle down comfortably in Kolkata. I have already started my college here and made a few friends as well. Everything is different, but I am trying to adjust, and once I do, I am sure I am going to love this place and create my own little family here as well. I will continue to work hard and do everything I can to make my family and Dr Graham's Homes proud."

Kyra successfully graduated from her beautician training course in 2023. She writes about how, having **Hope**, helped her achieve her dream:

*"Thank you so much for the support for all these years. Your support has been a lifeline for me during challenging times. It has given me the courage to keep going, even when I felt like giving up. Thank you for being there for me, and for reminding me that there is always **Hope**. Your support has been a gift that I will always treasure. I have found a new job where I'm getting to do service on clients."*

--- HOPE ---

From late summer 2023 the new students have been studying at the following colleges, along with students in other year groups, all former DGH pupils:

College – undergraduates (2023)	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year
St Xaviers, Kolkata	0	4	0
Loreto Kolkata	1	0	2
Scottish Church, Kolkata	0	1	1
Bhawanipur College, Kolkata	6	8	1
St Paul's College, Kolkata	1	1	0
Christ College, Bangaluru	1	0	0
St Anne's, Hyderabad	0	0	1
Loyola College, Chennai	0	0	1
Duncan Hospital Nursing School, Bihar	0	0	3
International Institute of Hotel Management	4	3	1
Indian Institute of Hotel Management	0	0	1
Kingston Educational Law Institute	1	0	0
Kolkata School of Contemporary Photography	1	0	0
Chandigarh University (online)	0	1	0
Techno India University, Kolkata	1	0	0
Total:	16	18	11

Undergraduate courses being studied include:

- Various general degree courses including:
 - Political Science, Sociology, Education, Business Administration
- Hotel Management and hospitality
- Nursing
- Computer Studies
- Law
- Photography
- Psychology

Post-graduate courses being studied include:

- Bachelor of Education
- MSc in Clinical Psychology
- BSc in Nursing
- French Language Diploma
- Aircrew Training
- MA in Public Administration
- MA in Social Work



After taking a first degree, Patricia then graduated from aircrew training in September 2023

If needed, after graduating with their first degree or other qualification, we often continue to support our students as they take further studies so that they are better qualified for their chosen career and the world of work.

--- HOPE ---

The World of Work – a Safe Future for Our Young People

Our commitment to the children who enter The Homes, sometimes at a very early age, is that we will care for them until they reach the point where they have a safe future in front of them. This care may mean financial as well as pastoral support depending on each of their individual circumstances. Below are some stories of young people who have finally entered the world of work, as a result of your support coupled with their own hard work and determination.



Leanne and **Corinne** graduated from the Homes in 2017 and then from Duncan Hospital (Raxaul) as qualified nurses. Leanne now works at a specialist Hospital in Kolkata.

She writes: *"I am really happy and fortunate to be an OGB of DGH. Much of who I am now is because of my time at the school."*

Lawrence graduated from DGH in 2018 and then three years later from the International Institute of Hotel Management.

He says: *'On 4th May 2023 I was granted approval for my US visa, which will enable me to work in the Princess Cruise line. I am really looking forward to it, and none of this would have been possible without help from GO, who granted me a loan.'*



We are delighted that he is now a full-time hospitality crew member on board a Princess Line cruise ship.



Michelle graduated from DGH in 2016 and completed both a BA and an MA in English. She is currently preparing to take exams for a government position, and she is working in another field while she waits.

Michelle says: *"DGH taught me discipline, hard work and, most importantly, provided me with the safest environment possible as a child. The influence was the power to meet and live with so many different kinds of people from so many areas without any judgements."*

Other News

Web site

We hope that you are still enjoying the many new articles to be found on the new website. Do keep looking, and if you would like to write an article for the website, please let us know.

Our visit to DGH in November

We were looking forward to meeting up with all the children and students when next we visited The Homes, scheduled for November this year. However, flooding decided otherwise for us! Our visit has now been put back until around March of next year, our return from which should bring up-to-date news of the children in time for publication in the May 2024 Annual Report.



Don't forget

1. ...to access your sponsored child's latest report by going to the **school** website drgrahamshomes.net
Please find the link on the first page of the school website, click on it and then put in your child's admission number to show the latest report. If it doesn't work, please contact us!
2. ...to write to your child, we do hope that letters will be exchanged more regularly.
3. ...to let us know if you would like us, or one of the Trustees, to come to your church or another group that you belong to, to talk about the work of DGHUK. We had a very special time in September at a church to which one of our sponsors had invited us. Louise was a sponsored child in DGH several years ago and had already shared many stories with her friends at church. We were able to share up to date information about The Homes as well as showing a PowerPoint presentation.
4. ...if there is anything that you would like to know about your sponsored child, please do email us, or phone us so we can give you the information you need.

Last but not least....

THANK YOU for all that you do for the UK sponsored children.

Your support is greatly appreciated by us and all the Trustees.

Please pass the word on about the work of Dr Graham's Homes **and if you know anyone who would like to become a sponsor, please get in touch with us.**

We need them!!

"And now these three remain: Faith, **Hope** and Love."

1 Corinthians 13 v13

Ian and Anji Russell
Joint Sponsorship Secretaries

Treasurer's Report, December 2023



A fresh face or, at least, a different face - but, in some respects, with a very similar story to tell. Sometimes that can be very reassuring, sometimes it's a cause for concern. So, which is it this year?

Before getting to that, I'd like to extend my thanks to Jim and his wife Maida who, together, have helped make the transition of systems and procedures to your new Treasurer relatively painless. Add to them our Sponsorship Secretaries, Ian and Anji, who feed me information 24 hours a day, or so it seems, ensuring that if I don't know something relating to sponsorship, it's entirely down to me. And woe betide me if funds are not in the right place at the right time to allow them to make the required student bank transfers - all for the benefit and well-being of the students I hasten to add. I like to think that I'm slowly getting to grips with things.

Elsewhere in this report you will learn about the changes which are happening at The Homes. Change is a necessary part of life there but comes at a cost, a relevant proportion of which falls on DGHUK.

Income ... Our income over the nine months to 31st October 2023 was £177,000:

a. Donations plus Tax Recoveries:	£49,000	(£41,000)
b. Income from Sponsorship:	£92,000	(£98,000)
c. Legacies:	£9,000	(£11,000)
d. Investment Income:	£27,000	(£17,000)

(Bracketed figures, totalling £167,000, are the corresponding figures for the same period in 2022).

The increase of £10,000 in Total Income between the two years can be explained in several ways:

- Donations and Sponsorships reflect timing differences in receiving recurring income
- Legacies by their very nature are unpredictable
- Investment income is a response to market conditions.

As in previous years, I would remind supporters that the sponsorship payments we make to The Homes include an allowance for pocket money. Any additional sums we receive in respect of pocket money are treated as general donations rather than being attributed to any specific child.

Expenditure our total Ordinary Expenditure across the same nine-month period (i.e. to 31st October 2023) amounted to £354,000, compared with £278,000 in the previous year; an increase of £76,000. This was predicted and, therefore, did not come as a shock.

As Administration and Governance costs are modest and relatively stable, it is under Sponsorship that the increases have risen most sharply:

- a. Child Sponsorship increased from £194,000 to £210,000
- b. Extended Sponsorship increased from £55,000 to £92,000.

We were also able to fund the purchase of lockers for the use of pupils, at a cost of £10,000.

A further (recoverable) loan of £45,000 was advanced to The Homes in September.

As will be obvious, Expenditure is currently running considerably ahead of Income and the current year deficit is already standing at £178,000. This is expected to rise to at least £200,000 by the end of this financial year. Fortunately, we have the Reserves to cover this but such deficits cannot be sustained indefinitely.

Investments trying to predict what the markets are going to do next is not for the faint-hearted. Fortunately, we have the support of our stockbrokers, Killik & Co, who have done a sterling job in steering us through the worst of the past few years.

We are very grateful for the advice provided which is based on a risk approach considered to be low/moderate and an investment strategy which provides for a balance of income and capital growth. It is anticipated that we will require to realise some of our investments in the not-too-distant future to cover the current and expected deficits.

Support funding the running costs of The Homes on an ongoing basis continues to provide a challenge to the Trustees! Despite this, at their most recent meeting the Trustees agreed to increase the level of child sponsorship paid to The Homes to take account of the budgeted increased running costs at The Homes. Obviously, this will do nothing to alleviate our current deficit position but we need to be seen to be contributing fully the appropriate share of running costs for our children.

In recognition of this further pressure on finances, the Trustees undertook also to significantly ramp up our fundraising efforts and everyone will be hearing more of this in due course. The Trustees, however, are very aware that we cannot simply ask each of our current loyal supporters to contribute more. While some may be able to do so, many or indeed most are not and we need to find ways of attracting new sponsors or adopt alternative ways of funding the Charity's core objectives. As mentioned above, we will be writing more about this in the New Year.

Gordon Coupar
Treasurer DGHUK

Fund-Raising and Events in 2023

As we've stated many times in our Newsletters, Fund-Raising for our current supported children and, even more so, for those needy children whom we hope will continue to benefit from our future support at Dr Graham's Homes, remains our *raison d'être*.

Below we review, briefly, our 2023 Fund-Raising activity as well as that now in planning for the near future. Do try and catch up with us at some of our future events; indeed, why not bring your own inventive genius to bear with new and innovative ideas? We'd be glad to help you!

Significant Fund-Raising Events Completed in 2023

DGH AGM Lunch and Raffle:

Raffle and Donations – a great opportunity to renew DGH friendships.

Arran Friends of DGH: £929

Autumn Coffee Morning

Troon Friends of DGH: £422

Coffee Morning

Garden Open Days, Dundee: £252

Garden in the Rain

DGH Calendar:

Sale of Calendars – London Meeting

DGH Legacy Bike Ride: £1,650

Central Scotland's DGH Country

Book Sales: £500

Royalties from "Last Children of The Raj"

Cardross Parish Church: £366

Village Café Project

We are indebted to those kind supporters who have taken the time and trouble to organise these events. We also realise that your event may have been omitted from the lists above; neither deliberately nor forgetfully, we assure you – possibly just not linked directly to a specific fund-raising event when remitted to our Treasurer; gratefully recognised all the same. So, don't forget to let us know whenever you hold a fund-raiser for Dr Graham's Homes!



"Raffle Ticketeers"

Troon Friends of Kalimpong Coffee Morning – “As Usual”

Our Annual Coffee Morning took place “as usual” in early October and “as usual” was held in the main hall of Troon Old Parish Church. What was not “as usual” was the torrential rain which did eventually ease off slightly as the morning wore on. Despite the weather, however, what was also “as usual” was the amazing support we continue to receive from our many supporters who attend, volunteer, bake, donate and spend money.

I was particularly pleased to welcome two very drookit figures who had made their bi-annual drive to Troon, “as usual”, from Glasgow - Pat and Jim Simpson.

“As usual”, with our regular Church Coffee Mornings at £2.50, we provide the best value in town (!) and I am delighted with the result - £422.30, all of which goes to Dr Graham's Homes.

Aileen Fraser
Trustee DGHUK

Arran Friends of Kalimpong Coffee Morning



Arran Friends of Dr Graham's Homes held their regular Autumn Coffee Morning in Corrie Village Hall recently, raising a fine £828 all of which goes towards sponsoring another child at The Homes - a happy result! Numbers attending were slightly down on previous years – fewer tourists, dodgy ferries etc doubtless the culprits – however, most of our faithful Arran Friends came along and joined the noisy chat.

Lots of nice raffle prizes were on display although these were soon spread amongst the lucky winners. Amongst all the generosity of prize donors I must mention Pete Brown who farms at Clachaig on the island who, once again, donated a generous quantity of meat and fresh vegetables to the raffle.



Shona Hume
Trustee DGHUK



Janice Small
Arran Friends

DGH Legacy Bike Ride, 2023 – Central Scotland

In summer 2022 I experienced a lightbulb, life-changing, moment which would set me off in a direction I could never have imagined! At a Thursday night running class at which I coach, Billy, a visitor to the club, told me he was shortly setting off for India to take part in a charity cycle run for a school in the Himalayan foothills, Dr Graham's Homes. Would I like to join him? As a lifetime ambition is to visit India, how could I resist?! Planning and funding started



immediately and in due course we both found ourselves in India joining an amazing group - soon to become the firmest of friends - at the start line of a 200km cycle run from Siliguri to Kalimpong in West Bengal! That adventure featured in the DGHUK Annual Newsletter this time last year. That first experience was mind-blowing, the warm welcome we received on arrival at The Homes, complete with School Pipe Band! Nothing less would satisfy than bringing an equivalent bike ride to Scotland, origin of Dr Graham's Homes!

My thoughts on the driving factors behind this follow-up proposal were that the route should:

1. link to Reverend John Webster who has set up similar ventures over some 20 years
2. take in Cardross, the boyhood home village of Dr Graham
3. include the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, a position held by Dr Graham back in the 1930s

In due course the route was agreed upon, the details put in place and an appropriate title - suggested by former pupil and original biker Tenzing Norsang - settled upon:

'The DGH Legacy Ride 2023'

Six Riders; Five Days; Four Events; Three Churches; Two Support Teams; One DGH!

Virtually on the eve of our departure, a set-back hit us as our original back-up support team had to drop out. Luckily one of our US-based riders, Tenzing Norsang, suggested DGHUK might help. With but little warning, DGHUK Trustees Anne Pears and Jim and Pat Simpson found themselves reporting to New Lanark Mills as facilitator and luggage wallahs, respectively!

Day 1 - New Lanark to Ardrossan/Arran. The team set off from New Lanark Mill, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, on a very steep climb in lashing rain prefacing a sixty-mile ride into a west wind - all with a 6:00p.m. "last-sailing" ferry deadline at the forefront of minds! An unscheduled detour of 15 miles at the outset, overcome through Tenzing's awesome navigational skills, immediately placed our timetable in jeopardy; it was going to be a close-pedalled thing! However, with our back-up team following us on GPS every step of the way, Anne purchased our ferry tickets in advance whilst Jim and Pat chatted up the portside berthing team and succeeded in slowing down the ferry turnaround routine by the vital few minutes! What we all do for Dr Graham....!

Day 2 – Ride around Isle of Arran. Happily, the weather improved for our 60-mile leg around Arran. The cyclists quickly scattered according to their levels of fitness but, following the wise advice of Janice - DGH supporter and resident Arran cyclist - we were confident that on a circular route no-one could get really lost! After a lovely lunch about halfway round the island where our support team Pat and Jim have a base, everyone arrived back safely, ready to invade a local restaurant to celebrate the day.

Day 3 – Rest Day on Arran. The opportunity to spend time together and travel around this beautiful Scottish island was not to be missed. Lunch was planned as a 90th Birthday celebration with John Webster – another island resident – but unfortunately John was feeling unwell so could not join us. Tenzing, however, ensured that birthday cake found its way to John eventually! The afternoon of friendship was enhanced with samples at Lagg distillery! The day concluded with yet another gathering of this wee Graham family, this time to enjoy a curry night at Lamblash hosted by Margaretta and Vanda from Islay. Another DGH supporter, Shona from Arran, joined us for the evening. DGH supporters are everywhere in Scotland!

Day 4 – Arran via Ardrossan to Drymen. We all congregated at the Douglas Hotel next morning before heading for the ferry on the next leg of the journey. Suitably watered courtesy of Vanda, and with our luggage en route to Drymen with Pat and Jim, next we followed Sustrans Cycle Route 7 northwards. After crossing the River Clyde via the Erskine Bridge, we arrived on time at Cardross Parish Church. Reverend Maggie McArthur and her congregation welcomed us with a lovely lunch and a tour around their beautiful church.



We were then all taken to one of the highlights of the trip, the childhood home of Dr Graham: where we walked, he had walked as a boy! The weather was kind and the views amazing; he must have been happy living there as it is so beautiful. All too soon we were back on our bikes at Cardross and completed the last fifteen miles to Drymen where we had a nice meal and comfy bed for the night.

Day 5 - Drymen to South Queensferry. Up early and ready to go on our final day, everyone was in fine fettle, particularly as after about 20 miles Tenzing found us an amazing side road, which took us over some beautiful rural countryside near the site of the famous Battle of Bannockburn. After lunch at the Visitor Centre, we headed for the last leg of the journey through South Fife, the three Forth Bridges – another UNESCO site - soon coming into view. With just a mile to go and our destination, the Dakota Hotel South Queensferry, also in sight - albeit on the other side of the Bridge - the rains came down. Never mind - we'd made it!



DAY 6 - South Queensferry. We woke to the most beautifully warm day. The minister of Queensferry Parish Church, Reverend Fiona Mathieson, and her team kindly hosted twenty-four riders, friends, and supporters at lunch. We were joined by the Very Reverend Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of The Church of Scotland, and her husband Stuart with whom we were able to share the story of Dr Graham's Homes. Sally concluded our adventure with prayers before Tenzing and Naincee handed out tokens of appreciation to all who had helped turn my DGH Legacy Ride 2023 dream into reality!

The venture had been planned purely as an informal promotion of Dr Graham's ideals - not to mention as a reunion of friends - rather than as a fundraiser. Nonetheless, thanks to the generosity of many participants and supporters, some £1,650 was somehow raised through the event! And I must mention, too, a new Sponsor for one of DGHUK's supported children!

Carol McLaren

carolthecoach@gmail.com

Global OGB Association (GO) – Bike-For-DGH Fundraiser, 2024

Hello all you Bikers out there!

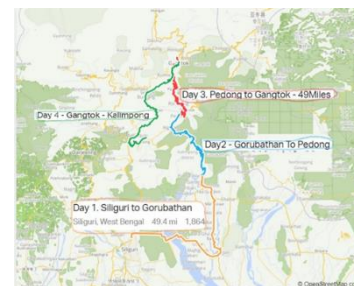
Our **DGH Legacy Team of Bikers** has just completed a grand Tour of Central Scotland. Great fun!

Why not join us in September next year when we plan to complete a similar adventure, this time back in India and, hopefully, beyond.

Just as much fun but possibly a wee bit harder.
Never mind, you'll manage!

Contact Tenzing at the e-mail address below.
Come on – you can do it; you know you want to!

Tenzing Norsang, Minnesota
Member of GO and Bike Ride Organiser
bikefordgh@gmail.com



2024 Fund-Raising Events Now in Planning

DGH Cross-Scotland Run For Hope – Summer 2024?

Regular readers of this bi-annual Newsletter from DGHUK telling of planned fundraising ventures are possibly asking “what has happened to the ‘Run For Hope’ project” which has been heralded regularly in recent issues. The answer is “Watch this Space” as nothing has been forgotten about! The fact is that finding and also matching runners to a date suitable to all is a more difficult issue than expected, whilst finalising the route – after landslides along the planned way keep jeopardising the plans - is another. Michael is keeping us in the picture. Now it looks like Summer 2024 is in our sights!

Michael Scott [michaelscott.msa@outlook.com]
Organiser

Jim Simpson
Trustee DGHUK

The Great DGH British Tea Party - 2024



The “Great DGH British Tea Party” Is Back!!
.... February 2024....

Please help us to raise money to support the children
who currently don't have a personal sponsor.

More detailed news will follow after Christmas!

A Sponsor Visits The Homes

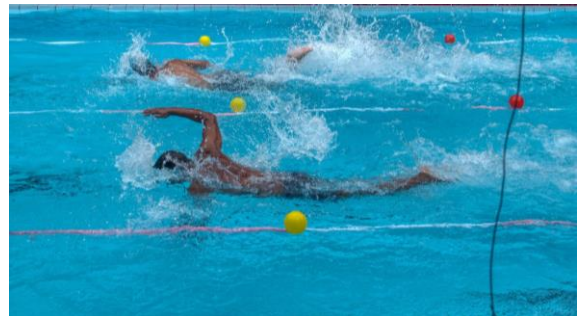


Having had a personal interest in Dr Graham's Homes over many years, and now sponsoring a child there, I recently had the privilege of spending a few very enjoyable weeks on campus, staying at Ahava, the visitors' guest house. This was my third visit to The Homes and was longer than originally intended as I was unable to visit friends in Gangtok, the recent dreadful dam burst in Sikkim leaving the route impassable.

It was lovely to be at The Homes at a time when they were celebrating their 123rd Birthday! As customary, the occasion was celebrated enthusiastically over a couple of weeks with a variety of events, including an Inter-Cottage Singing Competition (the children are strong on singing), the Swimming Gala, a wonderful Play staged by senior pupils, a Craft, Art and Science Exhibition and the Inter-Cottage Debating Competition (the team fresh from winning the Inter-Schools Competition!). Just before I left, came the Sports Day complete with Pipe Band!



Wiston: Winning Inter-Cottage Singing Competition



Inter-Cottage Swimming Gala



MacGregor Cottage Girls Sports Team



Winner – Inter-Schools Debate

In a Google review of DGH I recently read this message from a former pupil – an “OGB”:
“I studied here for over a decade, from 2010 to 2021, and I say with pride that this was the best school experience ever. I thoroughly enjoyed my school years, and now that they are over, I'm gonna cherish all these years and am gonna miss this school very much. The teachers are extremely friendly and qualified, and the school campus is big and beautiful. One of the best schools for a child's development. Period! Homes is where the heart is ❤️”. #Grahamite.

Opening the Celebrations, however, was the rededication service at which the staff recommitted themselves to serving in the Homes in the way envisioned by Dr and Mrs Graham. Here is the pledge taken by all staff and committee members:

"We pledge ourselves, individually and collectively, to carry on the great work of the Homes in the spirit in which Dr. and Mrs. Graham founded and built them. The first call on the Homes shall always be the children in greatest need; the one vital and essential consideration: for the highest good of the children themselves; with the spiritual aspect of the work always kept prominently in the foreground, so that The Homes may be maintained and developed in accordance with the vision and ideals of the Great Founder and of his Divine Master in Whose Service his whole life was utterly and selflessly dedicated."

I would encourage everyone to visit the Homes - at length if possible - and you will find that Dr Graham is greatly honoured. You will find children who are being well educated, encouraged, and developed such that they can take their place in society as useful, confident citizens who care for others. For many, their fate would have been so very different had it not



been for Dr Graham, his dedicated staff across the years and the Sponsors who make this possible. Many of those who have left The Homes speak of the love they received as they grew up there. I listened to cottage aunties who obviously love their children; they play such an important part in the lives of their charges! I watched the Chaplain scoop a bundle of little boys into a group hug at the end of Cottage Fellowship with another lot clamouring for their hug. I

watched other little children run up to him, one holding his hand, another snuggling in. Whether a child comes from a broken home or not, love is so vital. If only all the boys' cottages had a father figure - sadly, still a need waiting to be fulfilled! Should you be fortunate enough to attend Sunday Morning Service you will be as moved as I was to listen to the children singing — words that I trust will remain with them the rest of their lives. Sunday by Sunday and during the week, the children are being faithfully built up in the Christian Faith, although children with other Faith backgrounds are equally welcomed.

The campus is big and in a beautiful setting. On clear days one can see the great Kanchenjunga: at over 26,000 ft, a wonderful sight. There are mountains all around; everything looks in perfect order. Looking more closely, however, unfortunately some of the buildings aren't quite as beautiful as they once were. Time and climate coupled with poor management and lack of available finance have taken their toll. One cottage was even without running water when I was there. However, a Joint Committee comprising the Board of Management, Alumni and Trustees of UK Committee are addressing these problems and bringing hope to The Homes. Lucia King, the cottage for the pre-school children, is a lovely example of what they all once were and with hope and much organisation can all be like once again! May it all be restored to the original vision of Daddy Graham!

I would encourage anyone who can, to sponsor, or to join a sponsoring group, to give a needy child the nurture and care enjoyed by so many others across over a Century of The Homes!

Patricia Lomax

Joint Independent Review Committee (JIRC) Report

Representation:	<u>Board of Management</u> <u>India (BOM)</u>	<u>DGHUK</u> <i>(*JIRC Convener)</i>	<u>Global Alumni of</u> <u>the School (GO)</u>
	Shane Calvert	Esther A Pears*	Arijit Mallick
	Suchitra Guha	Jim Gibson	Dawn Van Steensel
	Jayshree Pradhan	Frank Dunn	



Summary: The reformed JIRC met for the first time in September 2022, our task to support the BOM in developing and implementing a recovery plan based on **Forty-Five Recommendations** arising from the Independent Review Report (IR) of March 2022.

The JIRC Working Group (WG) was formed in April 2023 and by June 2023 was meeting on a weekly basis. The Working Group has approached its tasks positively and proactively but has found that implementing new systems and processes, dealing with varying levels of experience, and monitoring change efforts, to be challenging.

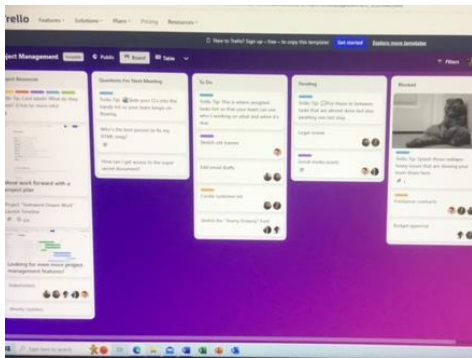
Introduction: Whilst the Working Group initially included only three Kolkata Board Members, it was unanimously decided that active participation of all Board Members would be essential to enhance the decision-making process. Consequently, three Sub-Groups were established to encompass the three key administrative and operational functions of the Board : **Governance, Finance and Operations**. The rules of engagement for the WG were collectively established and agreed upon by the participants. Meetings were scheduled to take place every Tuesday. Each Sub-Group was designated to meet in a rotating sequence. It was expected that the representatives from each Sub-Group would attend their respective meetings, which essentially occurred once every four weeks.

Project Overview: The core WG met once a week by Zoom to brainstorm and deliberate upon recommendations from the IR. The IR emphasised twelve critical Core Issues. It became evident that our primary focus should be on the development of **Policies, Procedures, Guidelines**, and **Standards** to enhance the effectiveness of the Board and School Management's operations and administration, and to lay the foundations for change.

Policies immediately addressed included a **Board Governance Policy** addressing structural challenges within the Board's operating model. This policy aims to encompass principles, responsibilities, criteria for Board Member appointments, suitable tenures, Board Member composition, competencies, and more. The Board unanimously adopted the **Board Approval Policy** which defines the timeline and protocol for the Board's endorsement of decisions arising from recommendations originating from the JIRC Working Group.

A further fifteen policies have been written and work is now in progress to develop a **School Operating Manual** aiming to encompass a consolidated manual of all administrative procedures, processes, guidelines, and standards. This should be the guide-book for day-to-day operations for the Senior Management Team, presently Principal, Headmaster and Bursar.

Progress: The WG convened with enthusiasm and dedication identifying and agreeing upon the initial policies that needed development. Throughout our meetings, pivotal recommendations and decisions were documented and registered on 'Trello', the WG's preferred project management tool. Some examples included alterations to terms and conditions for employees, modifications to benefits offered to specific employees, and ideas for optimising workforce size and enhancing performance practices. Some of these fundamental recommendations were subsequently integrated into the respective Policies.



Trello is a basic project management tool designed to eliminate the need to minute meetings by simply recording meeting outcomes. Using Trello, the WG was able to record progress, update decisions made; action items; work in progress tasks; backlog discussion and the like. Trello was updated following each Tuesday meeting and all Members were encouraged to use this workboard as a point of reference to stay updated, ask questions; and to provide additional ideas for action.

Typical Trello Project Management Board

Co-ordinated Action is Key! Board Members must strive for better engagement. The significance of the role of Board Members in the decision-making process cannot be overstated! Consistent and active participation will cultivate an environment in which a wide range of perspectives is appreciated and respected. This, in turn, reduces the necessity for subsequent discussions and clarifications once decisions are reached.

Change: We may be at a pivotal moment in the history of The Homes and we must embrace this opportunity for change, recognising that the outcomes may well be different to our imaginings! The JIRC is a cohesive group of like-minded people, all with the good of The Homes in mind. We have learned to be honest with each other and respect one another's point of view.

Reporting progress on the IR recommendations illustrates the work and effort of all contributors within the JIRC, BOM and School Management Committee (SMC). The IR advised certain timelines for implementing the recommendations. We are pleased to report that One Recommendation is fully implemented - *Campus Security and Safeguarding of the Children* - Five are ahead of the timeline and Thirty-Nine on schedule.

The Independent Review Report also lays bare the deficiencies in infrastructure and maintenance within the school. We have made significant progress and breakthrough whilst recognising that there is still, and always will be, a great deal to be done.

There is no time for division; it simply detracts from the issues with which we are faced. Rather, we need unity, the BOM, GO and International Committees working together for the common goal, bringing children out of poverty, and giving them a chance in life in a school that has been running for 123 years, thanks to all, past and present.

Esther Anne Pears
Trustee DGHUK; Convenor JIRC

Dawn van Steensel
GO

"HAPPY NINETIETH BIRTHDAY" to Reverend John Webster!

On 28th June this year a group of friends and family gathered at the "Khukuri" Nepalese Restaurant, Edinburgh, for a luncheon to celebrate the Ninetieth Birthday of Reverend John



G. Webster, at the same time recognising John's almost sixty years of Homes involvement. I'm sure that everyone associated with Dr Graham's Homes knows of John in at least one of his roles: UK Committee Honorary Vice President, Bengal Biker, Fund Raiser extraordinaire, one-time Farm Manager and then Chaplain at The Homes in Kalimpong!

It was a joyous but poignant affair with everyone very aware of the recent loss of Jennifer Webster; John, being John, however, was very happy that his milestone birthday be celebrated. However, strictly no speeches, no gifts must be the order of the day - just a meeting of friends and family. Although Calum could not be present, John's two other sons joined the occasion, Gordon from Perth, Australia, and Johnnie from Biggar, along with several DGH UK Committee members and other supporters of The Homes.

Albeit some eighty years apart, history records that, in turn, two young men, both Church of Scotland Ministers, were called to Kalimpong. They travelled to India with their wives, by ship, train and then a climb into the hills and the unknown.

None of us today knew personally the first of those travellers, John Anderson Graham, but we know of his legacy. However, we are all very fortunate to know the second, John Gordon Webster, and are very aware of what he has done for The Homes over his time in Kalimpong and back in Scotland.



John Webster is the flame of fate, that torch of truth and a guide to all our young people, past and present, rich and poor, at Dr. Graham's Homes, all aiming towards a better future for themselves, for India and for the world beyond. But behind every great man so often there is an amazing woman, thus we could not let the day pass without thinking of Jennifer who, as everyone was aware, sadly passed away earlier in the month.

Nobody who knows of Dr. Graham's Homes cannot not know too of Reverend John Webster and his amazing marathon achievements: Everest Base Camp, London, and Glen Coe; of his bike rides from Kolkata, from Kathmandu in Nepal, from Paro in Bhutan all to Kalimpong; his incredible 3-K Tours which have introduced so many people to The Homes. Through all these activities John has encouraged generous giving and sponsorship to help the poor and needy children of Kolkata and beyond. Indeed, the amount of funding raised by John can never be known!



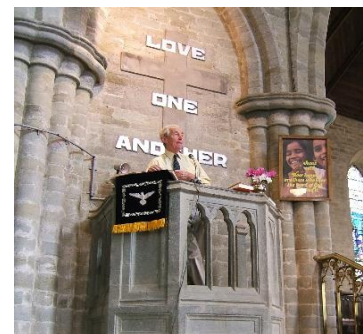
Anyone who has travelled with John will have learnt a great deal about the sub-continent, its people, and its customs. Any train ride with John was an education; arrival at Sealdah Station, Kolkata, has always been an enlightenment: his communication skills, his baggage handling and, as entertainment, his baksheesh management!



We were in the restaurant to be among friends and all present shared a tremendous respect for John. However, to see absolute reverence you need to see John at the DGH farm and witness the respect and gratitude the older farm workers have for John Webster, even today some fifty years or so since his time as Farm Manager. The same goes too for the senior staff at the Homes.

It is a pity that circumstances do not at present permit one last Webster sermon from the pulpit of the Katherine Graham Memorial Chapel. The children singing the School Song is always an emotional moment of every service conducted by John.

Hymn 198 encapsulates the spirit of all our attitudes and of our sincere gratitude to Dr. Graham's Homes and to John Webster.



*"Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions."*

All present sincerely thanked John for everything he has done for the Homes, whether as Farm Manager, Chaplain, Fundraiser, UK Committee Chair or simply as a true friend to so many.

*"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments –
but what is woven into the lives of others."*

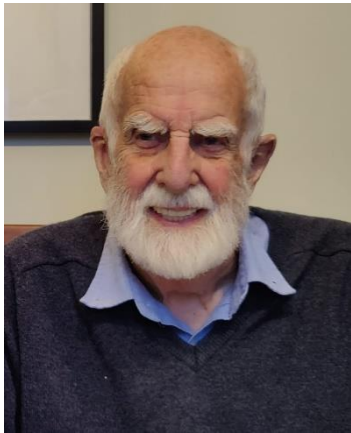
Ignoring his "No Presents" request, John was presented with a small book of anecdotes and photographs compiled by friends: a book of memories. Everyone enjoyed a splendid Nepalese lunch and the opportunity to personally thank John for his dedication to the life of Dr. Graham's Homes.

James MacHardy

Former Trustee and ex-Chairman of DGHUK

James Edward Maddocks

11th November 1930 to 16th September 2023



Jim Maddocks, a long-term supporter of Dr Graham's Homes, passed away in Chester at the age of 92 after a short period of ill health. His life spanned a remarkable period in history: the proliferation of the motor car, jet planes, the Second World War, moon landings, unimaginable advances in healthcare. Jim's life might be said to be an adventure to match the era!

Born in 1930, between the World Wars, he spent days and nights in air raid shelters while bombs rained down on the Liverpool area. He was sent, with his sister, as a child refugee to Wales but he also fondly remembered smuggling treats to Italian Prisoners of War doing forced labour in the fields!

After schooling at Birkenhead Boys School, he worked in agriculture and spent time in the RAF in Canada. In 1950 he emigrated to India as the Assistant Manager of a tea estate near Darjeeling, close to Bhutan and Tibet. He spent ten years in India and, had he not been almost obliged to return to Britain due to the enforced "Indianisation" of all businesses in the late 1950's, he may well never have returned at all. Life in India was full of adventure, whether looking after his pet otter or hand-rearing a leopard cub - before it severely mauled him, leaving him scarred for life. Significantly, he was the first and only European to be accepted into the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, set up in Darjeeling in 1954 by Sherpa Tenzing (for whose daughter, Pem Pem, he acted as chaperone!). He experienced hunting tigers that had attacked villages as well as crazed elephants. He reminisced of being charged by a rhino which overturned his jeep - the resulting bad leg injury was treated by a local doctor without anaesthetic!



A naturally friendly character, he had a habit of meeting up with A-listers of the day. A chance snooker game in a London hotel with a novice - who turned out to be Robert Redford. A fuelling stopover in Beirut on a Comet flight to India brought him face-to-face with John Wayne! He even witnessed the arrival of the Dalai Lama in India as he escaped from China-occupied Tibet in 1959.

Shortly after returning to Britain, he married Marjorie – a relationship that would last over fifty years. They headed directly from their wedding reception to Liverpool docks to emigrate to New Zealand, where Jim had secured a job as the manager of a tobacco plantation. The six-month boat journey was their honeymoon! That adventure, however, was short-lived as Marjorie became terribly homesick, so they returned to the UK – Jim's second return from emigration. Two baby boys followed, in 1961 and 1964, and Jim joined his father-in-law's sand quarrying business in Cheshire – a thirty-year career that took him to retirement, a time when he could indulge in his many interests; his life-long interest in 'photography, in vintage cars, in sport and leisure – he was a keen golfer, tennis player and bridge enthusiast.

Between the late Eighties and 2020 he returned again and again to India – back to the tea estate with Marjorie, trekking in the Himalayas, a trip to Bhutan, a trip to Myanmar with his granddaughter, and then many annual visits to Nepal and his old stomping ground of Kalimpong and Darjeeling, in the shadow of Kanchenjunga. This was when he reconnected with one of his favoured charities, Dr Graham's Homes.

Over time, Jim was to become one of our most active supporters, taking part in everything from annual 3-Ks Tours to India and The Homes, attending AGMs of DGHUK as well as a variety



of fundraising events. Most significant however, and latterly in conjunction with his son Crispin, was his sponsorship support of several of our students through funding and correspondence. His financial commitment continues and will ensure that previous and current pupils - Chelsea and Daniel, followed now by Janet and Manuel - and future pupils alike will benefit from his support on their journeys through The Homes and beyond. On one visit to Kalimpong he met up with a former pupil and well-loved Homes

personality, Lolly Raphael, who all her life has been an ambassador for The Homes. Jim hosted her on many of her visits to UK.

James Maddocks, you have been an untiring supporter of DGHUK and we salute you for your unflagging support of our Charity through your sponsorship of our children!

Crispin Maddocks with Jim Simpson

From the Archives



As your Editors, we were on the brink of finalising layout and content for this year's Annual Newsletter when the sad news came through of the passing of **Mrs Yuden Pempa Hishey**, the longest serving member of the Kolkata Board of Management and a stalwart supporter of The Homes at every level and in every context. Indeed, Yuden was a good friend whose company and hospitality Jim and I had enjoyed on many an occasion.

In the circumstances we felt it fitting to set aside our customary "From the Archives" feature, instead, writing a brief appreciation of Mrs Hishey's connection with The Homes.

Pat and Jim Simpson

Trustees DGHUK

Mrs Yuden Pempa Hishey.

Yuden Hishey was the wife of the late Mr Tashi Pempa Hishey, a leading business figure in Kalimpong and in the Darjeeling Hills. He was an Old Boy of The Homes and, in his day, chaired the Local Advisory Committee, LAC, in Kalimpong whilst also serving on the Kolkata Board.

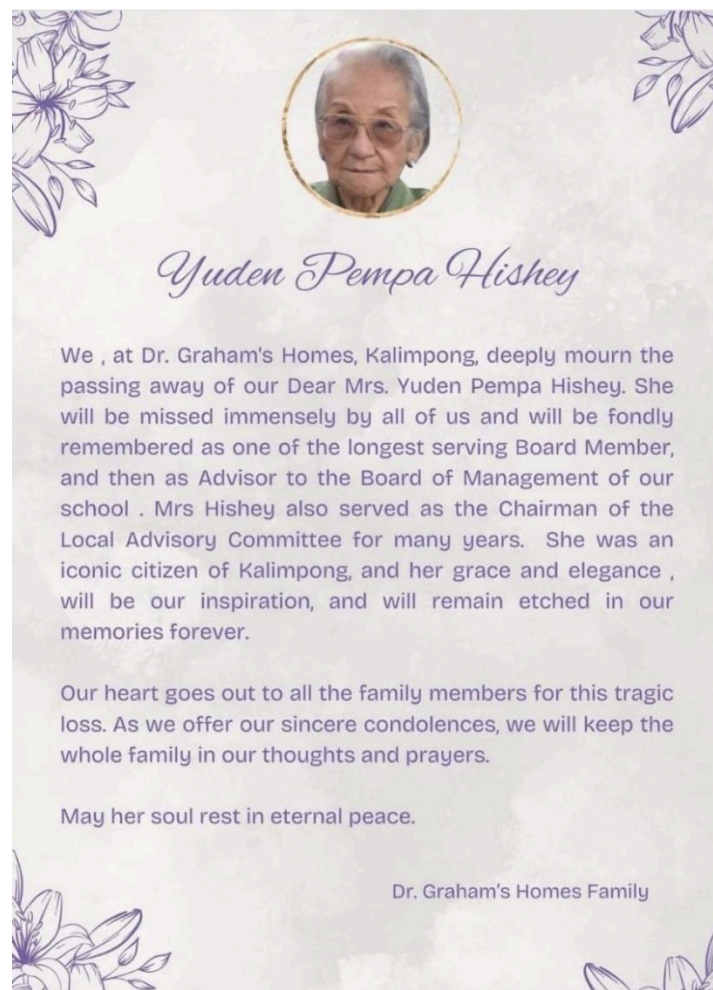


Upon his untimely passing many years ago, Yuden Hishey took over the reins of many of his interests, notably joining our Kolkata Board whose notice of her passing accompanies these words. Perhaps her most appreciated skill, however, which she brought into play frequently on behalf of The Homes, was her network of contacts coupled with the enormous respect she enjoyed across the area. These together enabled her to mediate on behalf of The Homes whenever the frequent disputes which crop up in the area impacted upon the smooth running of our own operations! Somehow, she was always able to bring calm to those often quite explosive situations.

Homes Centenary Gala, 2000

The Tashi Pempa Hishey Perpetual Trophy

A gracious lady and a dear friend to all; she will be sorely missed across Kalimpong and the entire Homes Community.



A RE-RUN OF AN ADVERTISEMENT FROM 2022

More urgent now as, recently, two of our long-serving Trustees have retired!

BECOME A TRUSTEE OF DR GRAHAM'S HOMES UK - TODAY!

Perhaps you have been supporting Dr Graham's Homes for very many years; perhaps for just a few! Whatever, perhaps you feel that your skills, added to those of our established UK Board of UK Directors, could make a difference? So, why not apply to become a Trustee of DGHUK and help The Homes and The School to continue the task started over 120 years ago by our Founder, Dr John Anderson Graham? The Children whom we support today in this 21st Century world are just as needy as those for whom he "Saw the Need" so many years ago!

We hope that some of our Supporters may be interested and invite them to contact our Committee Secretary, Frances Dent, for an application form and information on secretary@drgrahamshomes.co.uk.

AN UNHERALDED, BUT MUCH-APPRECIATED, AWARD FOR DGHUK!



We're pleased to record that at the **Seventh Annual Scottish Enterprise Awards Contest** DGHUK has been named by media group **Scottish Media Enterprise, SME:**

"Most Inspiring India-Focused Child Sponsorship Charity, 2023"!



DR GRAHAM'S HOMES, KALIMPONG, INDIA

1900 - 2023

OVER A CENTURY OF CARING FOR CHILDREN

Founder: The Very Reverend Dr John Anderson Graham DD, LL.B, CIE

Moderator of The General Assembly of The Church of Scotland, 1931

