

The Mexico Child Link Trust

CHARITY REFERENCE NUMBER XO 354 / 92

ANNUAL REPORT 1993

CHAIRPERSON

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TRUSTEES

Dr. M.G.A. Mc Ginnity, M.B. M.R.C. Psych. (Consultant Psychiatrist in Mental Handicap)

Mr. G. F. McElroy, LLB, (Solicitor)

Dr. T.B. Anderson, B.Sc. Phd, F.G.S., (Head of Geology Dept., Queens University Belfast)

Mrs. U. Brennan, S.C.T. Cert. , (Teacher)

Mrs. C. Lewis, T. Cert., Dip. Sp. Ed., (Teacher)

Mr. M. Barbour, B.Sc. P.G.C.E., M.Sc., (Educational Psychologist)

Mexico Child Link is a Charitable Trust, recognised as such by the Inland Revenue.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our main objective is to improve the quality of life of abandoned children in Mexico with special needs. We work in partnership with a Mexican organisation known as Fundación Trébol de Puebla which we helped to develop and now fund and advise. We also have the support of other Mexican Non Governmental Organisations.

We plan to build three houses on a small farm which shall be home to up to fifteen abandoned children with mental handicap. This project has the support of local Government in Mexico as well as local Non Governmental Organisations.

STAFFING

The Trust is a small organisation and our low level of staffing enables us to keep overheads to a minimum. This year, for the first time, the Trust was able to pay a salary to Jonathan Getty the co-ordinator. Colette Mc Ginnity is unwaged but received expenses and a living allowance in Mexico. Mrs June Getty works as a part time volunteer in general fundraising and administration. Mexico Child Link also relies on the services of voluntary collectors and supporters who organise fundraising events throughout Northern Ireland.

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The work of the Trust falls into two main categories, (a) fundraising and promotion within Northern Ireland and (b) Development work in Mexico

NORTHERN IRELAND.

FUNDRAISING

The Mexico Child Link Trust had a productive year in 1993 and improved on its achievements of its first year in existence 1992.

£ 32,346 was raised, easily beating the £ 22,864 attained in 1992. This money was obtained through a multitude of fundraising events. (See accounts.)

A successful lottery was run in the period before Christmas which raised £1300 and helped to publicise our cause.

15 street collections were carried out raising a total of £6,894.

The number of monthly donors who contribute through the *Give as you Earn* scheme, covenants and Bankers Order Form was increased significantly.

A number of very successful talks were given in schools throughout Northern Ireland about the work being carried out by the Mexico Child Link Trust. In many cases, the school went on to organise a fundraising event on our behalf.

A concert in Roslea starring Dominic Kirwan raised almost £2,000 on our behalf

PUBLICITY

Our mailing list of supporters and donors was expanded from 250 to 400. Supporters received a newsletter in March and December.

Our profile was raised through a number of reports which appeared in the local press such as *The Belfast Telegraph*, *The Irish News*, *The Tyrone Courier*, *The Ulster Star* and *The Fermanagh Herald*. Colette Mc Ginnity also spoke on *BBC Radio Ulster* and *Northern Sound Radio* on our behalf.

MEXICO.

In Mexico, the work of Mexico Child Link was carried out by Jonathan Getty, the Co-ordinator of the charity and Colette Mc Ginnity, a full time volunteer. They were in Mexico from April 28th until October 3rd.

It was decided not work in partnership with the organisation P.R.O.E. as there were a number of problems associated with this organisation.

However we found that La Confederación Mexicana en Favor de La Persona con Deficiencia Mental, (CONFE) an organisation which works on behalf of people with mental handicap, gave good support.

An autonomous Mexican charity called *Fundación Trébol de Puebla A.C.* (the Shamrock Foundation) was set up. This involved:

(a) The formation of a multi-disciplinary committee to plan and supervise the work to be carried out.

The team includes an accountant, an agronomist/veterinary surgeon, a psychology lecturer, 3 special education teachers, 2 psychologists, and an education specialist.

(b) Supervising the drafting of the legal statutes of *Fundación Trébol* in co-operation with the Committee Members. (A copy of the statutes is available upon request)

(c) Election of executive posts. A small office was located and rented as an administrative base for *Fundación Trébol*. Electricity and telephone services were contracted. (with much difficulty!) The office was equipped with a telephone, fax and answer machine, Printaform 386sx computer, work tables, chairs and a filing cabinet.

A part-time Co-ordinator Lic. Enriqueta Palestino Aguilar, was appointed to carry out administrative

tasks and to undertake a piece of investigative research. She received training in the use of the computer. and also attended several courses about fundraising.

An investigation was planned, designed and initiated in the children's homes and other institutions in the City of Puebla, to determine the number and whereabouts of abandoned children with mental handicap, and the level of care they receive.

An architect with experience in adobe building and with a commitment to the ecological principles of the project was contacted and agreed to plan the houses and the ecological systems, for very low cost.

Support for the project was secured from CONFE Mexico and CONFE Puebla (La Confederación Mexicana en Favor de La Persona con Deficiencia Mental.) CONFE is the largest organisation in Mexico working for the rights of people with mental handicap. Our partner organisation affiliated to CONFE during the year.

A bank account was set up and a system of book-keeping established

THANKS

A fax machine was donated to the Trust by Mr John Getty and has proved to be a valuable asset.

Our appreciation is also due to the following people and organisations

June Getty	Alan Bell
Jimmy Lynch	Ulster Garden Villages Limited
Patsy Mc Phillips	Hilary Mc Creary
Coranny Primary School	May Blair
Fitzroy Presbyterian Church	Nigel Mowbray
Mrs Annie Mc Ginnity	S.M Dawson & Co.
Longstone Special School	I.T.S. Limited
St. Eugene's Secondary School, Roslea	Dean Shearer
St. Michael's, Enniskillen	The Glencraig Community

Finally, last but not least a special thank you to all our regular donors and supporters whose contributions allow us to expand and develop the work of the Trust.

Jonathan Getty
(Co-ordinator, The Mexico Child Link Trust)