

The Sophie Cameron Trust



15 May 2002

We are writing with the latest news from The Sophie Cameron Trust which, as you can see above now has its official logo in use. This was designed by Mytra Gallery aged 12 from The Royal High School Bath, who has won book vouchers to the value of £25 for herself as well as £250 for her school. The competition was sponsored by Penguin Books. The logo will now be incorporated into all literature, letterheads and a website which is in the process of being designed.

We have all been delighted with the incredible support and local interest for Sophie and the Trust. The recent Bath Half Marathon had wonderful support with a team of about 40 runners including a large group of 6th formers from The Royal High School as well as the Headmaster, James Graham-Brown. A double-decker tour bus was made available for our team with drinks and snacks and the atmosphere was wonderful. Our participation in the Bath Half Marathon will certainly be repeated next year and we would welcome any of you to join us again - or attempt it for the first time. It isn't as difficult as it sounds! At the end of the year, we will start regular training runs for our team. We have already received nearly £10,000 in sponsorship for this year's event and money is still arriving daily.

There has also been the Spring Concert at the Royal High School with proceeds coming to the SCT. Substantial sums of money have been raised from other schools in the Girls Day School Trust nationwide. Three local friends of the SCT, Clive Johnstone, Mark and Vivien Hynes walked the 100 miles of the Cotswold Way and raised over £2,000. At Kingswood School Bath, more than £1,000 has been raised from a variety of events including all-night video watching. Mr & Mrs Capodici of Great Amwell donated a car to the Trust which was sold for £600.

Other initiatives planned in the near future include a black-tie large formal dinner, a country jazz concert, triathlon participation, a sponsored hair-cut and a children's 'swimathon' in Brighton! The variety of enjoyable events is quite amazing and it is rewarding for all concerned that each event is raising so much money. In addition, the Trust has been chosen as an official charity for the Bath Chamber of Commerce and Bristol Grammar School. Should any of you have other ideas, please let us know and we will forward the necessary literature and if required, arrange for a speaker.

A delightful evening should be assured in early July in the beautiful grounds of The Royal High School Bath when Shakespeare's 'As You Like It' is being performed in the open-air. All guests are encouraged to bring picnics. Tickets cost just £5 each for the evenings of July 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Please find enclosed a booking form. It is anticipated that tickets will sell quickly. All proceeds are to be donated to The Sophie Cameron Trust. We are extremely grateful to Mr James Graham-Brown, his staff and pupils of The Royal High School for the tremendous continued support. Sophie always thought her school was exceptional and would be overwhelmed by its generosity of spirit, time and money.

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And what are the Trust's plans for the money already raised?

Thanks to the hard work given by committee members and friends of Sophie, as well as various professional services from local businesses, our overheads to date have been minimal. As a result, with the exception of costs for postage and stationery, all proceeds to date have been kept in a high-interest account and we are taking financial advice to ensure that it is wisely invested.

The Trust has been awaiting charitable status, which we are assured is on its way but to date has not arrived! In the meantime, in order to gain a better understanding of this rare condition, the Trust will support a study into the incidence of encephalitis lethargica within the UK over the last 10 years and the residual problems victims have experienced. Once started, this project will probably take 12 months and we are in discussion with neuro-scientists in Bristol to find the appropriate person or institution to undertake the study.

We have also ordered some valuable apparatus recommended by Sophie's physiotherapist for her to use and which we plan to be used by others in the future. The apparatus is to increase flexibility and suppleness of the joints in the wrists, ankles and elbows.

Sophie herself continues to make progress, albeit slow, in all areas and can often stand well for long periods of time with the aid of a frame. Her awareness is increasing and her family are hoping that with the input of a programme suggested by a speech therapist who specialises in helping people with movement difficulties, she will become more able to demonstrate her needs as well as her displeasures. Such progress could improve Sophie's quality of life significantly.

When we get charitable status we can really move forward. We will launch our Gift Aid programme and make approaches to organisations for their support. We will be looking to develop partnerships with other trusts and medical bodies with the aim of fulfilling our research and education objectives. If you know of appropriate contacts, please do let us know.

In the meantime, many thanks for your continued support of the Trust.

Yours sincerely

Dr Bernard Whiteside
for The Sophie Cameron Trust