

# FRIENDS OF SANGAM (UK)

Newsletter, Autumn 2012



*FOS (UK) is a UK Registered Charity No 1077376*

**Greetings Friends,**



Thank you for all your positive feedback on the Spring Newsletter. We will try to get more '**Now and Then**' Photographs for future editions. The centre pages this time show some of the latest developments at Sangam which seem to be progressing well.

We have greetings from Sangam Centre Manager, Jen Barron which unfortunately didn't arrive in time to be read out at the A.G.M. in Wheldrake.

The newsletter this time has more pages because the forms you will need to fill in and return to renew your membership and to propose new committee members have been incorporated within this copy. Instructions and information about the forms are on the reverse side so you will not be losing anything crucial when you cut them out. This should save a lot of time and some printing costs. We do hope that you will put these forms to good use. Remember to get the signature of anybody who you propose for Trustee.

It has been decided to ask our members to design a new badge for adults, and Trish Halmshaw is organising this. The Juniors' metal 'Shoba' badge is selling well, and we plan to have a ribbon version too which will be used for new members.

Even if you do not want an electronic newsletter it would be very useful if you could let us have an email address for quicker and cheaper communication.

The deadline for the Spring Newsletter will be March 1st. Please let us have your news, it was great to hear from Brownies who did the Challenge! Which I have shared with you after the Treasurer's report.

**Gill**



## Chairman's Report Y/E 31.12.2011

It's hard to believe that this is my fifth (and final) annual report, as Chairman of FoS (UK). There's an ancient Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times" – and the last five years have certainly been interesting. "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times", as Dickens said. Let's focus on the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011, though.

At the beginning of the year, the green shoots of recovery were beginning to show. Jen Barron had been appointed Programme Manager, a few months earlier, so we were all confident that Sangam would again deliver training of exceptional quality, which would at once both challenge and develop participants. Sure enough, we were soon hearing people bursting with enthusiasm about their time at Sangam, once more – and the numbers attending events began to rise, as word spread. Relationships with Sangam's many Indian friends were rekindled, so that participants could, once more, enjoy the experience of visiting a local family, while at Sangam, and get to see the amazing work undertaken by many charities in the Pune area. Jen was clearly determined to leave her mark – and there are deep footprints still visible in the camp ground, from where the elephant she hired as a special surprise for the birthday event sank in the boggy ground!

Sangam was looking good, when Hilary and I went there in January, 2011, for the FoS International meeting. The buildings were well-maintained and the gardens were magnificent. Datta continues to mastermind the grounds – but is now helped by a number of contract gardeners, who are able to undertake the heavy and routine work. As well as the many trees and flowers, there are now some herbs and spices grown and additional fruit trees have been planted (so expect even more mango dishes, in due course, and pomegranate gluts, in the future).

Some problems remained, though. While we were assured at the meeting that we would receive regular reports, as we had previously, these failed to materialise—with the exception of one, which was so minimalist as to be almost impossible to decipher, other than noting that some new toilet-roll holders had been fitted! There was also the surprise announcement that we in FoS (UK) had provided the money to repair the water tower—because the money in question was what we had previously sent for the new building project. As this clearly contravened both Charity

Commission rules and accountancy practice, I immediately engaged with first Donna and then the World Bureau – and the latter immediately recognised the validity of my concerns and the matter was swiftly and amicably resolved. As a result, the essential repairs to the water tower were carried out – but our donation for the new building work remained in that kitty.

You may recall that at last year's AGM, we reported that we had not sent any money to Sangam in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2010, because of our concerns that nothing was happening on the building front and the fact that our efforts were not being acknowledged. At the end of the year, we learned the new World Centre Manager was to be Jen Barron – and to show our support (and delight), we immediately sent a donation!

So what's happened since?

Jen's showing the same enthusiasm and drive as WCM as she displayed as Programme Manager. Unlike her predecessor, her passion for and commitment to Sangam is both palpable and infectious, as she inspires others to give of their best, to achieve her vision. The Spirit is truly back at Sangam, which is once more a friendly, welcoming place, full of staff and volunteers who are keen to ensure participants have an amazing experience.

Towards the end of 2011, planning permission had finally been obtained for the ambitious building work – but, at the Centre Team meeting, it was recognised that the costs had risen so much in the years it had taken to reach that stage, that there was no longer enough money to finance the project. Viewed critically and dispassionately, it was also clear that the very expensive project would cause massive disruption, but not, in fact, provide much additional space. The decision was taken, therefore, to abandon those plans and, instead, to redesign existing space. We were able to agree that the planned works still constituted "new building" and so our donations were available to support Jen's revised plan.

The work is broken down into bite-sized chunks. As a mini project is completed, things are moved into the new area and the vacated space becomes the next stage for development. The office by reception is now the Yahdej, the old one becoming the Programme Room. The old Programme Room will become Jen's office. Just before I left, last week, a new fridge was delivered and installed, which will stock sweets and chocolate – and may thus put some of the local shops out of business, given the quantities of such things some participants were buying each day!

Dorm 1 is being used by the Tares (previously known as the Community Volunteers). Jen intends to block off the end of the veranda, outside that dorm, to turn it into a separate lounge for them to be able to use – which would, of course, be available for other participants, whenever there are no Tares.

Aruna is retiring, in December – but will be kept on contract for a couple of years and will be on the planning committee for the fiftieth birthday celebrations, in 2016. Jen is planning back-to-back events to mark the occasion – with one finishing and the second starting on the birthday, so as many people as possible are able to celebrate the occasion. When Aruna does finally finish with Sangam, Manik and his family will also be moving out – and the two houses will then be converted into homes for the Centre Manager and Deputy, enabling the other career staff to have more room, in the Guide House.

Final update – remember how the swimming-pool problems had finally been sorted? Alas, once more, there are cracks and ridges in the courtyard, numerous tiles have fallen off and water appears to be leaking out. The good news, though, is that Jen has found a solution which is seemingly used widely in Australia and involves some kind of plastic film, effectively. It is then possible simply to drain the pool and re-coat it, as necessary, every couple of years. Watch this space...

And so, it remains only for me to say goodbye and thank you to you all, for your friendship and support over the past five years – and, in particular, to those who have served as trustees and organised our gatherings during that time. It's been challenging, on occasions, but I've had a great time and it's great to know that, as I pass the reins to Sara, Sangam really is at the very top of its game and we in FoS (UK) once again enjoy a close and collaborative working relationship with both Sangam and World Bureau staff. So, let's all continue to spread the word, to promote Sangam and do all we can to support the excellent work which is being done there.

I'm sure Sara will have as much fun in this role as I have and know she'll enjoy the friendship and support of you all. Thank you.

**Tina**

## **Namaste**

To begin I'd like to say a big thank you to Tina for all her work as Chair of Friends of Sangam UK.



Thank you too, to Rosemarie Temple and her team for a wonderful AGM and gathering in Wheldrake in September. We enjoyed a very tasty Indian meal and an afternoon of Indian activities and stalls.

I am only a few weeks into being chair person so I don't have much to report but I guess I should introduce myself.

I'm an enthusiastic Guider who loves all things to do with international guiding. I first went to Sangam as a leader with a Senior Section group from Wales. At the end of the event I walked out of the doors with an application form to become a PA - Programme Assistant. My application was successful and the following year I returned and spent nine fantastic months living and working at Sangam.

I have since been back on a visit with other members of Friends of Sangam UK and hope to make many more trips to our home in India as well as spreading the word about Sangam.

Thank you for the kind words of support I have been given as I start my new role. I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead and working with members of Friends of Sangam to help spread the Sangam spirit.

**Sara**



## **From our President's Pen**

It was a pleasure to welcome everyone to our Annual General Meeting in Yorkshire and our thanks go to Rosemarie Temple and her team for an excellent event. She even arranged for the sun to shine all day! Since the meeting our thoughts have been with the people of Yorkshire who were affected by the recent floods.

The Annual Meeting is a time for reflection on the past Year's activities and also to look to the year ahead. This year Tina completed her term of office as Chairman and I would like to thank her for all the hard work and time that she has put into the job. Sara Malyon as the new Chairman has, as a Committee member, already gained an insight into FOS UK and I would like to wish her every success in her new role.

Congratulations to Becky Hinton who was elected to become the FOS Europe Representative and in her role will have contact with FOS members in Europe. She follows another member of FOS UK into the role as Liz Aveston has completed her term of office – our thanks go to Liz for the work that she did.

One of the initiatives of the year, thanks to a small hard working group, has been the Sangam Challenge which has been very well received with a record number of badges being sold.

I had not realised until I looked on the web site that Sangam is now affiliated with more than 20 Non- Governmental Organisations (NGO) in Pune, this is a great achievement. These NGOs work in a number of fields including: medicine, education, environmental sustainability, and women's empowerment. Many of the names are familiar to you if you have visited Sangam. If you are planning to go to Sangam in addition to the Sangam "Wish List" there is also one for the NGOs so that you can support a particular organisation if you wish.

The enthusiasm of members continues to be very strong and this helps to make the Friends a vibrant organisation. Please continue to share the "Spirit of Sangam" with everyone you meet.

Thank you for all that you do for Sangam

Jane Wardropper

**2012 Gathering in York**

An enjoyable sunny day was had by all who went to Wheldrake for our A.G.M. A welcome cup of coffee and chatting with old friends was followed by everyone being garlanded before the business meeting—Tina’s last as chairman. Trish Robinson talked about next years weekend gathering which she is hosting in Malvern and 15 people paid their deposits there and then.



An excellent Indian lunch prepared by John Armstrong and his team was next on the agenda and many changed into Indian dress and ate outside in the sun. The afternoon passed quickly with the usual stalls, crafts to make, henna decorating by a gifted Ranger and the fundraising ended with an auction followed by tea and cakes.



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About 20 people who were staying in York met for a meal in the evening and 10 brave bodies went on a ghost tour as well.

We haven’t the final figures yet but Diane’s stall took £120, Hilary’s £134, Produce £54, White elephant and quiz £82, Auction £83 and the donations for crafts was £27 and 3 people signed the table cloth £3 which Audrey will embroider.

Many thanks to Rosemarie and her team for a lovely day and we hope to see you all next year in Malvern. [details in Spring 2013].

\* \* \* \* \*





1st September 2012

Namaste, Friends of Sangam UK

It gives me much pleasure to send you greetings from Sangam for your Gathering. I wish you a weekend of fabulous connections and deliberations.

A few updates hot off the press and in brief:

#### Property

- The office re-design work is going really well and I'm sure Tina, Rosemarie and Wendy will give you a full update about this as they all had the 'Office Redesign Tour' when they were onsite!
- The 'old' badges from the dining room have been refurbished and are up around the building for everyone to enjoy (thank you).

#### Programme

- Monsoon events went very well! Sadly we had to cancel the Feasts and Festivals event that was scheduled for September, as we had no bookings. Also for the birthday event in October we only have 12 booked in. We will give these people an amazing experience for sure but a bigger crowd for birthday celebrations is always welcome! The good news is that our World Thinking Day event for 2013 is over subscribed! If you can assist us with promoting our upcoming events calendar it would be appreciated as participants means sustainability for Sangam but also that more people get the chance to experience the amazing Sangam Spirit!
- We have five 12 week Tare on site right now and for the first time five 4 week Tare will be joining us in October. Maybe some members of FOS UK would be interested in being 4 week Tare in February 2013? Applications are about to close for both the 12 and 4 week programme for Jan/Feb/Mar 2013!
- Initial planning discussions for the 50th birthday will begin at the Centre Team meeting in March 2013.

#### HR

- Christa (Deputy W.C.M.:Programme) has just returned from the USA where she had some annual leave and renewed her visa for the next 12 months.
- Catherine (from Ireland), our new guest services coordinator has just completed her first month with us.
- Bron (from Australia) our programme coordinator is three months into her six month probation period.

- Gwen (Deputy W.C.M.:Programme) has extended her contract until August 2013.
- Our short term monsoon volunteers from the UK and Kenya are about to complete their terms and two new Volunteers both from Scandinavia are due to arrive shortly.
- Aruna will retire in December 2012 but will go on contract with us.
- I'm sitting in Paris airport in transit to the World Centres Committee meeting at Our Cabana and looking forward to my first visit!

#### Finances

- Our budget is tight! We have budgeted to make a loss in 2012, almost break even in 2013 and in 2014 make a small profit. However, these figures include donations that we expected to receive and the inclusion of significant funds through the UPS Foundation—UPS will continue to fund a contribution to the Community Programme until the end of 2014.
- We are doing our best to control costs. We cannot enter into any new capital projects until donations have been received for them. Therefore the swimming pool resurfacing project—which is the next priority on our wish list—cannot go ahead until all the funds are in hand.

#### Other

- Mina and the girls who went to Ireland for camp 101 had an amazing time... sorry we couldn't get them to England... their visas arrived 48 hours before their departure and one of the visas just 24 hours before!

As several of your members have recently been to see us I'm sure they will fill you in with their observations on Sangam Life. The team is eager to welcome you to Sangam any time and we are also open to communication. Please get in touch with us if there is something you would like to know about our operations or about coming to stay. We are more than willing to share!

I hope you have a fantastic weekend and enjoy your time together and remember we are not far away!

In the Spirit of Sangam...

Jen Barron

World Centre Manager



The latest improvements / alterations in Sangam



The shop has moved to the office space beside the reception desk, and business is booming.



The programme room has moved into the vacated shop space, and soon Jen's office will be installed in the old programme room.

Resources have moved into the old laundry and a new laundry has been built in the space at the end of the corridor from the kitchen, it incorporates a drying area, washing machines for staff, sinks for participants and the stone for the Sangam ladies.



Dorm 6 has had bunk beds installed in each corner of the room, to increase available beds and to make up for those lost to the Tares (previously called C.V.P.s) who now use Dorm 1.

When the linen store has been moved nearer to the laundry it will become a disabled bathroom for this dorm.



**Security has been stepped up!**



There are now electronic key pads, for entry to each dorm and cameras installed at various points both inside and outside the main buildings. Jen and her deputies are the only ones who know the code for the lock on the front door. Everyone else has to ring the bell, as soon as night falls, to be let in by the night watchman, or another member of staff.



**Computers for participant's use in the Panaji lounge.**



Currently when there is a power cut the generator cuts in and the bakery bank on the path to the Guider's house has to be manually turned on. This system is no longer powerful enough for the increasing IT needs of Sangam and there is a plan to install a smaller,

modern, power source by the sub-station in the Parade Ground which will automatically switch on and off as needed.







Mish decided to take another adult party from Lincolnshire North to Sangam, followed by a visit to Sri Lanka (She had been with NEE in 2010) It was only when one of the Ranger's mothers said "Any chance of the Rangers going? It would be a great experience?" that she decided to widen the group, but only taking girls we had known and travelled with before. So eventually the group was 5 under 18 (one was 15), and 13 others ranging from 21 to 74. We were limited to when we could go and then we discovered all the Sangam sessions in summer 2012 were 10 days so that meant the only way we could fit things in was to go between sessions and do our own thing -just 4 nights/5 days at Sangam.

How do you fit all that means a session into 5 days? First – what was the essence of our memories? The Welcome ceremony, swimming, saris and Punjabis, rickshaws, exploring and shopping in Pune, meeting Terabai, Deep Griha...the list could have gone on! After we had booked we consulted Trish Halmshaw with our ideas, sent them on to Sangam. Of course, all this was a year or more ahead – the staff will be different! But the reply was encouraging. There would be time for the tailor to do his work, and everything else to be fitted in.

We had a couple of nights in a rainy Mumbai and were ready for the coach to Pune at 8 a.m. When it had not arrived by 9 we phoned Sangam – it could be stuck in traffic, it could be several more hours. It eventually arrived at 1.15, so our tight schedule at Sangam had already gone out of the window – we should have bought our saris and bangles that afternoon.

But Gwen was great –the tailor does not have to have 3 days—2 will do, buy your fabric tomorrow. So we relaxed and enjoyed the choreography of our welcome ceremony.

Thursday we had our first rickshaw rides in the rain, explored Pune in the rain, bought our bangles under umbrellas, but it was all fitting in.

We did brave the big new road on foot and visit Terabai. Green Tara was a revelation – Dr Mune is another determined lady who is changing lives with the use of her aprons. And what fun we had with the girls – our youngest taught the Hoki Koki and everyone joined in noisily. We swam, three even finished the Sangam challenge, we went to Deep Griha and impressed another group with the wonder of all they do, and we met our sponsored girls. We even fitted in a Bollywood movie though we didn't have the stamina to stay till the end, and some even got up for yoga in the mornings. When our clothes arrived from the tailor Jen and Karmeni showed us how to dress, and we all had mehendi to match. We only had one session – '10 Million Girls' and later our younger members wished they had had more.

Yes, we missed being with other groups but with such a mixed staff we did have the international feel. Our Sangam tiffins gave us a little memento of all we can do, and the Sangelee cloth bags became an essential accessory for the rest of our trip. The staff was great at helping us – even finishing our log book page when the rickshaws came early to take us to the station.

The rain had stopped and we left for the Jelhum express with memories of a crowded 5 days and ready for the 24 hours relaxing! We enjoyed the Taj – of course – and Promises made there by Rona Simons as Trefoil Guild and Grace Forster as a Ranger were extra special. Then Delhi, and on to the paradise island of Sri Lanka, where the highlight for some was climbing Sigariya ( at 74 I was extremely proud of myself climbing it again).

It was a memorable month – seeing things through young eyes was an extra dimension. If ever you cannot fit in a whole session, we can recommend doing your own thing at Sangam – with of course, the very necessary help from the staff.

**Sheila Harrop**

## **TREASURER'S REPORT Y/E 31ST DECEMBER 2011**

Herewith the accounts for the year ending 31st December 2011, showing the receipts and payments along with a statement of the total assets.

Income this year is down almost £2,000 on the 2010 total and expenses are up slightly (approximately £200) on 2010. There are though explanations for these differences, the most important being that no Gift Aid figures are included in the 2011 figures as they had not reached the account by the year end. Rather than including all money sent with subscriptions under that heading, some of it has been transferred to the donations column as this is really what the excess amounts to. The major reason for the increase in Trading figures over previous years is that the account has now been transferred to the General Account; it seemed to be a sensible course of action as it was somewhat idiosyncratic to keep it as a separate account. The Gathering at Broneirion did make a profit, albeit small if one excludes the amounts made by the Stalls and Raffle, but it was a delightful venue and catering and accommodation were of a high standard. I would suggest that a small profit is perfectly acceptable if the major purpose is to bring people together (as the name implies) but this may be an issue for discussion. Interest rates remain almost non-existent, hence the very limited increase in the amount in the Premium Business Account, but this does act as an emergency fund if required so I would suggest that it remain.

Overall, expenditure has remained fairly stable. Travelling expenses have increased but this was largely due to payment of flight tickets to India for our two representatives to attend the meeting at Sangam which is held approximately every three years. The Newsletter has been made available on-line and this has helped to keep down postal costs; in addition, fewer pages of the Newsletter have been in colour thus ensuring that the rise in printing costs has been kept to a minimum.

We continue to be in a healthy position financially and my thanks are due to everyone who has ensured that this is the case.

**Judith Rowley**

## **FRIENDS OF SANGAM (UK)**

UK Registered Charity Number 1077376

### **Income and Expenses Account for the year to 31st December 2011**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	<b><u>General Account</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>
Subscriptions	3895.50	4397
Donations	3158.10	1351
Building Appeal	54.00	3298
Gift Aid		1731
Trading	1940.17	90
Gathering 2011 £4385.00		
Less costs £4276.34	108.66	342
Gathering 2011 Fund raising	729.52	579
Guide Association		70
Tina Powell		5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9885.95</b>	<b>11863</b>
Premium Business Account	2115.76	2115
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>12001.71</u></b>	<b>13978</b>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>		
Travelling Expenses	1,467.80	592
Postage	49.47	113
Stationary + Photocopying	85.97	4
Newsletter Printing	1,579.40	1468
Newsletter Postage	441.84	450
Miscellaneous	102.00	45
Badges +Flyers	740.37	
Sangam	6,100.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>10,566.85</u></b>	
<b><u>STATEMENT OF ASSETS</u></b>		
General Account from 2010	9191.42	
Plus Excess 2011	1434.86	
Premium Business Account	2115.76	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>12,742.04</u></b>	





**Challenge Badges are selling like 'Hot Cakes'**

**2150** Rainbows through to Adults have participated from all Regions of the UK plus one group from BGIFC in Lanzarote. Perth Division had the most completed in one go with 190. It isn't too late to join them!

FoS member Anna Ranson Guider with 3rd Broughton Astley Brownies shared these pictures of some of her unit. Perhaps they would like



to become Junior Friends and receive regular stories, activity ideas and a unit certificate plus a ribbon badge for each girl.



**Teddy Too!**



**6th Colne Brownies**

already keen Junior members, are seen here making splatter paint pictures to 'celebrate' the colourful Holi festival without getting too dirty. Thanks to their Guider, FoS member, Judith Diggins for sending us these



pictures and sharing this good idea!

Try making child size



saris by cutting 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> yds. of 60" wide cloth in half lengthways, making 2 small ones!



## Membership Matters

The new database is coming into use and it is the responsibility of the controller to keep your details secure.

It is stated in the Policy Document that information is kept solely for the purpose of administration and communication and member's details will not be divulged to 3rd parties without their consent.

As part of our efforts to keep costs down the annual membership renewal form has been printed on the reverse of this page. If you already pay by Standing Order or if you have a 5 year membership, please ignore this reminder, unless you have been reminded that your five years is due for renewal.

We strive to keep your details up to date and would be grateful if you would use this form to change any of your details which have changed recently, or if they appear wrongly on your envelope.

It seems that email addresses and mobile phone numbers are frequently changing.

Updated details can be sent by email if you wish to save postage.

**Friends of Sangam (UK)** email address is - **fos\_uk@yahoo.co.uk**

Will Members who already receive their newsletter by email please print off the form, fill it in and post with their cheque to the address given.

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### UP FOR ANOTHER CHALLENGE?

We need a new adult badge for Friends of Sangam(UK)

The design can be either for a metal or cloth badge — or it could be both

The design must include the words 'Friends of Sangam (UK)'

Designs to be sent to Trish Halmshaw.

Closing date: 1st March 2013

Please include your name, address and / or email address

The successful designer will be contacted before the end of March 2013

# FoS (UK) - TRUSTEES

## **Why do we need to elect new Trustees each year?**

The Trustees are the committee members who are responsible for running FoS (UK). By changing our Trustees at regular intervals we aim to ensure that FoS keeps moving forward with new ideas, new thoughts and ways of serving Sangam.

Trustees serve for a period of three years. They may then if they wish, be re-elected and serve a further three-year period, after which they must retire. Three of the Trustees are the elected officers of the charity—Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. The remaining six 'ordinary' Trustees may take on other responsibilities, such as Membership, Trading and Juniors.

**In September 2013, Alison Beacom, Barbara Graham, Judith Rowley and Sara Malyon all trustees will have completed their first term of office and are all willing to be nominated for a second term. We will also require two new Trustees as Hilary Taylor will have completed her second term of office and there is a vacancy for another, this will bring the committee back up to nine.**

**Nominations are now invited for candidates who would like to serve as Trustee on the Committee.** As there are six vacancies in total if you wish to nominate more than one person please do .

- \* Any fully paid-up member of FoS(UK) aged 18 or over is eligible to be a Trustee.
- \* Please ensure that the person you are nominating signs the form!

Please photocopy or cut out and use the form on the reverse of this sheet.

Details of the candidates and voting papers (if necessary) will be in the Spring 2013 Newsletter. The results will be reported to the AGM in September 2013.

Please think seriously about helping Sangam in this special and very practical way! The work is not onerous, and you will find plenty of fun and friendship at the twice-yearly meetings—despite the seriousness of the work involved.

Members of the committee are always willing to discuss becoming a Trustee with you.

Hilary Taylor