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THE ARCHER

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A new school rises in Cambodia

The tiny school in Tany village in southern Cambodia has three dingy classrooms for 300 children. There just isn't enough room so the youngsters have to attend in shifts.

But things are changing with the help of volunteers from the charity Guy's Trust, set up by East Finchley residents Vicky and Tony Joseph in memory of their son Guy who was killed, aged 25, in a paragliding accident in 2011.

Work, play and achievement

A team of 20 supporters arrived in Tany in late February to start building a new five-classroom block with toilets and a proper playground.

Vicky said: "Most had never worked on a building site before and certainly not in 35-degree heat but after an extraordinary welcome from the entire school lining the path, waving flags and clapping, everyone got stuck in."

They dug, shifted sand and rubble, did metal work, laid bricks, installed sinks, created a vegetable plot and built a play-

ground. In between the labour, they played with the children who were told not to go on to the building site but totally ignored the rules.

By the end of the week the basins were installed and many of the children were mesmerised at seeing running water for the first time. The playground was finished, the swings and climbing ropes erected and new Guy's Trust T-shirts were handed out to everyone.

Tony added: "The team felt a huge sense of achievement and although it was hard work absolutely everyone had an incredible time; some said it had been one of the best weeks of their life!"

Guy's Trust

Guy had spent several weeks travelling around Cambodia during the summer of 2011 and was fascinated by the



Play time: Boys try out the swings in the new playground

country and impressed with the people's warmth and resilience. In Cambodia, although 95% of children are enrolled in school, only 61% complete primary education. There are problems with absent teachers and overcrowded classes. Many parents feel their children's time is better spent working at home or in the

fields to support their family, so the country has the least educated population in the region.

To date Guy's Trust has funded 12 marine conservation internships in Indonesia, built

three schools and a library in Nepal and another school in Cambodia in Guy's memory.

Find out more about the charity's work and get involved at <http://guystrust.org>.

Crucial work of Ebola professor

By Diana Cormack

On 24 February a family of four from Summerlee Gardens made their way to Buckingham Palace where Prince Charles was presenting awards to those nominated in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. One of these was Professor John Edmunds, who was receiving the OBE. The official citation for this was: "For services to infectious disease control particularly the Ebola crisis response in West Africa".

Career supporting public health

Prof Edmunds has lived in the area for more than a decade, starting off in Church Lane. His daughters attend Holy Trinity School. His own schooling began in Wales, where his favourite subjects of biology and maths pointed to his future activities. After studying at Imperial College, London, John worked for the Health Protection Agency (now called Public Health England) and was involved in UK and worldwide studies on pandemic influenza, the human papilloma virus and swine flu.

Now he is Dean of Faculty of Epidemiology and Population Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and is renowned in the field of disease modelling and analysis. This involves analysing, estimating, evaluating and predicting the spread of diseases. Better understanding of this means that health officials and governments are able to make successful and cost-effective decisions about public health.

Tribute to team

John told *THE ARCHER* that he feels the award is down to his team and is not only for

their work in West Africa. He praised their magnificent

response to the horror of the Ebola crisis which aided crucial decision-making on treating the disease and their assistance with the rapid development of an effective vaccine.

But this is just the most recent on a list of admirable achievements, for his research group has aided understanding and provided life-saving analysis about serious diseases and how they spread in many parts of the world.

We hear little about this vital work, for which thanks and congratulations are due to all concerned. John's OBE underlines this.



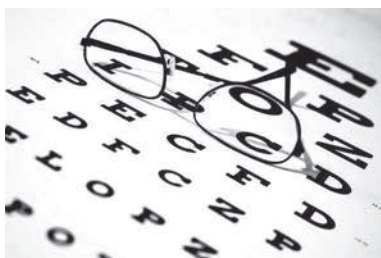
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