

HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales · Charity number 1139273

Details

Other names	HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES IS ONE OF THE PROJECTS AND IS MENTIONED IN THE TRUST DOCUMENT, PROJECTS TO SUPPORT REFUGEES FROM BURMA
Status	Registered
Legal form	Trust
Registered	2010-12-08
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Navestock House Mill Road Hempnall Norwich NR15 2LP
Phone	07931758970
Email	geof.holt@gmail.com
Website	www.h4fa.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECT OF THE CHARITY IS TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION, PRESERVE AND PROTECT HEALTH AND ASSIST IN THE RELIEF OF POVERTY AND DISTRESS AMONGST REFUGEES FROM BURMA, BY THE PROVISION OF SUCH FACILITIES AS THE TRUSTEES SHALL FROM TIME TO TIME IN THEIR ABSOLUTE DISCRETION THINK FIT WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE

Activities: The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma/Myanmar, who have fled hardship and human rights abuses. These activities specifically include aid for needy veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Other Finance
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Overseas Aid/famine Relief, Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOT DEFINED IN PRACTICE NATIONAL AND OVERSEAS
- Burma
- Thailand
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£75,872	£125,392	-	-
2023-12-31	£94,723	£106,585	-	-
2022-12-31	£124,226	£151,450	-	-
2021-12-31	£279,022	£117,151	-	-
2020-12-31	£113,593	£122,094	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alex Bescoby		2019-04-18
Andrew Curtis		2019-06-12
Andrew Philip Page		2020-10-03
Bertram Digby Alexander Lawson		2022-05-16
Fiona Matthews		2025-08-01
Geoffrey Johnston Holt		
Judge John Philip Trevelyan Head		2025-01-30
PETER CHARLES CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL		2013-07-28
SARAH KATHERINE MCLEAN MBE		2023-07-01
Timothy Peter Sinnett Davies		2025-05-19
Van Cung Lian		2019-10-30

HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales - Charity number 1139273

Accounts



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No 1139273

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2024

	Help 4 Forgotten Allies <i>includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma</i>
	Charity Registration No 1139273

Charity Registration Number:

1139273
(Registered 08 December 2010)

Governing Document:

Trust Deed dated 25 November 2010

Other Names:

The Charity was formerly known as Projects to support Refugees from Burma

Registered Address:

12 Highworth Avenue
CAMBRIDGE
CB4 2BG

Trustees:

Mr Geoff Holt (Chair)
Mrs Sally McLean MBE (Founding Chair)
Mr Andrew Page (Treasurer)
Mr Peter Mitchell (RCEL Representative)
Mr Van Cung Lian
Mr Andrew Curtis
Mr Alex Bescoby
Mr Bertie Lawson
Mrs Bellay South (resigned 12TH April 2024)

President:

General Sir Alex Harley

Patrons:

Dame Joanna Lumley OBE
Karen Archer

Objects:

The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma (Myanmar), who have fled hardship and human rights abuses.

These activities specifically include aid for veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War.

Website:

www.h4fa.org.uk



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)

Charity No 1139273

PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2024

		Comparative 2023
Income (Receipts)	£	
Individual Donations & Gifts (Veterans & Widows)	22947.50	17636
Individual Donations & Gifts (Education & Humanitarian)	4521.02	4786
Reclaimed Tax on Gift Aid	1634.74	3223
RCEL Grant [Note 1]	14691.91	32328
Van Mesdag Fund	20000.00	18250
Cuthbert Horn Trust [Note 2]	0.00	7000
Tadworth & Walton Overseas Trust	7000.00	4500
Special Forces Benevolent Fund	3000.00	3000
Other Grants (Veterans & Widows)	0.00	2000
Other Grants (Education & Humanitarian)	0.00	2000
CCLA Deposit Fund Income [Note 3]	2077.25	0
Total Income	75872.42	94723
Expenditure (Payments)		
Grants made to Veterans & Widows (H4FA)	38535.76	50469
Grants for Education & Humanitarian Purposes (PSRB)	85034.93	53621
Admin Costs	1821.36	2495
Total Expenditure	125392.05	106585
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	-49519.63	-11862
Current Assets	<i>as at 31/12/2024</i>	<i>as at 01/01/2024</i>
Investments		
CCLA Deposit Fund	90000.00	0
Cash at bank and in hand		
H4FA Account (Cooperative Bank)	20203.44	154467.46
PSRB Account (Cooperative Bank)	11090.54	16346.15
	121293.98	170813.61
	170813.61	
	-49519.63	
	121293.98	

Andrew Page
Trustee & Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts

Note1

The grant distribution year runs from April to March and timing of payment varies according to the local political stability and weather conditions. Additionally, RCEL provide grant funding upon receipt of a distribution plan. If veterans or widows are not found or have died then RCEL claw back the grants for these individuals in the following period.

Note2

Donation of £7,000 received in Q1 2025.

Note 3

CCLA Deposit Fund account opened in June 2024.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of H4FA

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of H4FA for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of H4FA, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of H4FA carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material matter respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of H4FA as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Raymond A Bissex FCA

32 Brooklands Avenue
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 3XZ

Date: 26 May 2025

Payments to Trustees

No payments (other than approved expenses) were made to Trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period.

No material transaction took place between the organisation and a Trustee or any person connected with them.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to protecting and safeguarding the welfare of beneficiaries of the Charity, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that established policies and procedures on GDPR and Data Protection are followed.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

Public Benefit

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or aims that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.



Chair of Trustees

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)



Photo Credit (Evangeline Modell)

Trustees Annual Report

UK registered charity no.1139273

Patrons: Dame Joanna Lumley DBE FRGS & Karen Archer

President: General Sir Alex Harley KBE CB

H4FA

Introduction: (Geoff Holt writes)

Our charitable objects are to help relieve the suffering of those who have fled hardship and human rights abuses, including refugees from Myanmar/Burma. These activities specifically include aid for needy veterans (and their widows) who served so faithfully in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War. Sadly they have often not received the proper recognition they deserve. During the year, with the help of local partners, and despite increasingly challenging and often dangerous situations on the ground, we have continued to distribute grants.

The trustees have agreed that the future strategic direction of the charity will be to focus increasingly on educational and humanitarian projects, seeking to provide a longer-term legacy for these people who have suffered so much. We remain immensely grateful to all our supporters and donors, both individuals and grant-making bodies, without whom none of this would be possible. As we look forward, we believe there is a strong and much needed future for the charity.

Myanmar/Burma: (Peter Mitchell writes)

Over the last year, the conflict ravaging the country has become even more dire. Indiscriminate bombing by the Myanmar military junta continues in large parts of the country allowing them to maintain a hold on key territory, not least the major towns and cities. Air power has been used to terrorise the population with targeted attacks on villages, towns, schools, hospitals, places of worship of different religions – anywhere where people might gather. The aim of the junta is to make the people fearful of their power and thus deter opposition. There have, however, been some positive developments. Opposition forces have made gains across large parts of the country, especially in more rural locations. Some areas are no longer under the junta's direct control. Nevertheless, there are circa 3.5 million IDPs and many thousands of refugees on the borders with both Thailand and India. There are huge problems in accessing humanitarian aid and the education of young people has suffered greatly. The recent termination of US Aid has exacerbated the situation.

The recent earthquake damaged the country greatly, especially in the central areas. A state of emergency was declared in Sagaing, Mandalay, Naypyitaw, Magway, Bago, and Shan State. The relief effort has been hampered by the authorities. ABC News reported there were relief supplies with the ASEAN logo at a warehouse in Naypyidaw nearly a month after the earthquake. Elsewhere in the country, local self-help is all there is to rely on. There is little or no help at all from the authorities.

The future of the country remains very uncertain. Internally, the junta oppress the people; externally, powerful neighbours have a strong influence which destabilises the country's society and economy. We must continue to do all we can to help.

VJ Day, 15th August 2025 – 80th Anniversary: (Peter Mitchell writes)

This important anniversary is fast approaching. The effort Britain and her allies in Burma made to defeat the Japanese invasion of Burma were gigantic but the war in Burma was largely forgotten. This will realistically be the last opportunity for a major commemoration. It is vital that we recognise all that these wonderful, courageous people did; thus the anniversary holds huge significance for H4FA.

'The Last Burma Star' Film: (Alex Bescoby writes)

I first heard about Sally Mclean and the incredible work of H4FA almost a decade ago, when I was cutting my teeth as a filmmaker in Myanmar. Given my focus on exploring the shared history of Britain and Burma, someone suggested I might want to follow their story – I'm so grateful I did. Out of that first meeting grew a lasting friendship and one of the proudest creations of my filmmaking career: *Forgotten Allies: The Search for Burma's Lost Heroes*. Little did I know then that nearly ten years later I'd be working with Sally as a proud Trustee of H4FA, sharing some of the most meaningful adventures of my life with this extraordinary group of dedicated volunteers.

After the success of *Forgotten Allies* in raising awareness of the Burma Campaign – and the men from Burma who fought in it – both in the UK and beyond, we knew that in this VJ80 year, we had to do something equally ambitious. We realised it might be our last chance to tell first-hand stories from the ever-dwindling band of WWII heroes. Joining forces with my old friend Major Levison Wood – whose grandfather fought in Burma with the Royal Welch Fusiliers – the idea for *The Last Burma Star* was born.



Photo Credit (Evangeline Modell)

Our film tells the story of our search for one of the last surviving veterans of the XIVth Army, 100-year-old Corporal Con Herh. He was living on the front line of the battle between Chin resistance forces and the junta, and even as we boarded the plane to India, we couldn't be certain we'd find him. Yet despite the terrain and the raging war, proving just how special his generation is, Con Herh was not to be deterred. On Easter Sunday, in a small church at a refugee camp on the Indian side of the Myanmar border, we were finally united with him. I can't wait to share the film we made with him with all of you later this year.

Along the way, we were confronted time and again with the reality that Myanmar, 80 years after the end of WWII, is still a country torn apart by conflict. Con Herh himself told us how, in recent weeks, he'd had to flee his home in Chin State after it was bombed by Myanmar military fighter jets.

One of the most moving moments on our journey to find Con Herh was a chance meeting with a young man known to his friends as "Bahu," named after a heroic character in a famous Indian movie. Rather than being a veteran of the Second World War, he is a veteran of the war raging in Myanmar today. Slight and softly spoken, Bahu told me how he sustained life-changing injuries while trying to recover the bodies of friends killed in a skirmish with junta forces. Unbeknownst to him, the corpses had been laced with explosives – an act of cruelty that left him blind for life.

For years, my work with H4FA has allowed me to meet and film with veterans of the Second World War. These encounters are some of the most treasured memories of my life, and now that so many have passed on, I feel privileged to have captured their testimony on film for posterity. But meeting Bahu was something different – an experience I will never forget. WWII veterans' memories are distant, their scars lasting but faded. Meeting a war veteran many years younger than myself was a powerful reminder that while the war ended for us in the UK 80 years ago, for our friends in Myanmar, the conflict continues.

That's why the work H4FA is doing is more important now than ever. As well as continuing to support our heroic veterans as they endure civil war and natural disasters, H4FA's mission is evolving. The one unanimous request we received from all our veterans was: "Please care for the next generation, and ensure they get a good education." We listened. Today, we're proud to fund Phoenix School in Mizoram, India – just across the border from Myanmar. Run by its heroic headteacher Joyce, Phoenix School provides essential education to refugee children from Myanmar – many of whose grandfathers and great-grandfathers fought for Britain in her hour of need.

My brief time with the teachers and students of Phoenix School left a deep impression. Children as young as ten recounted their experiences of fleeing airstrikes and losing loved ones as they escaped their homeland in terror. Now, they face the daunting task of rebuilding their lives in a new country, while processing profound loss – something no child should ever have to endure. One day, when peace returns to Myanmar, they hope to go home. The least we can do in the meantime is ensure they have a safe space to go each day and the education they need to rebuild when that day comes. Until then, H4FA's mission goes on. I know every one of our veterans would support us wholeheartedly in doing so. Thank you to all of you for your support.

Distribution of grants to ex-servicemen and widows in Chin State: (Van Cung Lian writes)



Welfare grant distribution to the Chin State area was very challenging due to constant fighting between the military junta and local resistance forces. The resistance groups in Chin State have been growing stronger and gaining momentum in their fight against the military junta. The Chin Brotherhood alliance seized the town of Matupi in southern Chin State from the junta in June, and the town was fully evacuated prior to the assault. It took a while to find our beneficiaries, but we managed to deliver much-needed grants to them. We knew that the Chin Brotherhood had planned to start operations in northern Chin State, so we took action to deliver grants before the town and nearby villages were evacuated. We made a short documentary about our distribution in the Tedim area (<https://youtu.be/ncNoxgCo6e0>).



I am from Falam in northern Chin State, and the Chin Brotherhood and their allies started their offensive in November last year. After five months of fighting, suffering, and sacrifice, the Chin Brotherhood managed to liberate the town. The military junta bombed the town constantly and destroyed my hometown and my childhood house. We always kept our eyes and ears open and undertook constant risk assessments to look after our beneficiaries. After the victory at Falam, the Chin Brotherhood has now been planning to take Tedim town, and we are in the process of delivering welfare grants to the Tedim area before the battle.



The scene of Falam, Chin State after the town was liberated (Photo Credit: Anyein)



The ruins of the Roman Catholic Church in Falam, Chin State (Photo Credit: Anyein)

Other Areas Distribution

We were able to distribute grants to our beneficiaries from other areas, including Yangon, Taungoo, Hpa-An, Nyaunglebin, Irrawaddy and on the Thai border. We are very pleased that we were able to distribute welfare grants to some of our beneficiaries in Loikaw, Karenni State. We had not been able to distribute in this area last year due to the conflict in the region, and we lost contact with our beneficiary.

Phoenix School: (Van Cung Lian writes)

We now have two projects in Zokhawthar, on the Burma/India border. The night school, which we started in 2022, has been growing, and students have continued to learn English, Burmese and Maths. In addition, they learn about Chin culture and language, and then play sports and take part in creative pursuits.

I reported on the Phoenix school, its building, and its opening in last year's report. Phoenix School has just completed its first academic year. Due to the remote location of their refugee camp, this is the only way young children can access education. They have been learning a curriculum set by the Mizoram State government. The district education department has informally recognized the existence of Phoenix School, and graduates will be able to join middle school when they complete their studies.



Across the two projects, we are looking after 270 students and spent £19,900 during the academic year. 70% of the expenditure was for teachers' salaries, and the other 30% was for expenses related to materials required for teaching and building maintenance. We have 15 teachers, and we paid them £70 a month. Our teachers are also refugees from Burma who took part in the civil disobedience movement during the military coup. Prior to Phoenix School, children in this Bethel camp spent most of their time at the refuse dump trying to salvage something to sell and seeing them have access to education and witnessing their progress has been inspiring. They have also contributed to local community work by collecting rubbish and cleaning the town, and through this good work, the local community is pleased with them.



Out students during their community work i.e. cleaning the town

Our trustee, Alex Bescoby, was able to see some of the children, teachers, and parents during his trip to the area. In addition, Mr Ben Small, who works for the UK and Australian governments in research on refugees in the area, also managed to visit Phoenix School and said:

"I think the project is value for money for trustees. I don't know where else these children would otherwise be getting an education. And given the challenges, the school was an impressive set up."



Photo taken during our trustee Alex Bescoby visit. The school honoured him with a Chin traditional ceremonial blanket.



Photo taken during Mr. Ben Small visit (November 2024) to Phoenix School

PSRB

Emmanuel School: (Sally McLean writes)

Emmanuel School is a small Anglican primary school in Mae La refugee camp. The camp, which has a population of over 34,000 people, is the largest of nine camps strung along the Thai/Burma border. It is 40 km from the town of Mae Sot, a small Thai town with an airport. There are currently 222 students: 108 boys and 114 girls, as well as 14 teachers, 2 cooks and a caretaker. The lower grades have higher numbers of children some of whom have arrived recently from war torn Karen State which is on the other side of the border where the schools are not functioning normally due to the raging civil war. We sent Emmanuel School £29,606 in four quarterly payments between April 2024 – April 2025.



There has been a drastic reduction in rations in the camps to just £1.74 a month per person and £1.10 for a child under 4 for food. Anxiety is exacerbated by the medical clinics in the camp closing. This has been caused by the cessation of USAID. The teachers and students and their families are enormously grateful to

you, the donors, for your continued support. The children find that the lessons in gardening and sewing give them hope of finding employment in the future, and that art is therapeutic. We are proud that their marks compare very favourably with other camp schools.

PSRB sends four quarterly payments to pay teachers' salaries, buy school equipment and stationery, and make repairs. The school has been recently renovated and the furniture upgraded and mended. With the intensity of the 'rainy season' keeping the roofs in good repair is essential. Recent developments include a change of head and several of the teachers; the resettlement programme to third countries has now reopened and some staff applied to leave the camp for a new life.

Emmanuel Middle School was begun through the generosity of the Van Mesdag Trust. Provision of lunches each day is with money kindly given by the Tadworth and Walton Overseas Aid Trust. These lunches are hugely appreciated as camp rations are now so meagre and for the children this can be their main meal of the day. The school has a library which commemorates and honours the memory of Mr Rob Van Mesdag. Full reports are sent each quarter. Currently the school is planning to build a kitchen. We were able to send extra money for Christmas 2024 celebrations and prizes.

Trustees visited in October 2022 and a visit was again made in March 2025. The earthquake, although felt in Mae La Camp, did not affect the school. The teachers, pupils and committee thank donors very wholeheartedly.



Sponsored Students

We sponsor three former students through Emmanuel School, who were chosen as particularly promising. One is sponsored in memory of Major Winstanley who fought at the battle of Kohima. Another hopes to become a health worker or even doctor.



Care Villa

Care Villa, also in Mae La refugee camp received **£3,012** at Christmas 2024 from PSRB. This pays for basic needs beyond the food rations the nine handicapped men receive; their housing is also very basic. They are casualties of landmines in the endless war between the Karen and the Burma Army. Now that rations have been cut by 53%, our donation may be more vital than ever. The money has been spent on two helpers throughout the year, working out at £28 per resident per month, for extra food, the two carers, medicines, extra hygiene products and music, current affairs discussions and English lessons.

Karenni Bible College

We have supported this small Bible College in Ban Mae Surin, Karenni Refugee Camp on the Thai Burma border since 2001. Despite the ongoing threat of camp closure, a devastating fire in 2013, and now the big cuts to camp rations from the US government, the College survives. It is in a very remote jungle location near the border with Myanmar and the internet connection is problematic. Currently there are 51 students, 21 teaching staff and the college is full of life and a source of comfort and support to the camp population of over three thousand. They provide a home for 60 war orphans and have a very successful choir appreciated locally in Thai villages. In March the College held three days of Jubilee events to mark 25 years of the College and our representative made the long journey to be there and report and take photos. Alumni returned and people visited from Thailand, the US and Australia. It was a major event for them. They are so grateful that throughout the life of the College PSRB has been their major donor. We gave a total of £14,024 over the year.



Over 25 years, the College has grown a great deal and it is good to see how its relations with Thai Churches as well as Burmese Churches and with Churches in Australia, through its diaspora, have grown and helped it to become well established and supported. As the Burma Army has bombed many churches on the other side of the border in Karenni State, and persecuted Christians over decades, this Bible College is an unlikely jungle haven of education and preparation for the students to rebuild their country in the future. The donations we send are mainly spent on paying staff, supplementing food rations, supporting the orphans in their care, and buying office equipment.



IDP Teacher's Project

Our distributor takes small individual grants, often travelling on foot through the jungle, to teachers in remote areas of Karenni State. The teachers work in schools that were set up for the children of villagers who have fled Burma Army incursions. The bombing of civilians has been the worst in Karenni State. We pay travel expenses and a grant to him in recognition of the work he does for his people and PSRB. He visited four schools and writes that in 2004 he supported 24 schools but now travelling is much more difficult due to the bombing. In total, between the four schools supported this year, there are 68 teachers and an average annual wage of £177. We gave them roughly £63 each. £6,533.25 paid out on 30th August 2024.

Maternity Bags Project

This is a project to provide expectant mothers, living in difficult circumstances as IDPs or in refugee camps, with the basic necessities for child birth and for their newborn baby. For the Karen people, following evidence of genocidal intentions towards them by the Burma Junta, protecting their newborns is very close to their hearts. There are three and a half million IDPs now in Myanmar, many in the east of the country and, therefore, too many women have to give birth in very difficult circumstances. PSRB has now decided to give annually to the project at roughly the same rate as this year: June 2024, £762.

Emergency Relief for IDPs

£2,500 was spent on tarpaulins and food for IDPs this year brought directly to them by one of our volunteers.

Flood and Earthquake relief

The Special Forces Benevolent Club made a generous donation for earthquake victims. Thanks to good information we were able to give to organisations on the ground bypassing the junta and reaching those in greatest need fast for those badly affected by the earthquake. We also sent £997 through the Free Burma Rangers for flood relief in October 2024.

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HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales - Charity number 1139273

Accounts



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No **1139273**

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2023

	Help 4 Forgotten Allies <i>includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma</i>
	Charity Registration No 1139273

Charity Registration Number:

1139273
(Registered 08 December 2010)

Governing Document:

Trust Deed dated 25 November 2010

Other Names:

The Charity was formerly known as Projects to support Refugees from Burma

Registered Address:

12 Highworth Avenue
CAMBRIDGE
CB4 2BG

Trustees:

Mr Geoff Holt (Chair)
Mrs Sally McLean MBE (Founding Chair)
Mr Andrew Page (Treasurer)
Mr Peter Mitchell (RCEL Representative)
Mr Van Cung Lian
Mr Andrew Curtis
Mr Alex Bescoby
Mr Bertie Lawson
Mrs Bellay South (resigned 12TH April 2024)

President:

General Sir Alex Harley

Patrons:

Dame Joanna Lumley OBE
Karen Archer

Objects:

The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma (Myanmar), who have fled hardship and human rights abuses.

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Website:

www.h4fa.org.uk



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)

Charity No 1139273

PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2023

		Comparative 2022
Income (Receipts)	£	
Individual Donations & Gifts (Veterans & Widows)	17635.95	18790
Individual Donations & Gifts (Education & Humanitarian)	4785.89	7758
Reclaimed Tax on Gift Aid	3222.50	1738
RCEL Grant (Note 1)	32328.47	64734
Van Mesdag Fund	18250.00	12000
Cuthbert Horn Trust	7000.00	7000
Tadworth & Walton Overseas Trust	4500.00	4400
Special Forces Benevolent Fund	3000.00	6000
Other Grants (Veterans & Widows)	2000.00	1000
Other Grants (Education & Humanitarian)	2000.00	806
Total Income	94722.81	124226
Expenditure (Payments)		
Grants made to Veterans & Widows (H4FA) (Note 2)	50469.18	90579
Grants for Education & Humanitarian Purposes (PSRB)	53620.88	57846
Admin Costs	2495.16	3025
Total Expenditure	106585.22	151450
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	-11862.41	-27224
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	<i>as at 31/12/2023</i>	<i>as at 01/01/2023</i>
H4FA Account (Cooperative Bank)	154467.46	158577.99
PSRB Account (Cooperative Bank)	16346.15	24098.03
	170813.61	182676.02
	182676.02	
	-11862.41	
	170813.61	


Andrew Page
Trustee & Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts

Note1 The February 2021 Military Coup in Myanmar delayed H4FA's 2021 Grant Distribution programme and due to a change in the RCEL's funding policy from payment in arrears to payment in advance; £24,791 of the RCEL Grant received in 2022 related to 2021.

Note2 Due to the increasing distribution challenges in Myanmar, yearly grant payment comparisons are difficult due to timing. As at 31/12/23, circa £15k of the 2023 grants are unpaid and will be paid in Q1 2024. At the end of 2022, only circa £5k of the 2022 Grants were outstanding and subsequently paid in Q1 2023. Whereas at 31/12/21, approximately £25k of the 2021 Grants were unpaid and actually paid in Q1 2022.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of H4FA

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of H4FA for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of H4FA, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

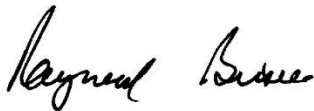
I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of H4FA carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material matter respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of H4FA as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Raymond A Bissex FCA

32 Brooklands Avenue
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 3XZ

Date: 7 May 2024

Payments to Trustees

No payments (other than approved expenses) were made to Trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period.

No material transaction took place between the organisation and a Trustee or any person connected with them.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to protecting and safeguarding the welfare of beneficiaries of the Charity, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that established policies and procedures on GDPR and Data Protection are followed.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

Public Benefit

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or aims that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.



Chair of Trustees

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

Our charitable objects are to help relieve the suffering of those who have fled hardship and human rights abuses, including refugees from Burma/Myanmar. These activities specifically include aid for needy veterans, their widows and dependents, who served so faithfully in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War. Sadly, they have often not received the proper recognition they deserve. During the year, with the help of local partners and despite increasingly challenging and often dangerous situations on the ground, we have continued to distribute grants, many of whom live in remote locations.

The trustees have agreed that the future strategic direction of the charity will be to focus increasingly on educational and humanitarian projects, seeking to provide a longer-term legacy for these people who have suffered so much. You can read more about these exciting developments elsewhere in this report, in particular the night school for Chin refugee children at Zokhawthar in Mizoram state, India.

We remain immensely grateful to all our supporters and donors, both individuals and grant-making bodies, without whom none of this would be possible. As we look forward, we believe there is a strong and much needed future for the charity.

The Myanmar Army Junta have continued to unleash indiscriminate acts of terror and violence on many of Myanmar's people. This is done to terrorise and cower the population. There has continued to be sustained use of air power with arbitrary attacks on housing, schools, hospitals, places of religious worship and community centres: anywhere where the Junta suspects people are gathered regardless of whether they have any association with the widespread anti junta organisations. The regime is heavily supported both politically, and with materiel, from outside of Myanmar. There remains a very limited awareness of the dire situation in Myanmar/Burma in the wider world, which continues to be very focused on the war in Ukraine and other strategic international crises, especially in the Middle East.

The economy of Myanmar continues to be devastated and the health and educational system is severely damaged and has in many areas collapsed. This pivotal South-East Asian country has in effect, tragically, become a failed state. It is unfortunate that neighbouring countries have not been able to help Myanmar become a democratically accountable state. PSRB/H4FA's vital work on the ground with refugees on the Myanmar/Thai and Indian borders, IDPs within the country and, most especially, our educational projects are all crucial.

The UK's historic responsibilities in Myanmar/Burma, particularly the massive efforts Great Britain and our vital Commonwealth allies made to defeat the Japanese invasion of Burma in WWII, remains woefully unknown. The devastating position daily facing the people of Myanmar is not understood in the UK. This is deeply regrettable.

Our colleagues and volunteers on the ground deliver help direct to IDPs and refugees, our remaining old veterans and their widows. This is in addition to our extensive and crucially important educational projects for children and young people in the refugee camps. They carry out this vital work often under dangerous and risky conditions. There are significant and unavoidable risks to their safety. Without their courage, perseverance and sustained fortitude none of this would be possible.

Despite significant challenges, grants have been delivered to ex-servicemen or their widows over the last 12 months.

Our income for 2023 was £94,723 and expenditure totalled £106,585. This level of expenditure continues to be facilitated by the exceptional level of donations seen in 2021. Of our expenditure, 47.4% was spent on WWII veterans and widows and the cost of getting their grants to them, within Burma/Myanmar and in the camps; 42% on education and humanitarian relief; 8.3% on adult Christian education; and 2.3% on essential administration, publicity and fundraising. At our 2023 trustees' meeting, it was decided that, unless a preference is indicated, all future undesignated donations would be split, with 50% going to H4FA and 50% to PSRB (educational and humanitarian) projects.

Our lists of veterans and widows become shorter as inevitably these now very old people pass away. They themselves have asked that any extra funds be dedicated to the education of their people. In 2022, we began a new educational project among the Chin refugees in Mizoram State in India and provided partial funding for a new school in Karen State. We continue to support both schools.

As of April 2024, 26 veterans and 120 widows remain – a total of 146.

Special thanks must go to H4FA's donors in 2023, among them: The Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, Special Forces Benevolent Fund, Van Mesdag Trust, Cuthbert Horn Trust, Holy Trinity Brussels, Roi Baudoin Foundation, Tadworth and Walton Overseas Trust, Gavin Wigginton in memory of his father Sydney Wigginton SOE, and many generous individuals in the UK, Germany and Belgium.

Educational and Humanitarian Projects (PSRB)

Emmanuel School

Emmanuel School is PSRB's largest project. Thanks in large part to the generosity of the Van Mesdag Trust we have been able to support them this year with the above amount; we are their sole donor. A magnanimous annual gift from the Tadworth and Walton Overseas Aid Trust provides lunch every school day for all the 236 students. This for many of the children is their main meal of the day. Gifts from many other donors make up the total amount.

50 new children had arrived at the school by March 23. Fleeing with their families the civil war raging in their homelands across the border in Karen State refugees arrive traumatised and desperate. Emmanuel School becomes for the children a place of safety and peace where they can thrive and learn.

This year Gloria, who has been the headmistress for over twelve years is being resettled with her family in the US. We are so grateful to Gloria for the wonderful work she has done and the excellent reports she has provided us with every quarter without fail. While she has been headmistress at the school she has opened up new avenues of learning for the children particularly in art and craft work and in cultivation. We are proud that students from Emmanuel School came top in exams throughout the camp (population 34,000). The school is very well organised with a committee and parent teacher organisation. It comes under the Anglican church. A new head teacher has now been appointed.

Mizoram Project – PSRB Night School

We are continuing our education project in Zokhawthar refugee camp which is located at Burma/India border. We started this project in May 2022 with 60 students and provide supplementary education to the refugee children from Burma (mostly Chin ethnic). They learn English, Burmese and Maths.

In addition, they learn about Chin culture and language from and then play sports, take part in creative pursuits. The student numbers grew to 160 in the 2023 academic year. The new academic year started in April 2024 and we currently have 250 students. The increase in the student number is a result of the good reputation of the project, and also sadly as refugee numbers are increasing due to the on-going conflict.

Mizoram Project – Phoenix School

Due to the increase numbers of refugees within the area, a new refugee camp was established 2km away from Zokhawthar refugee camp. Over 300 families are currently camping at this camp. Children in this newly established camp do not have access to education, especially the primary age children. They spent most of their time at rubbish pits and salvage what they can find. There is a need and demand to provide education to those children. H4FA has built a new school at this camp early this year and the school was ready for April which is the start of Indian academic year.

We currently providing education to 80 students at Phoenix school. The district education department has informally recognized the existence of Phoenix school and they will be able to join the middle school when they graduate.

It is vital that these children, who have had to endure the most traumatizing of circumstances, are able to continue their education. It is expected that this undertaking, along with our other humanitarian projects, becomes an increasing focus for our work over the next few years.

Bible College

We have supported this small Bible College in Ban Mae Surin refugee camp since its inception in 2001 and stood with it through some dark times, such as when it completely burnt to the ground and had to be rebuilt. A few hours drive from Mae Hong Son, in the jungle and close to the border, it is very remote and the internet connection very poor, but despite this one of our trustees has visited many times and this year was there for their Graduation ceremony.

Most of the money we give the Bible College goes on paying their academic staff, but is also used to supplement camp rations, and pay for the diesel to fuel their generator which provides light at night to study. The students grow a lot of vegetables.

Many graduates from the Bible College have courageously gone back into Karenni State to work in the Churches there, though currently sadly many of these Churches lie in ruins. The bombing of civilian structures there has been well documented and includes many Churches, schools as well as hospitals and pagodas.

The Bible College has taken in 40 orphans fleeing the fighting. These children live in the Bible College compound under their watchful eye and go to camp schools. PSRB gives some funds for their clothing and food.

Care Villa

There are nine residents here, all of whom except one have suffered landmine injuries, mostly sustained as Karen soldiers while trying unsuccessfully to defuse a mine. The ninth is a boy of 12 who is blind. Their food from camp rations is inadequate and extra food is bought for them because of their health. Each year Care Villa holds a Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration for around 120 people within the Camp. This is organised by the large Bible College nearby which oversees their welfare. The money sent pays for some food, two carers, medicines, extra hygiene products and music, current affairs discussions and English lessons.

IDP Teacher's Project

Our distributor for this project is a prominent member of the Free Burma Rangers; he has worked with us since the nineties. He takes small individual grants, often travelling on foot through the jungle, to teachers in remote areas of Karenni State. The teachers work in schools that were set up to cater for the children of villagers who have fled Burma Army incursions. The bombing of civilians has been worst in Karenni State. Figures show that 60,000 civilian structures have been destroyed by these bombings nationwide, and two and a half million people are living as IDPs and have had to flee their homes in Myanmar/Burma currently.

Other Projects

We continue to send funds through various organisations on the Thai Burma border as humanitarian relief to IDPs. This aid is designed to buy food and tarpaulins to help civilians in the extreme situations they find themselves in fleeing their homes and the bombing of the Burma Army.

We support a Maternity Bags project begun two years ago to provide young mothers on the run from the fighting in Karen and Karenni State during the civil war with clothes and goods needed for childbirth and for caring for themselves and a new born baby. PSRB is contributing to the project organised by a group in Chaing Mae Thailand.

We also support a school in Karen State but details remain confidential due to the civil war and need to protect the people there.

HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales - Charity number 1139273

Accounts



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No **1139273**

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2022

	Help 4 Forgotten Allies <i>includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma</i>
	Charity Registration No 1139273

Charity Registration Number:

1139273
(Registered 08 December 2010)

Governing Document:

Trust Deed dated 25 November 2010

Other Names:

The Charity was formerly known as Projects to support Refugees from Burma

Registered Address:

12 Highworth Avenue
CAMBRIDGE
CB4 2BG

Trustees:

Mrs Sally McLean MBE (Chair)
Mr Geoff Holt (Secretary)
Mr Andrew Page (Treasurer)
Mr Peter Mitchell (RCEL Representative)
Mr Van Cung Lian
Mr Andrew Curtis
Mr Alex Bescoby
Mrs Bellay South (appointed 16th March 2022)
Mr Bertie Lawson (appointed 16th May 2022)

President:

General Sir Alex Harley

Patrons:

Dame Joanna Lumley OBE
Karen Archer

Objects:

The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma (Myanmar), who have fled hardship and human rights abuses.

These activities specifically include aid for veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War.

Website:

www.h4fa.org.uk



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)

Charity No 1139273

PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2022

		Comparative 2021
Income (Receipts)	£	
Individual Donations & Gifts (Veterans & Widows)	18790.29	180402
Individual Donations & Gifts (Education & Humanitarian)	7757.66	10296
Reclaimed Tax on Gift Aid	1738.00	42773
RCEL Grant (Note 1)	64734.10	17170
Van Mesdag Fund	12000.00	10000
Special Forces Benevolent Fund	6000.00	6000
Cuthbert Horn Trust	7000.00	5000
Tadworth & Walton Overseas Trust	4400.00	4200
Other Grants (Veterans & Widows)	1000.00	1000
Other Grants (Education & Humanitarian)	806.19	2181
Total Income	124226.24	279022
Expenditure (Payments)		
Grants made to Veterans & Widows (H4FA) (Note 2)	90578.84	74371
Grants for Education & Humanitarian Purposes (PSRB)	57846.11	40488
Admin Costs	3024.84	2292
Total Expenditure	151449.79	117151
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	-27223.55	161871
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	<i>as at 31/12/2022</i>	<i>as at 01/01/2022</i>
H4FA Account (Cooperative Bank)	158577.99	199090.07
PSRB Account (Cooperative Bank)	24098.03	10809.50
	182676.02	209899.57
	209899.57	
	-27223.55	
	182676.02	

A Page

*Andrew Page
Trustee & Treasurer*

Notes to the Accounts

Note1 In 2021, the RCEL changed their payment methodology from payment in advance to payment in arrears. Also, the February 2021 Military Coup delayed our Grant Distribution programme. As a result, the 2021 distribution was only completed in March 2022. Therefore, £24,791 of the RCEL Grant received in 2022 related to 2021.

Note2 Due to the February 2021 Military Coup, circa £25k of the 2021 Grants were actually paid in Q1 2022. However, due to 'distribution catch up' only circa £5k of the 2022 Grants were paid in Q1 2023.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of H4FA

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of H4FA for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of H4FA, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of H4FA carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material matter respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of H4FA as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

R A Bissex

Raymond A Bissex FCA

32 Brooklands Avenue
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 3XZ

Date: 19 May 2023

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

Our charitable objects are to help relieve suffering, including refugees from Burma/Myanmar, who have fled hardship and human rights abuses. These activities specifically include aid for needy veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War – those who have served so faithfully, and who sadly have often not received the proper recognition they deserve.

During the year, with the help of local partners, we have continued to distribute grants to these old soldiers and their widows, many of whom live in remote locations, and despite increasingly challenging and often dangerous situations on the ground. But sadly numbers are rapidly dwindling, and at the time of writing we are supporting just 31 veterans, and a larger number of widows.

The Trustees have agreed that the future strategic direction of the Charity will be to increasingly focus on educational and humanitarian projects, seeking to provide a longer-term legacy for these people who have suffered so much. You can read more about these exciting developments elsewhere in this report, in particular the night school for Chin refugee children at Zokhawthar in Mizoram state, India – visited by one of our Trustees in December 2022.

We now have a team of 9 Trustees, with a wide range of skills and expertise, to continue to support this key work. For personal reasons our Founder, Sally McLean, has stepped down as Chair after 27 committed years in the role. Her vision, passion and sheer dedication to the Charity have been outstanding. She continues as a Trustee with a particular focus on PSRB projects. Sally – we are hugely indebted to you!

We remain immensely grateful to all our supporters and donors, individuals and grant-making bodies, without whom none of this would be possible. As we look forward, we believe there is a strong and much-needed future for the Charity.

Distribution of grants to ex-servicemen and widows

We have our colleagues and volunteers on the ground who deliver help direct to our old veterans and their widows, and increasingly to IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) and refugees. They carry out this vital work often under dangerous and risky conditions. Without their courage and sustained fortitude none of this would be possible. Despite significant challenges, grants have continued to be delivered to ex-servicemen or their widows over the last 12 months.

Mizoram Project

In December 2022, our Trustee Bertie Lawson travelled from Aizawl, capital of Mizoram State, to Zokhawthar. In Zokhawthar, he met many refugees from Myanmar. They are some of the newest pupils at the PSRB Night School, set up by H4FA to provide supplementary education to the refugee children from Myanmar. In the early weeks of the school 60-90 pupils attended. Over 100 attended in December.

The children are divided into six classes – nursery, kindergarten and grades 1-4. The classes run Monday-Friday from 16:30-19:30. They learn English, Burmese and Maths. On Saturday mornings they learn about Chin culture and language from 08:00-10:00 and then play sports, take part in creative pursuits and are served lunch.

Visiting Zowkahthar, spending time amongst the smiling, bouncy children, one can be mistaken for forgetting the horrors that these people have gone through and the precarious nature of their present existence. Mizoram is not their home and tomorrow is uncertain. The Night School in a small but important way attempts to patch together something that is broken, until these families can return to a peaceful Myanmar and re-build their lives.

Emmanuel School

Emmanuel School is in Mae La camp, with a population of over 34,000. 50 children have arrived, traumatised from the civil war on the other side of the border. Thanks to annual donations from the Van Mesdag Trust and other generous donors, they now have a middle school as well as a primary.

Trustees Bellay Htoo and Sally McLean visited in October 2022. It has been an honour to see their work flourish as they wait in the refugee camp for life to become normal back in Karen State so that they can go home. The education and training they are receiving will mean they have much to contribute when that happens.

Care Villa

Care Villa is a home for seven landmine victims and a partially blind boy. We make an annual payment and this pays for their carers, extra foods and necessary articles, plus music and current affairs during the week. Sally McLean and Bellay Htoo visited Care Villa, in Mae La refugee camp, in October.

Bible College

The Bible College is further north along the Thai Burma border - a four-hour drive from the town of Mae Hong Son. The camp is quite isolated and difficult to reach from the nearby town and has little or no access to the internet. Refugees are not allowed to come and go freely. Students can gain different qualifications in Theology.

IDP Teacher project

Each year we send money out to reach remote areas with financial support for teachers. They are working in schools in small jungle camps where the villagers have had to flee Burma Army incursions. Without this financial help the teachers would not be able to spend the time teaching but would have to forage or cultivate food for their families.

This year Karenni State is among the worst areas in Myanmar suffering aerial bombardments of civilians and consequently now has over 250,000 IDPs. Karenni State borders on Thailand, but Thailand has refused to accept more refugees.

Other Projects

In response to the serious humanitarian situation in Myanmar, we have focussed during the last year on projects to help refugees and IDPs. We have also given money to small local projects to feed groups of IDPs in Loikaw, Toungoo, and in rural districts in Karen State. We have given larger amounts to building a Karen school, and to a new project which provides expectant mothers on the run with vital articles for the birth and the health of mother and child.

Payments to Trustees

No payments (other than approved expenses) were made to Trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period.

No material transaction took place between the organisation and a Trustee or any person connected with them.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to protecting and safeguarding the welfare of beneficiaries of the Charity, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that established policies and procedures on GDPR and Data Protection are followed.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

Public Benefit

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or aims that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Geoff Holt
Chair of Trustees

HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales - Charity number 1139273

Accounts



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No **1139273**

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2021

	Help 4 Forgotten Allies <i>includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma</i>
	Charity Registration No 1139273

Charity Registration Number:

1139273
(Registered 08 December 2010)

Governing Document:

Trust Deed dated 25 November 2010

Other Names:

The Charity was formerly known as Projects to support Refugees from Burma

Registered Address:

12 Highworth Avenue
CAMBRIDGE
CB4 2BG

Trustees:

Mrs Sally McLean (Chair)
Mr Peter Mitchell (RCEL Representative)
Mr Geoff Holt (Secretary)
Mr Andrew Page (Treasurer)
Mr Van Cung Lian
Mr Andrew Curtis
Mr Alex Bescoby
Mrs Zoe Rigden (resigned 15th July 2021)
Mrs Sarah MacDonald (resigned 15th July 2021)

President:

General Sir Alex Harley

Objects:

The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma (Myanmar), who have fled hardship and human rights abuses.

These activities specifically include aid for veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War.

Website:

www.h4fa.org.uk



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)

Charity No 1139273

PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2021

Comparative
2020

Income (Receipts)	£	
Individual Donations & Gifts (Veterans & Widows)	180401.93	22293
Individual Donations & Gifts (Education & Humanitarian)	10296.00	5886
Reclaimed Tax on Gift Aid	42773.38	2092
RCEL Grant (Note 1)	17169.44	49323
Van Mesdag Fund (Note 2)	10000.00	10000
Special Forces Benevolent Fund	6000.00	6000
Cuthbert Horn Trust	5000.00	3000
Other Grants (Veterans & Widows)	1000.00	2000
Other Grants (Education & Humanitarian) (Note 2)	6381.17	13000
Total Income	279021.92	113593
Expenditure (Payments)		
Grants made to Veterans & Widows (H4FA) (Note 3)	74370.92	84461
Grants for Education & Humanitarian Purposes (PSRB)	40487.86	35145
Admin Costs	2292.40	2488
Total Expenditure	117151.18	122094
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	161870.74	-8501
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	<i>as at 31/12/2021</i>	<i>as at 01/01/2021</i>
H4FA Account (Cooperative Bank)	199090.07	44070.21
PSRB Account (Cooperative Bank)	10809.50	3958.62
	209899.57	48028.83
	48028.83	
	161870.74	
	209899.57	

Andrew Page
Trustee & Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts

- Note1** In 2021, RCEL changed their payment methodology from payment in advance to payment in arrears. Therefore, the two payment tranches were received in September 2021 & March 2022, instead of April & October 2021. £24,791 was received in March 2022.
- Note2** In 2020, the £10,000 donation from the Van Mesdag Fund was not individually itemised, but included in 'Other Grants'. A further £10,000 was donated in 2021 and the Trustees feel that this should be individually itemised.
- Note3** In early 2020, £6,695 was transferred to an Agent, who then due to COVID & subsequently the Military Coup could not distribute the monies. The monies were returned to H4FA in 2021.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of H4FA

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of H4FA for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of H4FA you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of H4FA carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

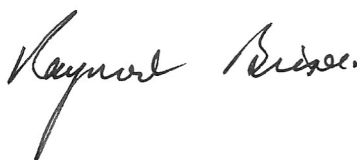
Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination being a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below in Section B) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Raymond A Bissex FCA

32 Brooklands Avenue
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 3XZ

Date: 23 May 2022

Section B Disclosure

The accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 show income in excess of £250,000. Consequently, the accounts should have been prepared on the accruals basis and not on the Receipts and Payments basis. Therefore, the accounts do not conform with the accounting requirements.

During the year the charity received a generous donation and this is unlikely to be repeated. The trustees are of the opinion that income for the year to 31 December 2022 is expected to be under £200,000.

In order to save inconvenience and costs, no change has been made to producing accounts on the Receipts and Payments basis. It is unlikely that there would be material changes if the accruals basis were adopted.

INTRODUCTION

Burma/Myanmar 2021/2022: (Peter Mitchell writes)

This has, and continues to be, a time of great uncertainty, economic hardship, and fear especially for Burma's people. The situation in Myanmar is dire. This is a direct result of the Myanmar Army's overthrow of the evolving democratic government of Burma in February 2021. Whilst the Army have gained some degree of control in Yangon and Mandalay and to an extent in some other larger towns, this has only been achieved by the ruthless and violent suppression of any form of civilian dissent. There is no accountable government, nor rule of law, with arbitrary arrests common and numerous cases of atrocities: the burning of towns and village, torture, and abuse. There is widespread resistance and fighting in the extensive ethnic minority states but also now in many other places throughout the country against the army.

In Western Myanmar, for the first time, there is intensive fighting against the army in Chin State and adjacent Myanmar regions. This is resulting in thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and refugees entering the Indian state of Mizoram. Mizoram State is very close to Chin State culturally, ethnically, and through the Christian religion. Mizoram is welcoming refugees unlike other Indian states which are Hindu and do not have the same sense of close identity. The central government of India does not take in refugees elsewhere from Myanmar, due to its complex relationship with the Myanmar army/government.

The atrocious war in Myanmar has been eclipsed by the appallingly brutal Russian invasion of Ukraine; indeed, Russia is supplying arms to the Myanmar Army. This lack of media attention to Myanmar is understandable as the war in Ukraine, in Europe, is much closer to Britain. The effect, however, is that with much less media attention to Burma there is little known in the UK about the Myanmar atrocities and, therefore, less desperately needed support forthcoming. This is sad and deeply regrettable, especially in the context of Britain's long involvement in Burma, particularly in World War II. We greatly need help for the desperately suffering people of Myanmar, including the surviving old veterans in Burma, their children and grandchildren, who have and continue to pay a huge price throughout their lives from when so many supported Britain at our time of greatest need in WWII.

Political perspective: (Ashley South, political commentator, writes)

In 2021, Burma faced two extraordinary and inter-linked crises: the Covid pandemic and the February 1st coup. This "critical juncture" provides an opportunity to re-imagine the type of country Burma could be. For the first time in generations young people from the towns and cities have been exposed to the full violence of the Tatmadaw. This has led to a renewed solidarity (with the ethnic nationalities) and commitment to ending the Myanmar Army brutal rule. A loose federation based on overlapping ethnicities and common values, with an illegitimate central government, is being created by the junta's blunders. Ethnic areas are having some success at running their own civil societies. The National Unity Government was formed as the democratic alternative in opposition to the Junta who refer to it as a "terrorist organisation". It enjoys wide support but is still negotiating on a common position on federalism.

As a result of the coup, a collapse in central governance has sparked a multidimensional crisis. The economy is in free-fall; the COVID-19 pandemic is raging virtually unchecked in the absence of a viable health system; food is scarce to nonexistent in many areas; local administrative and service infrastructure is deteriorating under attack by warring forces; lawlessness has emerged in communities as the army orders the police to take repressive actions, negating their law enforcement role; public education has been decimated; and the telecommunications system is collapsing. In February 2022, Myanmar was ranked second least democratic nation in the world, worse than North Korea and only better than Afghanistan - Bloomberg. Aung San Suu Kyi ASSK, former leader, has been in military custody since 1st February 2021, and has been charged with corruption and sentenced to five years in prison; already sentenced to six years for incitement against the military she faces more charges.



Under new rules foreign currency now has to be converted into Kyat. Meanwhile Australia is accepting defectors from the Burma Army and the NUG is offering cash for defections. There have been over 3,000 so far and many hundreds of Burma Army soldiers have died. In the face of this situation, junta leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing called for "peace talks". Ethnic nationalities currently enduring aerial bombardments resulting in 400,000 IDPs nationwide are unwilling to trust that these talks would be genuine. Worst affected has been Karenni, Karen and Chin States. With international NGO's not allowed to access the areas where the IDPs are in hiding there is a serious humanitarian crisis and urgent need for food and shelter. A commentator in the Irrawaddy on 1st March writes on the subject of links between Russia and Myanmar on arms sales: "Both the junta and the Kremlin have underestimated the people they seek to subdue; these avowed friends must not be allowed to succeed and vindicate each other's actions."

Our IDP work:

Over the last year, H4FA/PSRB has allocated over £5300 in extra funds to IDP projects. This is a letter of thanks that we received from one mother from Loikaw, the Karenni State capital, who had to leave her home with her family:

"My name is Naw Kue Ku. I'm 42 years old from Loikaw, Nan Nat Taw quarter. I have 5 children. The oldest is 21 years old and the youngest is 8 years old. Now my family, plus my mother-in-law and niece, are gathered together here due to the military attacking and burning down our property: our paddy farm, and house. I don't have a proper job. Daily, I prepare the meal for my family, wash and iron clothes, a housewife's job. My husband was a truck driver and we depended on his monthly payment. Now the situation has changed. My family and my neighbours cannot live in our hometown because of the bombing attacks and gunfire all the time. The military coup took place in our town

and the soldiers took all of the animals including my chickens, ducks, goats and pigs. Now we have left the place where we lived to survive, taking our children. It took 4 days to arrive in Toungoo. When my family decided to leave, we didn't know where to move to next. In a hurry, we could only take the most necessary things along with us to survive. At first, the volunteer from some organization - I don't know the name - took us to PDF (People's Defence Force). Then the PDF picked us up and took us to Di Maw So. We stayed there for three days in the forest then moved next to See Bu village. When we got a secret contact from the Taungoo Karen Baptist Convention, they came and took us to get shelter. Now we don't know what will come next. I heard about the damage to my house. And all the people as an IDPs here from Loikaw and near that area, we already heard that our houses were burned down. Before it got burned, our property was looted for motorcycles, traditional things such as our traditional ethnic horns by the military. Now the Paku Baptist convention is letting us to stay here, and this is a blessing and so is the donation from the Taungoo Paku Town Church members. You gave us the huge donation through the H4FA organisation. We all thank you for the support and we are happy for such a great helping hand to us. We don't know what will happen next to us and I am afraid about my children's future.



H4FA/PSRB has also been supporting Chin IDPs and refugees in Mizoram State, bordering Chin State, Myanmar. H4FA/PSRB is supporting them with foods, blankets, clean water, and medicines. Our activity can be seen here in YouTube clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkqwnR6LEkc>

New trustee introduction:

Bertie Lawson is the CEO of Sampan Travel, a tour operator based in Yangon creating tailor-made tours through Myanmar and India. After graduating from the University of Liverpool with a BA in English Literature in 2013, Bertie moved to Berlin to work in communications. Two years later he arrived in Myanmar and set about building a tour operation that he intended to both offer exceptional, immersive experience to travelers while at the same time have a positive impact on the lives of local communities. This mission remains even more important in the current context.

Bellay Htoo South is Karen from Burma, and a UK citizen. She writes "I fled many places in Burma because of the war, finishing my high school at the Karen National Union Htee Hta High School in Mergui/Tavoy District (Tanintharyi Region). I attended Kaw Thoo Lei Karen Teacher Training College at the old KNU headquarters at Mannerplaw, following which I worked as a volunteer teacher for 4 years - until my village was occupied by the Burma Army in February 1997. In March 1997, after I married the writer Dr (then 'Mr') Ashley John South, we moved to the UK. We have 2 sons - and for the past 10 years have been living back in Thailand, with occasional visits to Burma. My passion is to help Karen people who are in need of education, health, and religion and to support communities in agriculture and livelihoods. Since 2002 I have also helped our WWII veterans through grant distribution along the border. Since May 2021, I have been working with a small team to make maternity bags for displaced Karen, Karenni women in Burma. The Maternity Bag includes products specifically for women who are pregnant and have young infants. These items will cover hygienic needs and allow women a measure of dignity in the midst of chaos."

Distribution of grants to ex-servicemen and widows update:

Currently we have 156 widows and 46 veterans on our lists within Myanmar and on the Thai Burma border. Each receives around £300 every year from us. Veterans who fought in the Burma Campaign are now extremely old and cared for by family. Widows are generally a little younger. We organize our distributors in areas all over this very large country and despite the fighting, and despite Covid, the distribution of welfare grants has gone ahead in almost all cases. The Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League (RCEL), and not H4FA, is responsible for welfare grants in Kachin State, but due to Covid and the political situation they have been unable to get payments through for several years and so we decided to try to help the old soldiers there. As we received a very generous one-off gift, we decided to give a single one-off payment of £417 each to the remaining handful of surviving Kachin veterans and this has been done much to their surprise and delight.

Our regular lists are in Loikaw, Toungoo, Naunglebin, Chin State, Hpa An, on the Thai/Burma border, the Delta area and around, and within Yangon. Our Grant Distribution Manager is in Yangon, formerly Rangoon; he handles three of these lists. Each distributor visits the home of every widow and veteran each year to give their grant money into their hands and check their welfare. This necessitates travel and travel expenses for these distributors, but it is essential to check on each recipient's welfare. Loikaw remains the only area where it has been impossible sadly, over this last year, to do this, due to Burma Army activity. Loikaw is the capital of Karenni State and has been hit particularly badly by aerial bombardments by junta forces.



Again, this year it has been absolutely remarkable that thanks to the contacts and organisational skills of our trustee Van Cung Lian we were able to complete distribution in Chin State to 12 veterans and 62 widows. This remote and mountainous area has also been seriously attacked by the Burma Army. Whole towns have had to flee as they were torched and looted. But somehow our welfare grants reached the elderly people in remote villages and in great need. The Chin distributors working with Van have been immensely courageous and we owe them a great debt of gratitude. To get an idea of the difficulties they faced travelling the mountain roads, the gratitude they received and some of the stories you can watch videos of the distribution via our website: www.h4fa.org.uk/videos.

Chin State is the poorest part of Myanmar. To highlight one Chin widow's story: her husband was the well-known Captain Tsai Cawn BGM. Her name was Bawng She and she was 97. When the Burma Army came to her village this year the family decided to flee to the Mizoram/Indian border and safety. They had to carry her. Soon after she died there, in exile from her country. Because her husband had been famous, the Army allowed her family to bring her body back for burial.



Rifleman 50564 Tsai Cawn of 4 Burma Rifles (pictured above), who died in 1985, was awarded the Burma Gallantry Medal on 19 July 1945. He was recommended for a BGM by Major Merton G.S.I Z who wrote on the 2nd October 1944: "He has served since August 1942 till the present time in a G.S.I.(Z) patrol for which work he specially volunteered. This has involved long periods of hardship living concealed in close proximity to the enemy, in constant danger and without respite, often short of rations and going long marches in difficult enemy occupied country with heavy loads. In spite of all of this, he has always been cheerful and has shown much courage and initiative in every emergency. He has volunteered again each year for a further patrolling season and has contributed much to the success that has been achieved in providing intelligence regarding enemy movements and dispositions. Area of operations, East of Tiddim up to the Chindwin River." A BGM medal sold in the UK was worth £5,000 in 2016. The family still have the medal. Our trustee Van Cung Lian hopes that one day there will be a museum in Chin State showing the valiant role the Chin played in fighting for freedom against the Japanese and now again against the military Junta.

H4FA makes one last payment when a widow or veteran dies to help with the funeral expenses. Out of 242 payments for 2021, 38 were for funerals. Old age and Covid have sadly shortened our lists, and old soldiers and their wives have 'gone home'. As described above, our focus is gradually shifting to humanitarian and education work which will honour their descendants and show our gratitude.

PROJECTS SUPPORT REFUGEES FROM BURMA (PART OF H4FA)

Emmanuel School:

This small Anglican primary school in Mae La refugee camp has been supported by PSRB since 2002. The camp is tightly packed with a population of 34,204 (February 22 figure) and is the largest of nine camps strung out along the Thai-Burma border. The school has had to be shut part of the year and partially open with some home schooling for longish periods. This of course was due to Covid which hit the camp badly, though many, if not most, were vaccinated. PSRB paid the teachers and cook furlough payments and, when possible, students came in for meals provided through the generosity of the Tadworth and Walton Overseas Aid Trust. Given the rations cut, this extra food has been a Godsend for them.

There are currently 187 students - 93 boys and 94 girls, plus 12 teachers and a cook at the school. H4FA sends four quarterly payments to pay for teachers' salaries, school equipment, and stationary, and to make repairs and for any other necessities for the running of the school. We receive regular reports and accounts showing many photos of artwork, gardening projects, and festivities. They are deeply grateful for our ongoing support since 2001. The school was founded when it became crucial to integrating new, often traumatised, arrivals from the war zones on the other side of the border. Now despite the recent and ongoing brutal Burmese military air strikes on Karen civilians just the other side of the border no new inmates are allowed. The strict security has caused dissatisfaction and demonstrations in the camp. Currently an estimated 40,000 Karen are hiding in the mountains, jungles and caves in Karen State; tragically the Thai government has allowed very few to cross to safety. They are urgently in need of humanitarian aid. PSRB is contributing to this and is appealing for your help this year.

Our normal, annual visit has again been prevented by travel restrictions due to Covid.



An exciting development has been the Van Mesdag Trust's provision of funds to build a Middle School enabling the children to go through nursery, primary, and middle school on the same campus. The brightest, with sponsorship, can then go on to Noh Boh Anglican High School situated further along the border. The Middle School is in memory of Rob Van Mesdag. His niece wrote a children's version of his life story for Emmanuel telling of his childhood in WWII in Holland, and how the experience inspired him to dedicate his personal fortune to philanthropy.

This year again all Grade 6 students from Emmanuel passed the exams set by the Karen Refugee Committee Education Department, many of them with distinctions. We can be very proud of the dedication and hard work of the students and teachers.

Three outstanding students from Emmanuel School are currently being sponsored by PSRB/H4FA. Two of the sponsors have done so in memory of someone they loved and admired. A year's education currently costs £300. Names of sponsors and students are withheld but we are pleased and proud to announce the names of those whose memory is being honoured in this way. The first sponsorship was 'in memory of Major John Winstanley who received a MC while with the Royal West Kents on the infamous tennis court at Kohima. He regarded the Karen people very highly'. She has now graduated and was given a gift of a keyboard piano. She continues her studies in English and Computer Studies in the camp. A teenage boy is sponsored in memory of William Raleigh Head, also a British officer who served in Burma. If you would like to sponsor a student please get in touch.

There is a need for very simple, elementary children's stories with illustrations, which may be posted direct to: Jitthamsri, 150, Moo 3, Mae Pa Tai, Mae Pa, Mae Sot, Tak Province 63110, Thailand.

Payments to Emmanuel School, March 2021 to April 2022: £19,257. A teacher is paid around £70 a month and a child's meal costs on average 11p.

New Mizoram Project – 'PSRB School':

The military coup in Myanmar has led to many young people taking up arms and fighting the Burma junta's army. Since the coup, Chin State has become a battle ground between the Burma Army and local resistance forces. The fighting and burning of towns and villages has forced more than 40,000 Chin people, and other ethnic minorities, to flee their homes in search of safety. They have crossed the Indian border to Mizoram State, leaving all of their possessions behind. Refugee children from Burma have missed years of schooling and they are in dire need of education. PSRB has initiated an education project at Zokhawthar Refugee Camp which is right at the border between India and Myanmar. This pilot education project started in May 2022 with 75 children from Zokhawthar refugee camp. The aim of the project is to help children to adapt to education while they take refuge in Mizoram state and also prepare them for their eventual return. At present, the Mizoram state government has allowed refugee children to join their state schools; however, they have limited resources. PSRB is funding four teachers to join a state primary school to teach refugee children with the Indian curriculum. In addition, since these children have been missing their education for over a year, they need extra support. For this, PSRB is running an evening school where teachers support them with extra classes and study groups. PSRB also runs school on Saturdays where we teach life skills, English, Burmese, and Chin classes. We hope that PSRB school will run for at least a year and after that we plan to review.

Payments to PSRB school so far £2,000 with an additional £1,500 to Chin refugees since May 2021.



Care Villa:

Care Villa is home to a group of seven male land-mine victims in Mae La refugee camp. The men at Care Villa spend their lives disabled by blindness and immobility and sit under a hot tin roof with little to do. For the most part they are ex Karen soldiers and lost their sight while attempting to defuse land-mines or lost their legs by stepping on one. Most have lived at Care Villa for many years.

PSRB's donation this year has been used to buy extra food to supplement inadequate camp rations. Our donation also paid for each man's soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, soap powder, clothes, shoes, and medicines such as painkillers and antibiotics. None of these are paid for by camp authorities.

Care Villa employs two carers who cook and clean for the residents. They are paid the equivalent of £30 a month. Care Villa has no other regular funding.

Singing, listening to and making music is something that the residents of Care Villa take a particular joy in. As a group they sing at Church services in the camp sometimes and have regular choir and music practice.

They listen to the radio a lot and discuss politics and on my last visit said that it seemed to them that the world is so troubled that WWII must be coming.

Payment to Care Villa is once a year: December 2021 £2,012

Bible College:

PSRB has supported this small Bible College in Ban Mae Surin, Karenni Refugee Camp on the Thai/Burma border since 2001; Completely destroyed by fire in March 2013, when a third of the camp burnt down, fire hit the camp again in March 2015 but this time did not affect the College. With H4FA funds it was rebuilt and reopened. Despite the current strictures of the corona virus, the Bible School begins a new academic year soon. There are 32 students and 12 teaching staff, and the college is a source of comfort and support to the camp population of over 1,933. They were not able to have their closing ceremony in March 2022 due to Covid.



Curriculum:

The academic year 2022/23 runs from July to March. The degree course is an ambitious attempt to provide a more affordable alternative to study in the bigger cities of Burma/Myanmar. Assistance has been offered, in staff, study materials and curriculum advice, by both Thai and Burmese Theological institutions. The College is non-denominational but has a strong Baptist focus. Currently, EBC works closely with four churches in Mae Surin Refugee Camp, and 55 churches in Karenni State. In addition, EBC has connections with The Karen Christian Convention in Taungoo and Yangon areas.

Whilst courses are currently taught in the Karen language; teachers have mainly been trained at the Insein Baptist Convention in Rangoon. Graduates go on to work as pastors in their communities, and often send back contributions to support the College.

A Light in Ban Surin:

Students carry out invaluable work within the camp among the neediest, caring for the elderly and visiting the sick, educating the children, encouraging the youth. The college compound is run rather like a medieval European monastery was with income generating projects such as weaving, pig rearing, and a fishpond. Despite restrictions on travel their choir is popular locally. Recently our funding provided new keyboards.

Difficulties :

Life has its problems for the camp dwellers; Karenni Camp 2 or Ban Surin is several hours drive from the town of Mae Hong Son, Northern Thailand and in a remote area close to the Thai Burma border. Contact with the outside world is difficult, refugees are not allowed to travel, and to obtain a mobile phone signal involves walking up a nearby mountain. Apart from NGO's authorised by the Thai government, visitors are forbidden. Since the coup going home is impossible and the Thai authorities are very strict about new arrivals.

Needs and Requests:

We are able to provide the Bible College with enough money to run its diesel-powered generator. There is no mains electricity in the camp, and only those lucky enough to have generators or solar power torches or lamps have proper lighting at night; this is obviously important so that the students can study in the evenings.

Holy Trinity Brussels, the Van Mesdag Trust, and individual donors, have been steadfast in giving through H4FA to the project over the years. Those at the college regularly pray for their donors.

The Bible College has appealed again this year to H4FA to help them with the costs of running the college. Their chief expenses are paying staff and supplementing the students' food. Rations for registered camp dwellers have been cut back due to 'donor fatigue'. Other expenses include the cost of books, office costs, events such as the opening and closing ceremonies, Christmas celebrations, and repairs to buildings.

Payments to Bible College: September 2021 £6,111

IDP Teacher project:

Our distributor for this work has done it for many years. He travels within Karenni State taking cash to teachers in small schools in remote areas. He visits the schools and sends photos. Earlier this year 60 teachers received £60 each. This money helps them to be able to afford to teach rather than working the land in order to feed themselves or their families. In some cases they receive a small wage from the state, and in some cases none. Often they receive contributions from the children's parents but the parents cannot afford to give much. In these remote areas rice is often more expensive due to transport.



Payments to Trustees

No payments (other than approved expenses) were made to Trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period.

No material transaction took place between the organisation and a Trustee or any person connected with them.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to protecting and safeguarding the welfare of beneficiaries of the Charity, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that established policies and procedures on GDPR and Data Protection are followed.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

Public Benefit

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or aims that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Sally Mclean
Chair of Trustees

HELP 4 FORGOTTEN ALLIES

England & Wales - Charity number 1139273

Accounts



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No **1139273**

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2020

	Help 4 Forgotten Allies <i>includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma</i>
	Charity Registration No 1139273

Charity Registration Number:

1139273
 (Registered 08 December 2010)

Governing Document:

Trust Deed dated 25 November 2010

Other Names:

The Charity was formerly known as Projects to support Refugees from Burma

Registered Address:

12 Highworth Avenue
 CAMBRIDGE
 CB4 2BG

Trustees:

Mrs Sally McLean (Chair)
 Mr Peter Mitchell (RCEL Representative)
 Mr Geoff Holt (Treasurer)
 Mr Van Cung Lian
 Mr Alex Bescoby
 Mr Andrew Curtis
 Mrs Zoe Rigden
 Mrs Sarah MacDonald (appointed 7th September 2020)
 Mr Andrew Page (appointed 3rd October 2020)

President:

General Sir Alex Harley

Objects:

The object of the charity is to help relieve the suffering of people, including refugees from Burma (Myanmar), who have fled hardship and human rights abuses.

These activities specifically include aid for veterans (and their widows/ dependants) who served in the armed forces raised in Burma during the Second World War.

Website:

www.h4fa.org.uk



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Help 4 Forgotten Allies (H4FA)

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma (PSRB)

Charity No 1139273

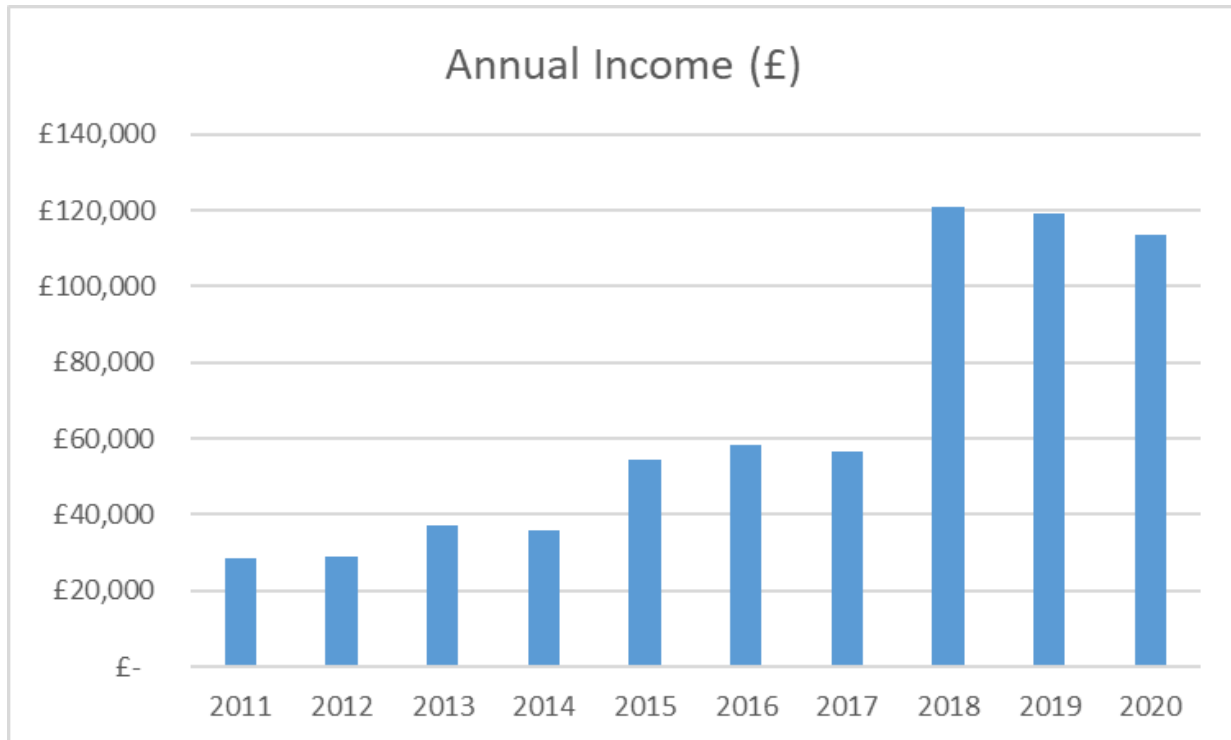
PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2020

		Comparative 2019
Income (Receipts)	£	
Individual Donations & Gifts (Veterans & Widows)	22293.10	12214
Individual Donations & Gifts (Education & Humanitarian)	5885.52	7897
Reclaimed Tax on Gift Aid	2092.25	2707
RCEL Grant	49322.53	68518
Awareness Trust	0.00	10000
Special Forces Benevolent Fund	6000.00	5000
Cuthbert Horn Trust	3000.00	4000
Other Grants (Veterans & Widows)	2000.00	0
Other Grants (Education & Humanitarian)	23000.00	9000
Total Income	113593.40	119336
Expenditure (Payments)		
Grants made to Veterans & Widows (H4FA)	84461.22	52978
Grants for Education & Humanitarian Purposes (PSRB)	35144.63	34311
Admin Costs	2488.41	3815
Total Expenditure	122094.26	91104
Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	-8500.86	28232
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	<i>as at 31/12/2020</i>	<i>as at 01/01/2020</i>
H4FA Account (Cooperative Bank)	44070.21	55765.14
PSRB Account (Cooperative Bank)	3958.62	764.55
	<u>48028.83</u>	<u>56529.69</u>
	56529.69	
	<u>-8500.86</u>	
	48028.83	

Geoff Holt
Trustee & Treasurer

Income

Over the past 10 years we have been encouraged to note a steady overall trend in increased charitable income, noting that we received an increased grant from RCEL during last three years, as indicated by the graph below:



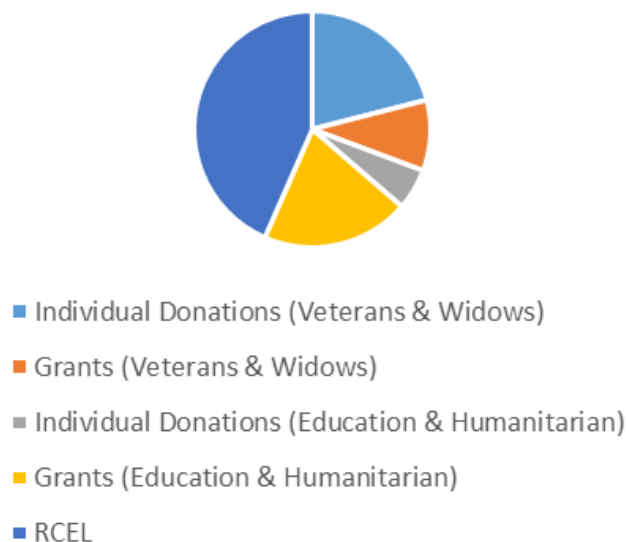
Sources of income during 2020 can be summarised as follows (see graph below):

- 21% - Individual donations for WW2 veterans and widows
- 10% - Other grants for veteran and widows
- 6% - Individual donations for education and humanitarian relief
- 20% - Other grants for education and humanitarian relief
- 43% - Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League Grant (RCEL)

Distribution of Grants in Burma

The reliable and efficient distribution of Grants to our Veterans and Widows represents a challenge, particularly in the more remote and outlying areas. However, with the support of our Burma-based Grant Distribution Manager, and supporting trusted local distributors, the Charity has been working very hard to ensure that this distribution network is in place, despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Distribution will continue into 2021.

Income 2020 - £113,593

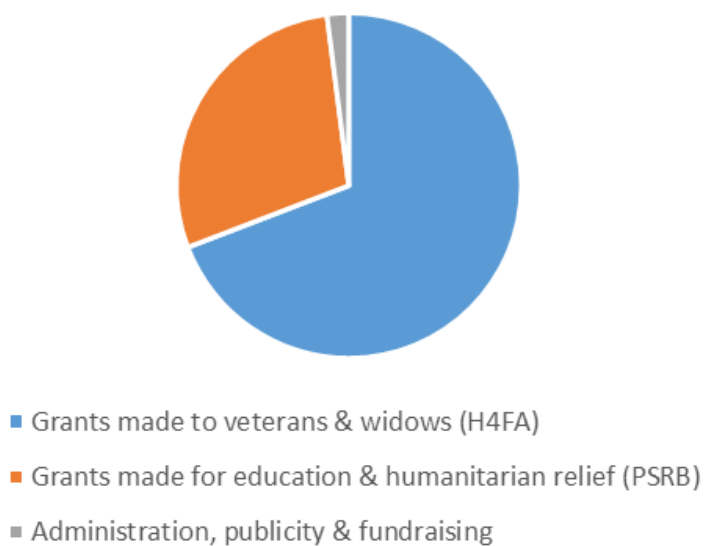


Expenditure

Expenditure during 2020 can be summarised as follows (see graph below):

- 69% - Grants made to WW2 veterans and widows in Burma and the camps
- 29% - Grants made for education and humanitarian relief
- 2% - Essential administration, publicity and fundraising

Expenditure 2020 - £122,094



ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES - 2020

Background and work

H4FA provides WW2 veterans and widows living in Burma/Myanmar and in refugee camps on the Thai/Burma border with small annual welfare grants. PSRB focuses on helping refugees in the camps with education projects and on humanitarian relief.

Burma/Myanmar's ex-servicemen

The dwindling band of veterans and widows, Britain's most loyal allies in the war against Japan 1942-45, now endure extreme old age on a pittance. Viewed, since independence, through the weary years of the junta, and now again during this extreme period of violence under the junta once more, as enemies of the state, they have paid dearly for their loyalty to, and affection for, Britain. Their subsequent fight for freedom has cost them dear: they are still struggling for the rights of their people in this new crisis.

Over two thousand 'levies', called up hurriedly prior to the Japanese invasion, were Karen or Karenni, and served in the legendary Force 136, one of whose prominent leaders was Major Hugh Seagrim GC. It is now over 75 years since Major Seagrim was executed as a prisoner of war with his Karen comrades. He gave himself up to stop the torture of Karen civilians by the Japanese who were searching for him. After the British retreat, Seagrim alone remained in the Karen hills, sending out information to the Allies in India. Later in the war, during the recapture of Burma, another great hero, Lieutenant Colonel Peacock, led forces parachuted into the same area. The Karen and Karenni were recognised as playing a pivotal role in this operation and praised widely for their courage by General Slim.

We now have 16 Chin veterans and 77 Chin widows receiving annual welfare grants in Western Burma/Myanmar. The Chin levies and the Chin Hills Battalion served in the British Armed Forces of Burma fighting alongside the Allies in the remote Chin hills. Chin State is the poorest part of Burma/Myanmar. Distributing their grant money is a challenge, but H4FA, with the help of our new trustee, Van Cung Lian, is succeeding. It is a joy to see these very old people receive thanks and acknowledgement, even at this late hour. Our website link to youtube shows videos of the distribution there.

Since WW2, many have had to hide their medals or any proof of their wartime service and change their names in order to get employment. Their affiliation to the British was viewed by the Burmese as sympathy for the 'imperialist oppressors'; it has done them no favours. Now in great old age, most have no pension, and many find it hard simply to eat, let alone enjoy the small comforts that make extreme old age bearable. With little support from Britain until a few years ago, we aim to make sure they are not forgotten again.

Following friendly discussions with the late Viscount Slim, President of the Burma Star Association and the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League in 2007, H4FA began giving grants in the border area. In 2014, RCEL asked us to take on the old soldiers and widows in the Yangon/Rangoon area and beyond, and, in 2018, asked us again to extend our work to include Chin state. In November 2017, H4FA was accepted as a constituent member of RCEL. We now work officially alongside RCEL and the relationship has developed and strengthened, bringing greater recognition and comfort to our beneficiaries. RCEL has no connection, however, with our educational and humanitarian projects.

In June 2020, our patron, Dame Vera Lynn, aged 103, sadly passed away after a wonderful life that brought joy to so many; she is greatly mourned by the whole nation. In 2018, we were honoured to welcome General Sir Alex Harley as our President. Then, in August, we were very pleased and honoured to welcome a new patron - Joanna Lumley.

Joanna was born in India and her father was a Major in the 6th Gurkha Rifles and fought as a Chindit in Burma. She has famously fought for the rights of Gurkhas and she too could rightfully be called a 'national treasure' for her stage, television and film roles which have delighted so many. It is so good of her to have found the time to support H4FA in this way.

News update on Burma/Myanmar May 2021

Aung San Suu Kyi's resounding victory in nationwide elections in November 20 were met with criticisms of fraud by the military and on 1st February 21 a coup was staged to the outrage of the entire population. Mass demonstrations and nationwide strikes, initially peaceful and good humoured though determined, were met with extreme violence on the part of the army or Tatmadaw. Soldiers rob, kill with impunity, torture and meet civilian protest with heavy weapons. By late April 745 demonstrators had been shot dead, 53 of them children, and 70 women. Military opposition by the ethnic armed organisations, in areas further from the centre has been reinforced by newly trained young demonstrators who have fled the cities. In reality this has little chance of success, since the Burma Army is so large and well armed. International condemnation has been strong but support from Russia and a refusal to condemn on China and India's part, has brought anger from the "Civil Disobedience Movement" and the "National Union Government" within country. The military leader Senior General Min Hlaing Aung who was due to retire, and would then have been open to charges on genocide against the Rohingya people, has said that new elections will be held in two years. 'The Lady' remains under house arrest pending her trial under trumped up charges. The country risks becoming a failed state. Since hospitals are closed statistics on covid are not available.

In the Refugee Camps, Thailand

In the current situation all talk of closing the camps and of refugees returning to Myanmar is on hold. Due to covid there are very strict rules in place to prevent any new camp dwellers or visitors. Of the 20,000 Karen people who have recently fled bombing of their villages by the Burma Army, The Royal Thai Government, has allowed some to cross the border and set up temporary camps but separate from the established ones.

There is an urgent need to send humanitarian aid to these people. H4FA hopes to be able to respond to this need.

H4FA 2020

H4FA has no ambition to compete with other, larger charities. Our engagement is simple and practical. How donations are spent is meticulously documented with accounts overseen by our treasurer, checked by a registered independent examiner and available to the public through the Charity Commission website. As our charity has grown, we now make small deductions for administrative costs. Funds for H4FA and PSRB projects are kept separately. We now have eight trustees.

The *Forgotten Allies* film, made in collaboration between H4FA and Grammar Productions, has been helping to spread the story of the brave veterans far and wide. During 2020, as we marked VJ75, *Forgotten Allies* was back on tour in the UK and beyond.

Trustees of H4FA were hoping to have been in Yangon for VJ Day in August 2020, but as with so many events this had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. A small ceremony was held in Yangon with the British Ambassador and three veterans attending. Meanwhile, in the UK, Alex Bescoby, trustee, represented H4FA at the National Memorial Arboretum, taking with him our generous donor and Burma veteran Charles Medhurst aged 95.

Finances

Our income for 2020 was £113,593.

Of our expenditure: 69% was spent on WWII veterans and widows and the cost of getting their grants to them, within Burma/Myanmar and in the camps; 29% on education and humanitarian relief and adult Christian education and 2% on essential administration, publicity and fundraising.

At our trustees' meeting, it was decided that, unless a preference is indicated, all undesignated donations would be split, with 75% going to H4FA and 25% to PSRB projects. Our lists of veterans and widows become shorter as inevitably these now very old people pass away. They themselves have asked that any extra funds be dedicated to the education of their people.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks goes to H4FA's donors in 2020/21, among them: Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, Special Forces Benevolent Fund, Van Mesdag Trust, Joanna Lumley, Cuthbert Horn Trust, Norwich School, Holy Trinity Brussels, Tadworth and Walton Overseas Trust, Gavin Wigginton in memory of his father Sydney Wigginton SOE, Mrs F B Lawrence Charitable Trust, and many generous individuals in the UK, Germany, Belgium, Austria and Tokyo.



*Photo courtesy of
Grammar Productions*

Expenses and administration

Our engagement is simple and practical, and based wherever possible on face-to-face meetings with those in need. Detailed records are kept of all grants made, with accounts overseen by our Treasurer, checked by a registered Independent Examiner and available to the public through the Charity Commission website. Funds for H4FA and PSRB projects are kept separately. Trustees make several visits per year.

Payments to Trustees

No payments were made to Trustees or any persons connected with them during this financial period.

No material transaction took place between the organisation and a Trustee or any person connected with them.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to protecting and safeguarding the welfare of beneficiaries of the Charity, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that established policies and procedures on GDPR and Data Protection are followed.

Risk Assessment

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The Trustees aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The Trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

Public Benefit

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or aims that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Sally Mclean
Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of H4FA

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of H4FA for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of H4FA you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of H4FA carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of H4FA as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Raymond A Bissex FCA
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Date: 21 June 2021