



Help 4 Forgotten Allies

includes Projects to Support Refugees from Burma

Charity Registration No 1139273

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & TRUSTEES REPORT

Year ended

31 December 2020

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

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

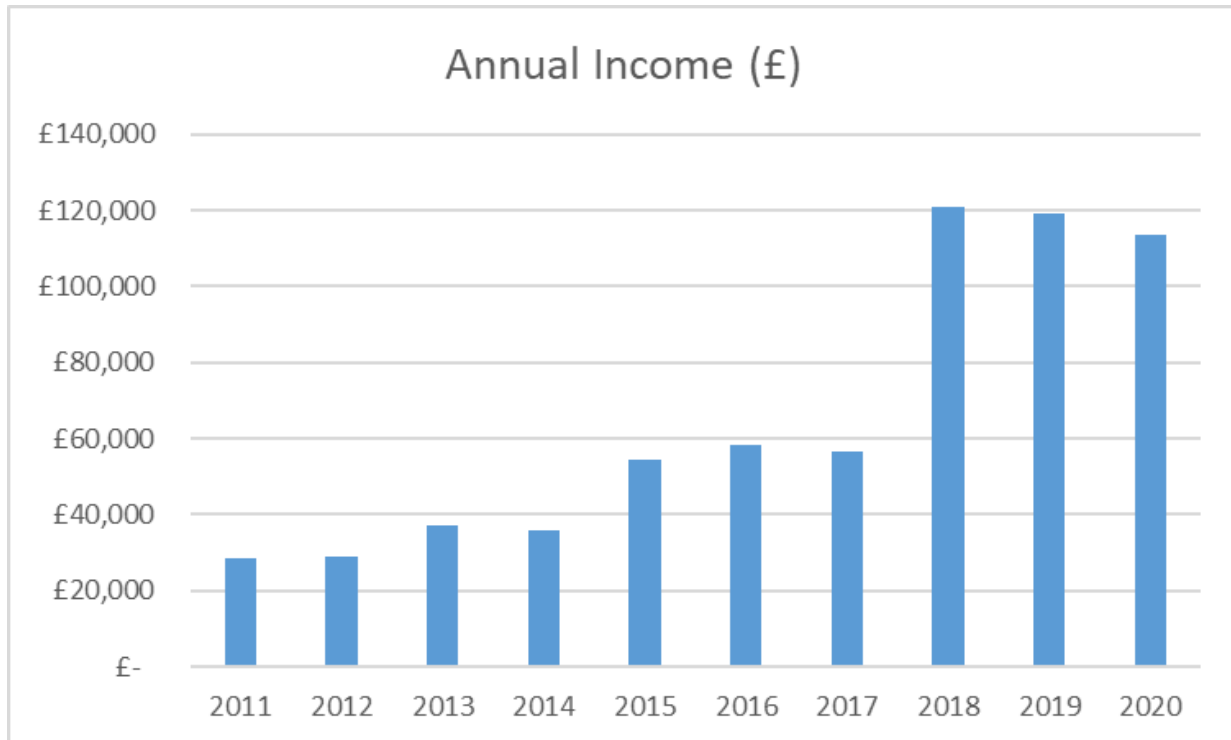
PERIOD: 1 January - 31 December 2020

		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
	48028.83	56529.69
	56529.69	
	-8500.86	
	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:



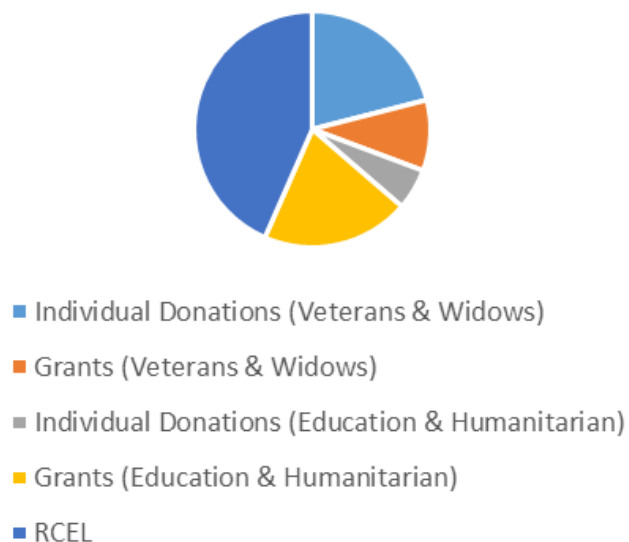
Sources of income during 2020 can be summarised as follows (see graph below):

- 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

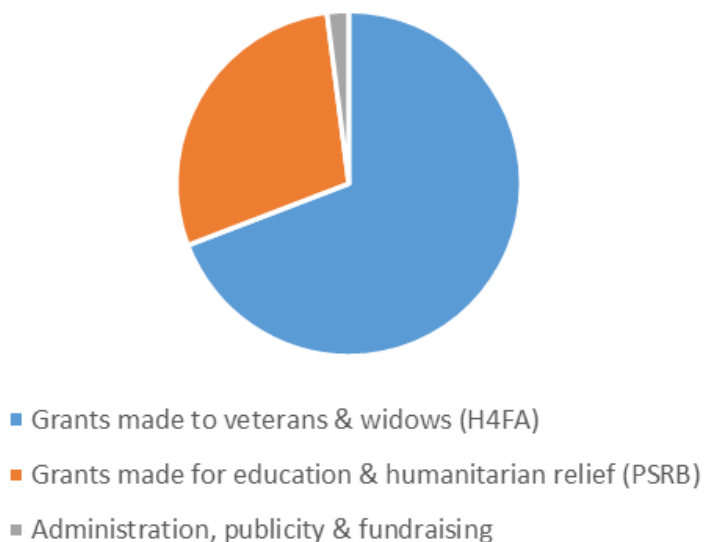


Expenditure

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* has been 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
32 Brooklands Avenue
Waterloo
Liverpool
L22 3XZ

Date: 21 June 2021