

THE SIR JULES THORN CHARITABLE TRUST



COMMEMORATING 40 YEARS



1964 - 2004

A TRIBUTE TO MY FATHER

by Ann Rylands

Chairman of The Trust – 1980-2004



1899-1980 a lifetime of achievement.

The creation of The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust in 1964 is undoubtedly the most enduring and rewarding memory of my father's illustrious career. From a small company which he started in the mid 1920s, he built an extraordinary business empire through exceptional talent, energy and enthusiasm. These three wonderful gifts, a perfect trio, were crowned by his loyalty, honesty and humanity. How natural it was for him to harness some of his endless energy into the field of medical research. Always an innovative man, the hope of finding the key to unlock 'incurable' disease and the paths taken by researchers to achieve this goal was an area in which he became not only very involved but also extremely knowledgeable.

Since my father's death in 1980 I have had the great honour of being the chairman of the Trust, and although it has evolved in many ways, now encompassing numerous humanitarian causes as well as medical research, the dedicated trustees and I remain true to his wishes and devoted to his memory. This Foundation is the legacy of an outstanding man, one of the great industrialists of his time, who found as much fulfilment through the Trust as from building Thorn Electrical Industries.



Ann Rylands

A TRUSTEE'S PERSPECTIVE

by

Christopher Sporborg CBE

Over the past 40 years, one man's vision and generosity has made an enormous contribution to the important work of charitable organisations across the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, and internationally too. Jules Thorn was a remarkable man. I know that because, apart from our business connections, he was a personal friend. I was honoured when he asked me to become a trustee. That was in 1970, and in the intervening 34 years I have seen Jules' vision become a reality. It has been a great pleasure for me to be part of what has been, until now, largely an untold story of tremendous philanthropy. I am absolutely delighted that on this ruby anniversary of the foundation of The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust, its work is being celebrated. Jules wanted to put something back into the society that had made it possible for his talents to flourish. But surely even he would have been surprised by what his initiative has achieved. The magnitude of that legacy is quite breathtaking. For the past 24 years the Trust has been led superbly by Ann Rylands. She has ensured that her father's aims have been pursued with great vigour, but tempered always with the sensitivity and kindness that were hallmarks too of Jules Thorn's approach. It was her vision that created the Trust's annual Special Project. Since 1985, the high quality of output from that initiative has never diminished. Today the Trust can look back with pride on a wonderful catalogue of work by so many excellent charities.

One test of effective grant making is the impact it has in enabling recipient charities to achieve their objectives. There is space only for a small sample of feedback in this publication, but I think it captures the essence of what The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust is all about. It is that special character which encourages the Trustees, and it is why we are so proud to be associated with such a worthwhile enterprise.



The offices of The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust in Manchester Square, London.

THE TRUST AT WORK

The Trust's grants assist numerous charitable organisations, each of which is committed to helping people to attain a better quality of life, a healthier future, or to fulfil their aspirations. The following pages illustrate both the diversity of these grants, and the dedication of the doctors, researchers, and so many others who work tirelessly to help the sick and the disadvantaged.

Medical Research

Support for medical research has always played a major part in the Trust's grant-making. The Trustees favour clinical work in universities and hospitals that is likely to bring early benefit through new therapies or improved diagnosis

University College London

*...working to maintain the health of
brain and spinal cells*

Understanding why cells in the brain and spinal cord die and finding ways of stopping it happening are goals of immense importance for identifying treatments for a host of debilitating conditions. These range from trauma and stroke, where the damage occurs within hours, to chronic neurodegenerative disorders, such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and Motor Neurone diseases, where loss of tissue occurs progressively over a much longer time span. The objective of the Wolfson Institute for Biochemical Research at University College London is to tackle just such problems and to take research closer to the clinic than would generally be the case with academic institutions.

Since 1997 the Trust has committed more than £1million in support of a major programme of research into the mechanisms of neurodegeneration being undertaken at the Institute. The results are exciting and offer the prospect of real progress in the management of these distressing conditions.

"One characteristic of The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust is that, unlike most other charities, it takes a personal interest in the research that it supports and it has been a pleasure to discuss our findings with members of Sir Jules Thorn's family, and to work with such a friendly, receptive and human organisation".

**Professor John Garthwaite, Wolfson Institute for
Biomedical Research.**



*Research supported by the Trust in progress at
University College London.*

The Sir Jules Thorn Award for Biomedical Research

...encouragement for the most talented young researchers



The Sir Jules Thorn Award supports the highest quality clinical research.

In 2001 the Trustees launched a major new prize competition in support of medical research. Leading medical schools are invited to compete annually for a grant of up to £1million to enable outstanding younger researchers to undertake a programme of highly original clinical research over a period of up to five years or more. There has been a very enthusiastic response to this prestigious scheme, enabling the Trust to back leading-edge research by some of the nation's best young scientists.

At the University of Edinburgh, Dr John Simpson and his colleagues were awarded funding to undertake pioneering work on the important problem of acute lung infection. They are pursuing a novel approach to treating patients in intensive care units who develop serious complications caused by the so-called 'superbugs' .

“The Trust has attained a special position in support of promising young medical researchers through its Award Scheme for Biomedical Research at a time of their career when the flow of new ideas is at its strongest. The energy of young clinical academics is often too dissipated in the efforts necessary to put together a programme of research from small project grants obtained from disparate sources. This problem particularly affects those interested in translational research, the crucial link between laboratory

discovery and clinical investigation. By committing significant resources to our brightest young investigators in this field, the Trust will unquestionably further the discovery of new approaches towards prevention, diagnosis and treatment of a range of intractable disorders that still inflict serious morbidity and untimely death in the UK and elsewhere”.

Professor John Savill, Head of the College of Medicine, University of Edinburgh Medical School.



A patient with epilepsy undergoes assessment in The Sir Jules Thorn EEG Telemetry Unit at The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.

Medically Related Grants

Medically related grants designed to offer immediate practical help are a vital part of the Trust's work. Here are two examples of the Trust's medically related grants in action:

The Sir Jules Thorn EEG Telemetry Unit

... dramatically improving the quality of life

In 1995 a grant of £225,000 from the Trust enabled The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery to open a six-bed EEG Telemetry Ward.

EEG Telemetry, with a video link, simultaneously monitors the behaviour and brain waves of patients with epilepsy, sleep disorders or other causes of "funny turns". The direct correlation of clinical and neuro-physiological events has proved of fundamental importance in the diagnosis and treatment of unexplained episodes of altered behaviour or consciousness, drug resistant epilepsy requiring surgical removal of the epileptic focus, and sleep related problems. The Telemetry Unit is in its tenth year of operation and has seen over 3,500 patients. It is the largest dedicated Telemetry Unit in the UK for adults and has the greatest throughput of patients in the world.

"This support has meant a great deal to The National Hospital and the many epilepsy patients who have been assessed in the Unit".

Paul Meyer, Director, Development Foundation.

National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.

Moorfields International Children's Eye Centre

... caring for the eyesight of children worldwide

Moorfields Eye Hospital, along with its research partner the Institute of Ophthalmology, provides the largest concentration of treatment, research, and teaching facilities for eye care anywhere in the world. The hospital treats more than 200,000 patients a year. One in ten of them are children, including many babies and very young children. The creation of the International Eye Centre as the best clinical and research institute for children's eye disease anywhere, represents the single most important project for the Hospital. The Trust's pledge of £750,000 made it one of the major contributors to the £13.5 million fundraising appeal.

"The appeal for the International Children's Eye Centre has met with fantastic support. However, without funding from trusts like The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust we would not be able to create this new hospital which promises to be a global centre of excellence in Paediatric Ophthalmology. We remain indebted to the Trust for its continued support".

Ian Balmer, Chief Executive, Moorfields.

Special Projects

Each year a major grant is awarded for a special project selected by the Trustees in memory of Sir Jules Thorn's benevolence. These projects cover a variety of areas but they all have one thing in common which is to enhance people's life experience.

The Tank Museum

... creating a permanent reminder of bravery and ingenuity

The Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset, a registered charity, is dedicated to conserving, developing and interpreting the national collection of tanks and armoured fighting vehicles, to promote a better understanding of armoured warfare and its impact on society – past, present and future. It helps people to discover the story as told by those men and women who designed, built and fought in tanks over the years. The Trust's grant of £225,000 enabled the museum to create a permanent "Tanks on the Somme" Exhibition to show how lives were saved by the invention of the tank. It was opened by Ann Rylands on Armistice Day 1998, the 80th anniversary of the ending of the First World War. It is now the museum's most popular exhibition, and each year continues to give thousands of people a better understanding of the horrors of war and the importance of the invention of the tank.

"The Trust is a model for all grant-giving bodies, their rules are clear, based on trust between the two parties and they have not heard of micro management. The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust has helped to ensure this Museum thrives by telling our story in a way that really enriches the lives of our visitors".

John Woodward, Director, The Tank Museum.



Katharine House Hospice

... giving dignity and care

Situated in the grounds of Stafford General Hospital, The Katharine House Hospice commenced activity as an independent Day Hospice in 1993. The particular area of Stafford in which the Hospice is situated has a population with a higher than average rate of life-limiting diseases and a lack of facilities to look after them. It was this serious situation that in 1996 led the Hospice's trustees to embark on an ambitious plan to create a £1.5million ten-bed, in-patient unit, for patients with cancer and with end-stage renal and cardiac failure. The fund raising, which included bequests, gifts, various sponsorships and statutory funding, raised some £1.1 million – a shortfall of £400,000. However, In Spring 1999, much to the delight of the trustees, The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust underwrote the remaining amount and the Unit opened in September 2000. Since that time, hundreds of patients have benefited from the provision of the clinical, emotional and spiritual care, provided by the Unit.

"We have all been stunned at the generosity and commitment shown by The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust. It is barely possible to express the joy that has been occasioned by your support".

Richard Soulsby, General Manager,

Katharine House Hospice.

Other Major Grants

The Army Benevolent Fund

...providing much needed support to service men and women

The Army Benevolent Fund is the Army's central charity and is committed to the welfare of current and ex-army personnel and their families who are in real need. The Trust has supported this work since 1982 with donations totalling £400,000, from which the Fund has been able to assist around 1000 elderly former soldiers to maintain their independence and quality of life. Grants have provided a variety of mobility aids, including wheelchairs, stair lifts and bath hoists. In other cases, small grants have helped to keep homes safe and comfortable by meeting the cost of essential repairs and replacing broken furniture.

"The generosity of The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust is enabling The Army Benevolent Fund to repay a little of the debt owed by today's society to the WW2 generation. This support is very much appreciated and we extend our best wishes to The Trust in its 40th Anniversary Year".

Simon Brewis MBE, Director Grants & Welfare,
The Army Benevolent Fund.



Sports Aid – the charity for sport

...investing in our young sports people

Sir Jules Thorn was always keen that young sports people with the potential to excel should be given the chance to further their ability and ambitions without the added pressure of financial burden. Over the past nineteen years the Trust's donations of £225,000 have funded grants to youngsters in a wide range of sports and a large number have gone on to conspicuous success. The Trust continues to consider grant applications.

"The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust was the first to recognise and support the then fledgling Sports Aid Trust in 1984. It made its first grant in 1985 and since then has been a wonderful support to so many able-bodied and disabled young people. The Trust can be truly proud of what it has achieved and the trustees of the Sports Aid Trust remain very grateful".

Michael Turner Cain, Administrator, Sports Aid.

Small Donations Fund

“A little goes a long way”

To many charities, grants of several hundred pounds mean an enormous amount. Through its Small Donations Fund the Trust has helped thousands of smaller charities, many of whom have received regular support over the years.

“Thank you very much for your generous donation.

Since 1928 the Fund has supplied more than 750,000 radios and radio/cassette recorders.

Without gifts like yours we could not exist”.

Fiona Fountain, British Wireless for the Blind Fund.

“Thank you, as always, for your support of our work.

We rely heavily on funds raised from trusts and foundations such as yourselves, to achieve the work that we do for the benefit of many children and young people nationwide with profound and multiple

learning difficulties”.

Rebecca Farrar, General Manager, Oily Cart.

“We have been successful in raising the necessary funds to purchase our new minibus. Without the help of the Trustees, this purchase would certainly not have been possible, and we will always be grateful for your support”.

June Briveau, Chairman, Barnet Old People’s Welfare.

“Thank you so much for your generous donation towards the cost of our project. The amount will pay for the cost of employing specialist artists for 3 days in 2004”.

Linda Fearon, Project Manager, Activity Zone, Holiday Activities for Children with Autism.



Activity Zone holiday play scheme for children with autism. Supported by the Trust.



Moberley Sports & Recreation Centre, Kilburn. Refurbished with a grant from the Trust.

“Thank you for the marvellous donation of £750. We are extremely grateful to you for your continued generosity towards this essential facility. We are a relatively small Hospice which is heavily reliant on the kindness of not only the people and businesses of Bassetlaw but of charitable trusts such as yours. This makes every donation, great or small, most welcome, and indeed vital if we are to continue to provide our special kind of care for the terminally ill in our area. Thank you for helping us make a difference”.

Lesley Smith, Appeal Co- coordinator, Bassetlaw Hospice of the Good Shepherd, Redford, Notts.

“The 100,000 patients of the Rotherham General Hospital each year are helped on the road to recovery by the tailor-made broadcasting from Radio Nightingale. Your donation is helping to make a difference”.

Mel Jaques, Station Manager, Radio Nightingale.



*Disability Sport
England ‘mini games’
at Stoke Mandeville.
Sponsored by
the Trust.*



*The Sir Jules Thorn IT & Multimedia
Centre for people with sensory
impairments, Ordance Road Library,
Enfield. Created with a grant from
the Trust.*

THE TRUST WORKING OVERSEAS

The main focus of the Trust's work is in the United Kingdom but it has special involvements in Switzerland and Canada.

Medical research at the University of Geneva

For over two decades a separately funded Swiss Trust, founded on the initiative of Ann Rylands, has supported research in Geneva.

"In the early years, Ann Rylands, aided by myself and Josef Blöchliger, considered applications for medical equipment grants, notably in the Department of Paediatrics (now the Children's Hospital). To answer increasing demand for medical research funding, and to help the decision making process, the Geneva-based Trust later appointed a scientific committee to take charge of reviewing applications and providing advice to the Trustees in the award of grants. An average of ten applications per year is considered, and funding is usually recommended for two or three of these. Besides this critical help for young members of the Faculty of Medicine starting their own independent research, the Geneva Trust has contributed to other charitable causes such as a centre for the blind, and a home for handicapped children.

Ann Rylands visits the researchers at least once during a project. Her close personal involvement in this way is a characteristic of the Geneva Trust, and is greatly welcomed by researchers. We are indeed fortunate that Ann is such a lively and charming supporter of the medical community in Geneva. She has our immense gratitude and admiration".

Dr Daniel Sorg, Trustee, The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Overseas Trust.

The Trust supports ground breaking glaucoma research in Canada

The UK Trust has developed a productive association with the major hospitals in Toronto, and researchers at the University of Toronto.

At the Western Hospital Research Institute, Professor Graham Trope and Professor John Flanagan have established The Sir Jules Thorn Glaucoma Imaging Laboratory with the assistance of funding from the Trust. Their internationally acknowledged research programme involves the investigation of functional and structural change in glaucoma, and the hemodynamics of the optic nerve and

retina. In addition they have incorporated imaging techniques into the construction of models of the biomechanical properties of the optic nerve (in collaboration with Dr. Ethier). This has led to the development of human cell culture models of glaucoma that study the effect of stresses and strains present within the optic nerve in early disease. This in turn permits research into the basic mechanisms of glaucoma.



The Trust has committed significant funds to assist research into eye disease, and to support those with visual impairment.



The Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit at King's College Hospital. The Trust has provided grants at UK hospitals and Universities for research into the problems associated with pre-term birth.

THE SIR JULES THORN CHARITABLE TRUST

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