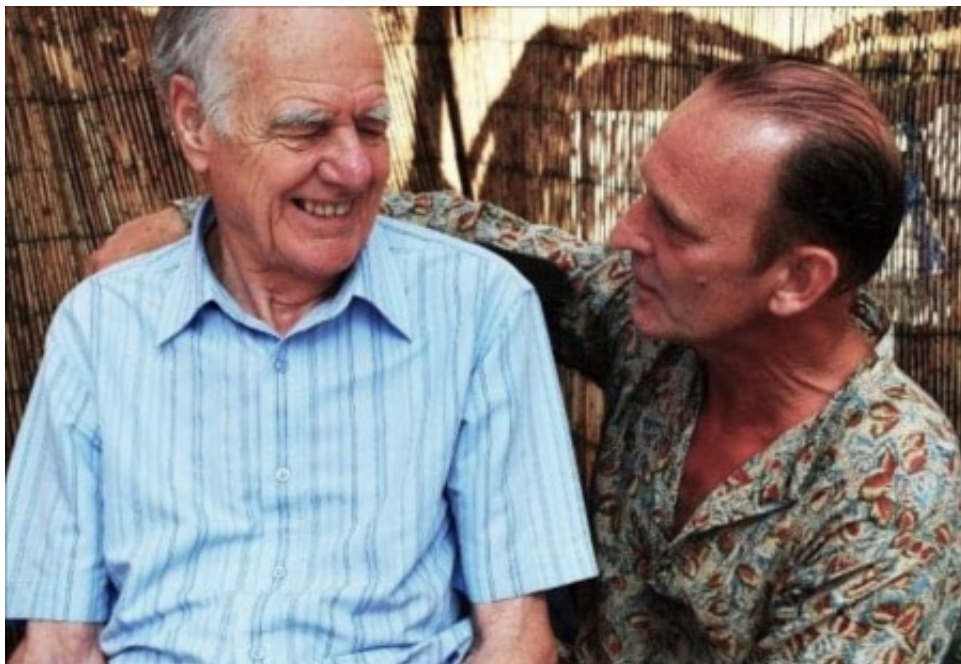




July 2019



With my father, Denis, in London

This photo of my father, Denis Earp, was taken some years back at a shuktara benefit in

London. He died on the 1st June at the age of 89 and I was lucky enough to be able to see him earlier that month. He brought many people to shuktara, who now receive newsletters and support the work that he would always talk about with pride. He, along with his wife Jean and her daughter Nicky visited us in the early days at our first home in Jubilee Park and on the day of his funeral and cremation, the older boys at shuktara held their own memorial for him by lighting candles in front of this photo and garlanding him with flowers.

On the 1st July we celebrated 20 years of shuktara. The day that I said yes to looking after Anna and Sunil. It was with a sense of sadness that we celebrated on the Monday 1st July this year.

Not having Anna with us, (he was always so integral to everything that shuktara means to me) left a huge gap, but we made a space on the roof of our boys home, where we held our celebrations, to honour him in the house that is now known as Anna Bari.



Just a few days before our Founders Day, at the end of June, shuktara Chaiman, Pappu, received a phone call from Childline about a young man with cerebral palsy who had been found in North Kolkata unable to explain what he was doing. Because he was also Deaf, the police were informed and Childline held him at one of their night shelters.



Rubel Sk - the photo sent to Pappu by Childline

Pappu immediately said yes to Rubel and he came to shuktara on 27th June. He does not seem to have any knowledge of sign language and we have not really got very far in knowing his story, because of his lack of communication - but Pappu, the staff at Anna Bari and the shuktara boys are all with him and he seems to be learning and understanding some basic signs. He appears to be a very intelligent young man and we are being gentle with him as he comes to understand his new situation. Currently we have no way of knowing whether he has lost his family, or been abandoned. Not many of us can understand what it must be like to lose or be abandoned by your family. For Rubel add to the mix his confusion, his mild autism and the fact that he's Deaf and hasn't learnt sign language yet - and he has cerebral palsy!

Thankfully he has met Sanjay Bapi, Vijay and Raja - who know EXACTLY what he's going through.



Left to Right - Sanjay Rubel Raja & Vijay
Front lying down - Bapi

Our girls house Lula Bari is being completely renovated. Our friends at [Kolkata International Womens Club](#) sponsored the painting and decoration of the ground floor. Pappu has now hired a team who will start work on the roof. This is to make it clean, strong and damp proof before the monsoon hits.

Then they will start painting the stairwell down to the first floor where all the girls sleep. When that is finished they will also paint the stairwell down to the ground floor, including all windows, frames and doors on the first floor itself. [Helena Christensen](#) was very excited by the opportunity to help paint the rest of the house in hot pink, so the continuation of this work is being supported by Helena and [Camilla Stærk](#) - through a percentage of sales from their Pawn Shop which you can visit at: staerkandchristensen.com/collections/pawn-shop

We're very grateful to Helena and Camilla to have given this wonderful gift of renovating Lula Bari and will post photos during and when the work is completed. As I write this the roof is now completed and the painting work is about to start.



At Anna Bari, Bappa is now enrolled at REACH school where he goes daily and still never stops laughing. He enjoys the trip there and back in the shuktara vehicle and is able to talk to the girls from Lula Bari who come back at the same time as him.

Here is a photo of Sunil and me with a photo of Anna on the morning of the 1st July.

David Earp



P.S. This Mailchimp newsletter that you have signed up to receive is an exact copy of a printed posted letter that I send out to supporters who don't have access to email.

Since writing this newsletter Pappu has taken Rubel to be reunited with his parents who have been found.

They had filed a missing persons report when he went missing and so he was in the system. It seems most likely that he had jumped on a train and ended up in Kolkata sometime at the beginning of June, which is when they filed their report. Rubel and his family are now back (over 300km away) at his home in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, close to the Bangladesh border where he is one of 6 boys.

His father works as a labourer in the fields as a daily wage earner.

Everyone at shuktara will miss Rubel and his infectious laugh.



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