

December 2023 meeting- John Harper "Tools with a Mission (TWAM)"

“Tools with a Mission” (TWAM) are a Christian charity that collects unwanted usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade tool kits and sends them to countries in the developing world to help enable training and livelihood creation. Our December speaker, John Harper, illustrated his talk with some inspiring stories and examples of how TWAM had changed the lives of families in Zambia and Uganda with tool kits costing an average of just £45. As well as helping families in the developing world, the charity is making a significant contribution to environmental sustainability by reducing waste and carbon emissions in the UK.

One of the examples that John described was Levina, in Kasese, Uganda, where she and her husband were struggling to support their family. Her husband was an agricultural day labourer, and Levina was only surviving by digging local fields. She could not afford to send their children to school. Levina heard that there was a Skills Centre in her community, and she trained as a tailor on a TWAM sewing machine that had cost just £25 to supply to the Skills Centre. When Levina finished her training she rented a market stall to make and repair clothing. She worked hard, built a good reputation, and now employs three people. Levina can now send her children to school and pay for their uniforms and books. And it all began with her training and a TWAM sewing machine costing just £25.

Typical tool kits include electrical and manual sewing machines, carpentry tools, computing equipment, plumbing, agricultural, motor mechanic and electrician tools. There is a Tendring branch of TWAM, and if you would like to find out more, you can contact Peter Simpson on 07470 912382 or email at: tendring@twam.uk

Our December raffle raised £130 and the proceeds were, appropriately, donated to Tools With A Mission.

The next Horticultural Society meeting is on Thursday 8th February 2024 when Barrie Sears will be talking about “Gardening the World – The Horticulture of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission” (CWGC). The CWGC cares for 23,000 war memorials and war cemeteries around the world and, as well as looking after the headstones, monuments and buildings, there is detailed horticultural work. This work is carried out in many different countries, against a background of climate change and growing environmental challenges, so it will be a fascinating talk.

Members and visitors are welcome to attend any of our meetings. Entry is free for members, and the admission charge for visitors is just £2.00. The talks are followed by refreshments, (tea or coffee and biscuits), and there is a raffle and plants and produce for sale.

Annual membership of Ardleigh Horticultural Society is £5, which includes free admission to all the monthly meetings on the programme up to May 2024 and the Annual Flower and Produce Show on Saturday 19th August, 2024. Our annual Plant and Cake Sale is on Saturday, 20th May, 2024 from 09.30 to 11.30.

The monthly meetings, Plant and Cake Sale and Flower and Annual Show are all held at Ardleigh Village Hall. More information is available on our website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/ardleigh-horticultural-society/>

