

Volunteer quotes: all these are extracts from volunteers' reports in the newsletters.

"In the 14 years of my teaching career I have to say that these 3 months have been the most rewarding. (E.O'R, April 2003)"

"As my time in Miraflores comes to an end I am feeling sad to be leaving the people that I have got to know and, dare I say it? love during my four months here."

"Some of the students have to come on foot from miles away. ... "Where does Carmen live?" " Oh, just down there" ... About a 1000 ft drop, 30 minutes and 10 "Oh-just-down-theres" later I finally got to the house and Carmen said "Hello. How are you?" as if I was always popping round. ... So poor Carmen has to trek up a bloody great hill through the mud for 40 minutes then 20 minutes more every time she comes to a lesson. That fact concentrates a teacher's mind wonderfully!"

"Funny how on my first day I didn't know how I'd be able to stay and now I don't know how I'll be able to leave."

"What is sure is that the people I met and have had the privilege to live with are working hard to provide for their children and to improve the conditions of their lives. They were at pains to make me see the value they perceived in our classes and although there are many other concerns and many other challenges for them, I can see that the English project is a small but greatly appreciated contribution to a much bigger job."

"I found myself constantly amazed by the good naturedness and sense of humour that the people around me preserved, despite the vast web of difficulties and hardships that seemed to constantly surface. I began to realize that this was getting to the heart of one of those hard to define, beautiful, characteristics of Nicaragua: instead of allowing themselves to be defeated by what seem like an overwhelming slew of obstacles, people are almost always able to continue doing what they need to do."

"All the students were very happy, positive and enthusiastic and they learnt a lot at the same time as they had great fun. I think the fact that they have fun is a very important aspect – first of all you learn more when you are relaxed and have fun and I think that these young people who normally have to work rather hard at home and in the fields need this opportunity to meet each other, have fun and relax from their everyday life."

"This is such a wonderful place, though I have to confess to wishing I was peeling to the telly watching the final moments of the final test match of the Ashes (yep, cricket fan, lost in Nica). But that's my only wish. I'm just so very happy where I am!"