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LOCAL ASBESTOS CAMPAIGNERS BECOME APIL CHARITY FOR 2002

Middlesex charity OEDA (The Occupational and Environmental Diseases Association) has been named charity of the year by an organisation dedicated to improving the law for victims of injury and disease.

The announcement by the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) is cause for celebration for OEDA's founder Nancy Tait, who began campaigning on behalf of asbestos victims more than 30 years ago. The charity will benefit from an immediate cash boost, as well as proceeds from fundraising events throughout the year which, says Nancy, may help to make historic documents dating back to the 19th century readily available to the public.

"I have shelves which are sagging under the weight of documents which go back to 1870 about asbestos, and one of my ambitions is to have all the information catalogued and professionally archived so it can be used as a resource for victims, campaigners, journalists and lawyers," said Nancy.

"I also have plans to produce publications looking at some of the ongoing issues connected with asbestos exposure and would like to look at ways of using the very powerful, specialised electron microscope based at our offices, to help people determine whether or not they have a case for claiming compensation."

Nancy was a recipient of APIL's award for outstanding achievement in 2000 in recognition of her work with victims of industrial disease and their families.

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“OEDA was a very popular choice of charity among our members,” said APIL chief executive Denise Kitchener.

“Nancy’s long-term efforts to raise awareness of the problems connected with asbestos exposure have won her great respect among lawyers, politicians and the public, and we are very excited by this opportunity to help her bring some long-term dreams to fruition.

“Current - and well publicised - problems suffered by people who have been exposed to asbestos, and predictions that the problem is likely to increase over the coming years, mean that this closer tie between our two organisations could not be more appropriate or more timely.”

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