

Newsletter No. 3 June Helping Communities

The SCT has donated £1800 to the Kambhoke Community Trust. The funding is to establish an indigenous poultry project in the area. This venture is aimed at reducing food insecurity and poor nutrition amongst Orphaned & Vulnerable Children (OVCs).

Coordinated and monitored by the community, seven free-range poultry units will be established at various child-headed households and one at the local Kambhoke OVC Special School.

By enabling child-headed households to access capital they are able to initiate a low start-up, self-sustaining long-term project. The SCT funding will be used to construct basic poultry housing and stocking of the chickens.



Kambhoke OVC School provides education and two free meals per day for 70 students. In a bid to reduce reliance on donor provisions, the school has also begun to utilise an adjacent area of land to grow vegetables. Students are also gaining skills in bee keeping.



Project Officer Mrs. Colleen Mamba (pictured above) is very excited about the potential of this venture. It will equip 70 OVC students with practical knowledge of indigenous poultry raising. It will also help with improved food security and nutrition (meat and eggs) and small income generation for these children'.

This project will integrate with the Ministry of Agriculture's conservation agriculture network already established within the area.

Staffing Matters

It is with great sadness that the SCT says goodbye to Gabrielle Brabander after two years with us. Her energy and dedication will be missed. Thank you for all the hard work and the best of luck in Australia.

A warm welcome to Sizwe Ndlangamandla who takes her place as Manager in Swaziland.

Bacon's School Christmas Appeal

The Swazi flag flies in Rotherhithe after a visit to Swaziland by Liz James, a teacher at Bacon's College. The school went on to raise the astonishing amount of over £10,000 in its Christmas Appeal. Vicky McDonough attended the launch ceremony. These are extracts from the College Assembly.

Liz James said:

"Today you will be travelling with me. I chose to make this journey so that I could find out about the possibilities of Bacon's twinning with a school in Swaziland. The first place I would like you to visit with me is a primary school called Antioch. We're in a hot, bare classroom full of pupils of different ages looking shy and defenceless. They are all orphans, their parents have died of AIDS, their guardians are with them. Women whose faces tell of the hard life that they lead, bringing up their own children as well as the children who have been made orphans. When we arrived at the school they sang and danced for us.



Children in Swaziland love to dance and sing, especially for visitors when they perform the



traditional 'Sibhaca' dance. The words of the songs have changed: today they sing about the AIDS virus, about losing members of their families and the need to go to the doctor for medicine. One of the problems for children who are HIV positive and who need anti-retroviral drugs is that they aren't well enough nourished to take the drugs and so get very sick.

This is how it was – joy was always so close to pain and suffering –

they were hand in hand, often in embraces and handshakes, smiles and tears in a spirit of love that was irresistible and immediate. Our job that day was to help dress the children in their new school uniforms, given to them through the SCT sponsorship scheme. All Swazi children wear their uniforms with huge pride. The children in Antioch School were given bags, containing socks and shoes, toothpaste and soap as well as ties and sweat shirts with the school badge.

It was like life in a bag. But for them it was a new life, because their school fees were being paid by sponsors, and they had shoes for the first time. There were children without guardians because they were living on their own. Some of them the age of our Year 7 students, are looking after their younger brothers and sisters in homesteads. They needed extra cooking oil and basic ingredients to feed their families. The school has its own vegetable area and chickens. These provide food at lunchtime for the orphans and something to take home with them."

The assembly continued with a slide show of St Francis School, the High School in Mbabane, the capital city, chosen to twin with Bacon's College. The testimonies of some of the sixth formers collected by Liz James were read out.



"We all have to pay our school fees. Our education isn't free like in England. Sometimes it's really difficult for our families to find the money for school and we have to leave for a year or two."

"There are a lot of our GCSE students who are aged 20 to 22"

"We have no library. Our teacher has to unlock a special box for us to read in class and we can't take the books home."

In a most moving part of the assembly the voices of the 70 students in the St Francis School choir rang out as Liz recalled the singing and her first meeting with the child that she has sponsored since 2003.

"When they sing I know they aren't all children. They have lived a hundred years in their music, for me they carried the harmony, the solidarity,

the pain and beauty of Swaziland and Africa in their voices. They had been singing for generations. The male line is fearless, melodic, unashamed, sung by boys who are men. The female voices are penetratingly clear and true.

There is total honesty in their music, the kind of honesty that met me in every embrace and handshake, given in spontaneous love and generosity of spirit to a stranger from London. They cover the distance between us with their voices and we are united.

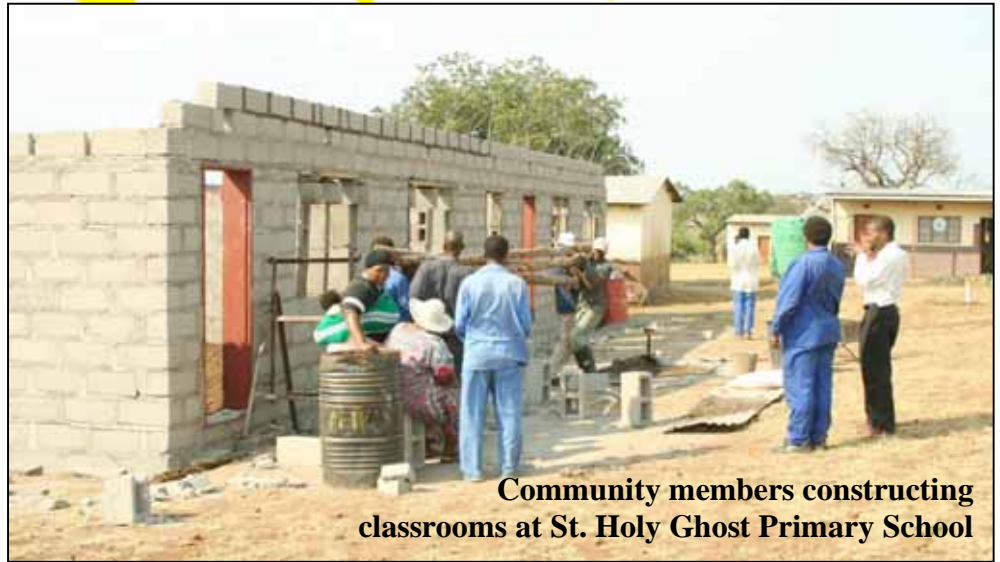
When I held the hand of Nqobile, the orphan I sponsor, I knew that the gift of money was not all that bound us – it was the gift of love. For the brief time I was in Swaziland I was given that gift, along with all those elderly women running orphanages in Swaziland totally dependant on voluntary donation, all those teachers who grow vegetables to feed children in their schools and all those head teachers who don't send their children away because there is no money to pay for their education."

Bacon's students took their cue and went on to organise a myriad of money raising activities. These included nail painting, carol singing and prawn cracker sales.

Rob and Sharol Mackenzie went to the final assembly to receive the cheque which exceeded all expectations – a testament to a wonderful school. Thirty two students will be sponsored by Bacon's College, bringing the total to 220, a library will be established at St Francis High School and classrooms will be built at St Benedict's, a rural primary school.



Edinburgh Charity Fashion Show assists Swazi schools



Community members constructing classrooms at St. Holy Ghost Primary School

Part of the proceeds from the 2006 annual Edinburgh Charity Fashion Show has come to Swaziland. Students from the university wanting to assist Swazi schools donated approximately £18,000 towards classroom construction. Administered by Swaziland Charitable Trust the funding will be shared amongst four rural schools in three regions.

Dedication and hard work by the Head Teachers, School Committees and parents have taken these projects forward at an amazing rate. Malkerns Valley Primary School completed their classroom ready for the 2007 grade 6 students to begin the New Year in stylish surroundings.

Tireless effort and co-operation on the part of the community at Ekutsimleni Primary at Luve over the past three-months have resulted in the completion of their block of three classrooms. Even before the paint had dried some of the 900 students were eagerly beginning lessons in the new rooms (despite not yet having furniture). Between 60 and 100 community members regularly came to complete the project. The site was a hive of activity. Everyone was there; from small babies on their mother's backs to old men, the oldest of whom was the chief's representative, he came every day to keep an eye on proceedings.

In the Eastern Lowveld region of rural Swaziland, St. Holy Ghost Primary School has 315 students. This area has been affected by drought for the past 20 years – the World Food Program (WFP) provides a daily meal for students. Over half the pupils at St. Holy Ghost are registered as orphaned and vulnerable (OVCs). Despite the difficulties, the community is in the final stages of completing their two classrooms and aim to have students in them at the beginning of term two in mid-May.

Importantly, these buildings will not just be centres of learning for many years to come, but they are also a fantastic achievement. The community came together and worked as a team to complete the classroom in record time. Parents have given their skills and expertise free of charge. Their spirit and dedication is a real credit to them, building the school with their own hands shows a real commitment to their children's education.

The parents at Ekutsimleni are so excited by their new classrooms that they are talking of organising adult literacy classes and using the new classrooms on Saturdays.

Edinburgh Charity Fashion Show assistance to Swazi



Left: Ekutsimleni Primary School community hard at work building classrooms.

Right: Malkerns Valley Primary School Grade 6 students in their new classroom

The Luxembourg Christmas Bazaar

Last Christmas Valerie Ellis, Christine Kearey and Jean McDonough chose the SCT as one of the recipients for the money raised at the British stand of the annual International Bazaar. They gave us £2,412 which was put towards the secondary education of Nhlanhla Mawelala

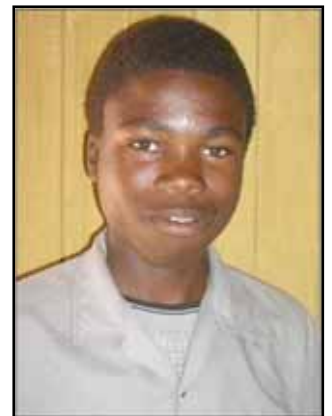
Sponsored students graduate with excellent results

2007 is the first time students sponsored through the SCT student support scheme have graduated and enrolled in secondary school.

Nhlanhla Mawelala & Bongwiwe Mahlalela (*pictured at right*) both graduated from Manzana Nazarene Primary School in 2006 with excellent results.

In the national exams Nhlanhla scored 100% in maths to receive a merit. Bongwiwe with 90% in English got a first class pass. Both students are now enthusiastically studying in Form 1. Nhlanhla, who walks 20km each day to attend school, hopes to become a doctor. He manages to fit study around collecting firewood, water and cooking for his very ill mother and two younger brothers. In school holidays and on weekends he does 'piece' jobs to support his family.

Without the generous support of individuals sponsoring Nhlanhla and Bongwiwe they would not be able to continue their education



Africa Night at Wrington raises funds for Swazi orphans

A wonderful evening of song and dance was organised this May by Sandy, Hazel and friends to raise funds for the SCT orphan support scheme. Hazel worked at the Swaziland adult literacy centre in 2001, returning with a love of the country and a determination to continue helping it..

Historical Footnote

1910 - 2007

This year sees the winding up of Swaziland Settlement Ltd, the progenitor of the Swaziland Charitable Trust.

The first Directors were:

- Lord Lovat
- The Marquess of Anglesey
- Sir Samuel Scott
- Col. John Groom
- Capt. James Morrison
- Capt. Archibald Stirling



The support of educational institutions by the SCT continues..... pictured above students choosing from the mobile book library.

Swaziland Settlement was set up in 1910 to buy land in the Swaziland Protectorate and settle English immigrant farmers. The farms were given names like Peebles and Kirkhill. Clause 15 in the Articles of Association states that one of the aims of the company was "To establish and support, or to aid in the establishment and support of hospitals, infirmaries, dispensaries and other charities..... libraries, educational institutions". 2007 sees the final stage in the transformation of Swaziland Settlement into the Swaziland Charitable Trust, now entirely devoted to charitable projects in Swaziland. I hope that the original directors would be pleased to see how their investment has been looked after and how it is now used exclusively for the benefit of the people of Swaziland. These are some of the applications which were granted recently.

Recipient Organisation	Purpose of Grant
Swaziland Skills Centres - N.A.S.T.C	Purchase of tools and equipment for training
Children's Cup Swaziland	Veranda & playground equipment for Madonsa Orphan Carepoint
Enjabulweni High School	School Library
McCorkindale Trust	Building materials & fittings for orphanage upgrades
St. Benedict Primary School	Building materials for kitchen roofing
Manzana Nazarene Primary School	Building materials for classroom roofing
Moya Centre	Inputs and tools for school trench gardening programmes
Gundwini Primary School	Home Economics equipment - Two handy-gas stoves
Sinethemba Pre-school	Playground equipment

Vicky McDonough, May 2007

Swaziland Charitable Trust (Reg. Charity No. 257666)

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