

Swaziland Charitable Trust Reg. Charity No. 257666 England

Newsletter No. 2 November 2006

The SCT UK Chair Vicky McDonough, son Hugo and friend Liz James spent a week in Swaziland in October. Hosted by Local Chairman Rowan Howe and his wife Lee, the group toured various projects around the country being supported by the SCT.

They saw how schools across the country are working incredibly hard with scant resources to deliver a good education to their students. At every school they were greeted with traditional dancing and singing, the warmth of the welcome was overwhelming and for Liz and Hugo on their first visit to Africa, very moving.

Vicky met students individually sponsored through the SCT, she was able to deliver presents and letters from their sponsors.

In 2005/2006 the SCT increased donations by 40%. Half of this increase went to supporting the educational sector and the rest to projects in agriculture, health and social welfare. At a Board meeting held during Vicky's visit, funding was pledged to an indigenous chicken project to be run by women, school trench gardening projects, income generating activities for youth, medical equipment for the Children's Ward at the hospital in Manzini and tools for vocational training.



Above: SCT UK Chair Vicky McDonough and Local Chairman Rowan Howe.



Left: *Traditional greetings* - Hugo McDonough with students from Ekutsimleni Primary School. Above: Vicky McDonough delivering a letter and photographs to 10 year old sponsored student Mbali Shabangu. Mbali is a double orphan & stays with her elderly & disabled grandmother in one room in an informal peri-urban township. Mbali takes care of her grandmother and regularly begs for food for them both. SCT now have 120 students on the student support scheme, with many more on the waiting list.



Antioch Primary School students and guardians with Vicky McDonough

Jurassic Jaunt – By Rob Mackenzie

Constance Lubhedze, a friend who teaches in rural Hhohho recently wrote to me saying “When you visit, don’t ask “where’s bani bani?” because you’ll be asking about ghosts, the dearly departed, phela. Believe me, it’s traumatic; we’re sick of funerals every weekend.” I lived in Dvokolwako for 20 years and it breaks my heart to hear of the heavy toll that the AIDS epidemic is taking on my friends and neighbours so I resolved to do a little to help some of the children left behind.

In June, along with brother in law Paul Ryder, and Vicky McDonough, we hiked the full length of the Dorset coast, that’s 88 miles, in 3 days. We raised over £6,000, enabling us to sponsor 20 orphans throughout their education at Antioch Primary School.

The three of us began our journey, setting off from Lyme Regis on Friday 23 June at 5am! The weather was good. We had bright sunshine and a fresh breeze helping us along and at 9pm we stumbled wearily into a wonderful restaurant on the outskirts of Weymouth. We celebrated completing the first and longest leg with a very cool bottle of Pinot Grigio under pink umbrellas with a view of what seemed like a scrap yard.

Saturday morning we were up bright and much too early for breakfast, keen to start on the most dramatic and most difficult section because of the number of cliffs. We arrive at Swanage at 10pm, the last fish and chip was closed. Fortunately we had family waiting at the Youth Hostel with much needed food and tea to restore us.

The last day was relatively relaxing with only 22 miles over nearly all flat ground. The only hills were at Old Harry and Hengistbury Head. 42 hours of walking and only 11hrs sleeping meant that periodic “organ recitals”, comparing aches and pains, were quite a feature and there was lots of hilarity along the way, or perhaps it was hysteria. We were thrilled, if a little tired, to arrive at the Hampshire Border at 6pm on Sunday 25 June – 61 hours and 88 miles after we started.

As you can see from the photo above, our walk was well worth it. Vicky, with her son Hugo and friend, Liz James, delivered uniforms to the children in October. These children have their primary years at school now guaranteed by the money we raised. We are so grateful to all our sponsors for their generosity.

Twinning

Accompanying Vicky McDonaugh on her recent trip to Swaziland was London teacher Liz James from Bacons College. Liz met with St. Francis Head Teacher Edgar Mavuso to discuss opportunities for their schools to twin. St. Francis is a co-educational high school of 476 students located in the capital city Mbabane.

Despite sitting for their final 'O' Level exams (the school year in Swaziland is from January to December), students and teachers made time to welcome Liz and treat her to their choral singing which has won them numerous competitions. She was also able to interview the students to gain an insight into the life of a Swazi student.

Bacons is a mixed multi-ethnic school with a large West African/Afro-Caribbean population. It is hoped that twinning between St. Francis' and Bacons will enable teacher and pupil exchanges as well as fundraising activities. Swaziland Charitable Trust will facilitate this partnership.



Above: St. Francis Form 5 students taking a break between exams. *Below:* Liz James with St. Francis Head Teacher Edgar Mavuso.



Edinburgh Charity Fashion

Crowded classrooms, such as the one pictured at right at St. Holy Ghost Primary School are common throughout Swaziland. With over 100 students sometimes squashed into small classes without adequate furniture teaching and learning is very difficult.

Some of the proceeds from last year's Edinburgh University Charity Fashion Show have been donated to Swaziland Charitable Trust. The students want to help Swazi schools and raised £18,500 towards the construction of classrooms, work begins in early 2007.

For the primary schools being assisted; St. Holy Ghost, Ekutsimleni, Malkerns Valley and Hhohho AME, extra room will make an enormous difference to their learning environment for students and teachers.



SCT would like to thank all those who generously supported the Edinburgh University Fashion Show. A very special thanks to Josh Scales and Casheen Smiersma who worked so hard to make it possible.

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Some of the SCT sponsored projects visited by the UK Chair;

Above left: Students at St. Benedict Primary School reciting a poem about gender and HIV/AIDS. The SCT sponsors 20 students at this school located in the far South of the country.

Above right: Traditional Sibhacca dancing at Ekutsimleni Primary School. The SCT sponsors 8 students and have assisted with a borehole.

Right: Inspecting a Moya Centre trench garden at Manzini Central Primary School. Learning the skills of growing vegetables is especially important for students that live in child headed households. The SCT has again pledged funding for school trench gardens in 2007.

Below Right: Fun at Manzana Nazarene Primary School, but also a valuable learning tool... Vicky brought blow-up globes donated by Liz Loveday, she delivered them to some of the schools the SCT is working with. Rural schools especially, have a severe shortage of learning materials and equipment. The SCT sponsors 26 students at Manzana and has supported agriculture and building projects at the school.



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