

Newsletter No. 10 November 2014

UK Chair visits Swaziland



Vicky is thanked by home economics student Thandzisile Tfwala at St Joseph's High School where the SCT purchased cooking equipment.

On this year's visit I wanted to concentrate on meeting as many of the orphans on our scheme as possible. The SCT newsletter goes mainly to all the generous and loyal sponsors who support the children, I want to use this section to explain how the scheme is working. Finding out how the students are is important. I am greatly helped in this task by our very efficient manager Phindile Ndabandaba and our secretary, Rob Mackenzie. Both talk to the children in Siswati enabling them to find out more about their schooling and any problems they might have. Swazi children tend to be quite shy and reticent, their stories sometimes conflict with what their teachers say so it's vital to be able to talk to them privately and in their mother tongue.

We have nearly 150 children on the scheme, most of whom are now at High School. The Swazi education system demands that students pass end of year exams and we have decided that unless there are extenuating circumstances verified by our manager, we can't allow students who repeatedly fail, to remain on the scheme. Given that the children were chosen entirely on grounds of need, it has not been easy to implement. We leave a great deal of the decision making as to the future of each child to Phindile. It is quite clear to me after my visit that our confidence in her is well placed; she knows their guardians and their head teachers well. It is an invidious position to be in so we have given her a set of criteria and she has wide discretion over the future of each child.

Continued on page 2

UK Chair's visit to Swaziland continued...

The scheme will have been going 10 years in February. The first sponsored orphan, my own, leaves school this year. Now a confident 17 year old, it was a joy to visit his homestead and meet his aunt who has cared for him since his parents died in 2005. I have asked Phindile to keep a record of what happens to our sponsored children. Many of you have kindly agreed to continue with a second child, we are now vetting prospective children for the scheme very carefully. Home visits are made and guardians given a clear understanding of what undertakings the SCT will make. For instance, we only pay for transport to and from school in very exceptional circumstances. If students want to change schools, they must pay the cost of the bus. The provision of uniform and books, not to mention the fees, are a lifeline for these children. I am so very grateful to all of you who help the SCT in this important task.



Vicky's sponsorship has helped Ngozo's aunt and uncle give him a stable and loving home while he finishes his schooling.

Sponsored children

Sixty five children are enrolled in 22 primary schools and eighty four in high schools across the country.



Clockwise from top left: Vicky with sponsored students at Lwandle Primary School.

Two sponsored students at home with their family near Antioch Primary School.

Vicky and Rob Mackenzie with sponsored students at Emcosini High School.

Cebisile reading a letter from her sponsor.



Our graduates



*Clockwise from top left:
High school graduate Bakhona Nxumalo hopes to become a nurse. His fees will be paid for by the government but he still needs to find money for accommodation.*

Mphumuzi graduated last year. His sponsor has helped him further his education.

Mbuso Lushaba will graduate this year from Qomintaba High School and hopes to become a teacher.

Thokozani Mbhamali, also at Qomintaba, hopes to become a science teacher.



Qomintaba High School



While visiting three of our students here, Mr.Mbingo, the headmaster, showed us a wonderful new resource to help students. Most of them are without electricity at home so these solar torches, charged at school during the day, can be taken home and used to do their homework by.

Orphan support scheme



Sakhile arriving home almost 12 hours after she left in the morning.

The Trust's orphan support scheme aims to help vulnerable and bereaved families keep their children in school. Students are matched with sponsors who pay their school fees and uniform costs. When Sakhile's father died in 2003, even with the support of her wider family, her mother struggled to look after her and her five siblings. The Trust has supported Sakhile since 2006. She is now 16, and having never failed a year, she's in Form 4, her last year but one.

Her 7 years primary schooling was close to home at Antioch. She then studied for her Junior Certificate 5km away at Emcosini High School (Form III), transferring to Mjinga, 45km away in Manzini, for her final two years to take advantage of higher teaching standards. Sakhile likes music, her favourite singer is South African gospel singer Benjamin Dube; she is an alto in the school choir and enjoys reading. Her favourite subject is chemistry and she hopes to become a doctor or a pharmacologist depending on her results and the availability of sponsorship.

Her mother cooks school meals at Antioch; living so close to the school, it is very convenient but poorly paid and most of her income is taken up paying bus fares. The four younger children are still in primary school but her eldest brother also studies away from home. The family farm two small fields where they grow maize. They have chickens but no cattle or goats.

A day in the life of Sakhile

Except on Thursdays when she attends a special evening service at her church, Sakhile sleeps at 8pm. She likes to rise early at 2am so that she can finish her homework before cooking breakfast at 4am; night-time study is made possible by a supportive mother, a water tank and electricity. It is about 3km to the river, but the family has a large water tank which is filled by rain in the summer and water tankers in the long dry season. Meals are cooked on the ground over a wood fire, typically a light maize porridge for breakfast and spinach with liphlishi, a thicker maize porridge, in the evening. Lunch is provided by the school, usually rice and beans or liphlishi with sour milk. School starts at 7.30am so she has to catch her bus at dawn. Fortunately, it is only a short walk to the bus stop. Lessons end at 4.10pm; she then catches the 5pm bus arriving home at dusk.

Both her paternal grandparents lived nearby but have passed away. Her paternal uncles now live in their home. During school holidays Sakhile often visits her maternal grandmother who lives near Piggs Peak in Northwestern Swaziland. She has never left Swaziland but would like to visit Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa.

Manzana Primary School

The SCT has a long association with Manzana. We have sponsored over 40 children, fenced their school garden and helped build classrooms and housing for teachers.



Sakhile with her mother and SCT chair Vicky McDonough



Clockwise from top left:

A warm welcome from Manzana School Choir. Making kedgeree in the Home Economics class. We will be looking at their application for funds to buy new cookers for them. Head teacher Mr Ndwandwe inspects the new houses built with our support. Having good teacher housing helps schools like Manzana attract and retain good teachers. 70km from town, the area is hot and dry with poor roads and little public transport. Classes double as clinics enabling peripatetic nurses to attend to remote communities.



Supporters visit Swaziland

Orphan sponsor Lucinda



Lucinda with Mlandvo Dlamini. Teachers and pupils from Bacon's College Rotherhithe have supported numerous projects and children.

In June this year, I was fortunate enough to visit Swaziland. Phindile the SCT manager kindly met me at the airport. My first visit was to St Andrews Primary School where we visited classes and were shown the paving that was funded by the SCT. The school is now looking for funds to equip their library.

Our next stop was St Mary's Secondary School in Manzini where I finally met Mlandvo. Now aged seventeen, Mlandvo lost both his parents when he was very young. I first started sponsoring Mlandvo when he was in primary school. After years of corresponding by mail, it was so amazing to finally meet him. He was living

with his grandmother until she died last year. He now lives with his aunt, two older sisters and his ten year old cousin. Currently in Grade 11, Mlandvo is a senior prefect in his school due to his excellent record of attendance, punctuality, behaviour and academic effort. Neat and well presented, Mlandvo wears his uniform with pride. He works hard and is keen to do well. He is studying Siswati, English, Literature, Maths, Biology, History and Geography. Mlandvo's eyes lit up when speaking about his favourite subjects – Literature and English. He particularly enjoys Shakespeare and poetry. He intends, however, to study Economics after Grade 12 as he sees Economics leading him to a more lucrative career. He conceded that it's not easy to concentrate in a class of 48 students, but he nevertheless tries his best and is determined to do well. I was very impressed by Mlandvo's focus, determination and positivity despite the many adversities with which he has had to come to terms in his young life. I wish we could have spent more time together, but his class was revising for their approaching exams so he couldn't be out of class for too long.

My final visit was to eKutsimleni Primary School, by far the most needy of all the schools. Despite the 35 degree Celsius heat, all pupils proudly wore their full school uniforms along with curious stares and friendly smiles. As with most state schools in Swaziland, there are 50 pupils per class. There are not enough chairs in all the classrooms so children carry their chairs to the computer classroom where 50 pupils share 20 computers. The school accommodates 860 pupils and has no running water, only one manual bore hole, which the children take turns to pump. The other bore hole is broken and has been broken for several months as they do not have the funds to repair it. Children fill buckets of water to wash their lunch bowls and also to water the vegetable garden. The Grade 6 pupils tend the spinach, tomatoes and beans in their school garden. Beans and rice form a substantial part of the children's diet at school. This meal is often the only meal for many children.

And yet the warm, playful smiles sit alongside the sad distant gazes in their very young eyes. Witnessing the reality of severe hardship on young children certainly puts first world problems in perspective. The efforts of the SCT are clearly appreciated by all who benefit. L. J.

Fundraisers Alice & Nathan

In March, Nathan and I ran the Kilimanjaro Half Marathon and through this managed to convince our family and friends to donate a total of £800 to the charity of our choice. After a glowing recommendation from a close friend we chose the Swaziland Charitable Trust and since we were going to be in that part of the world we asked if we might be able to pay a little visit.

At the beginning of May, after an exchange of organisational emails, we met Phindile the Project Manager for the SCT in Swaziland. From the beginning Phindile was friendly, warm and generous with her time. Over the next few days she drove us to schools that the SCT support in various different ways, from helping build the school classrooms, providing roofing, creating school gardens, to building a IT classroom. She had arranged for us to meet the Head Teachers, despite it being the school holidays, as well as a few of the children sponsored by SCT.

We were thoroughly impressed with Phindile's dedication and both felt absolutely privileged to have been able to gain such an insight into the fantastic work done by the SCT, particularly meeting the motivated and exceptional Head Teachers who work so hard to provide for their pupils. A.C.



Head teacher Mavis Mazibuko showing Alice and Nathan the new SCT funded computer lab at Hhohho AME Primary School.

Flying the flag at Holy Ghost

Situated in the dry low veldt, the SCT has sponsored over 30 students at Holy Ghost. The area is prone to drought and serves a very poor community.



SCT projects

New assembly yard at Malkerns



Built on the deep red soils of the fertile Malkerns valley, the St Andrews Primary School assembly yard was a quagmire in the wet season. Thanks to the Cooper Dean Charitable Trust, muddy footprints are a thing of the past. The newly surfaced area also doubles up as a netball court.

Head teacher Mrs Dlamini goes for goal. The SCT has also helped provide a library building for the school.

New kitchen at Ndunayithini

Deep in the drought prone low veldt, the midday meal at school is the only meal that many children can rely on.



Even during holidays the school committee and parents come to school to make blocks and help build the new kitchen. The old corrugated iron kitchen can be seen behind the new structure.

Mphetseni Primary School



The head teacher Mrs Vilakati shows off the new SCT funded projection room and donated sewing machines. Home Economics teacher Mrs Ngwenya treads one of the electric sewing machines.

Norwegian projects



Holy Ghost Primary School head teacher Mrs Magagula with SCT manager Phindile Ndabandaba and chair Vicky McDonaugh in the new library building built in partnership with the eMbiveni Foundation.

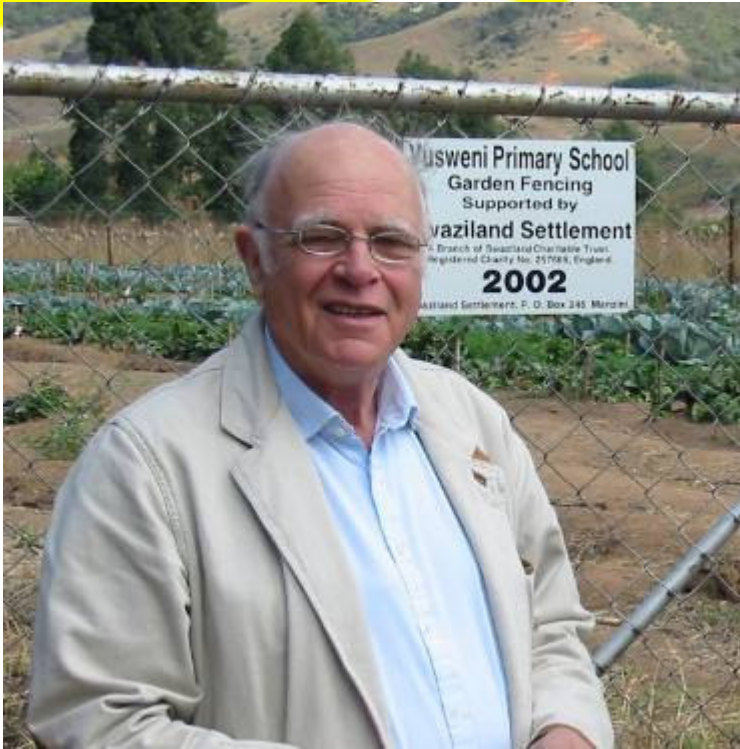
The SCT uses its long experience and intimate knowledge of the country to help other organisations improve the lives of Swazis. One such partnership is with the eMbiveni Foundation which was set up by Swaziland Meat Industries and their Norwegian customers to support the rural communities that supply them. The SCT identifies projects, purchases materials and monitors implementation.

Projects supported include purchasing computers for eKutsimleni Primary School, building a kitchen at Nkutjini Primary School, building a computer laboratory at Holy Rosary High School, buying a water pumps for Ndunayithini High School and Mponono Primary School and a building a library at Holy Ghost Primary School.



The SCT chair helps feed the fire in the new kitchen facilities at Nkutjini Primary School. Situated in the drought prone lowveld, they include secure storage for food and are a great improvement on the old outdoor kitchen, seen on the left.

Robert Loder CBE



Robert's love affair with Africa began in 1956 when he went to work with the Community of the Resurrection in Johannesburg following an invitation from the legendary Father Trevor Huddleston. There he became involved with the colourful life of the Sophiatown township and shared with its community the pain of seeing it bulldozed to the ground as part of the apartheid programme.

In 1957 Robert took up a junior management post with the mining colossus of Anglo-American in Johannesburg, a move commented on by some as deserting God for mammon, but in fact the first demonstration of his remarkable ability to bridge different cultural and economic environments, evident, for instance, in his continued interest in

the black musical scene. He stayed with Anglo in South Africa for some five years and then was posted for a further three years to Zambia, where he did much to create good relations for Anglo with local politicians in the run-up to independence.

The late sixties saw a move to the United Kingdom and the offices of Anglo's London associate Charter Consolidated. In 1971 Robert was invited by the then Chairman, Lord Antrim, to join the London board of Swaziland Settlement for which with his Southern African experience he was a natural candidate. The board meetings at the time were notable for lavish lunches at the Gresham Club and it was quite consistent that one of the decisions at Robert's first meeting was to send 200 cigars to Capt Wallis and Mr Hubbard, members of the local board in Swaziland.

Following the deaths of Lord Antrim in 1977 and his successor, Sir Robert Adeane two years later, John Riddell was the first member of the younger generation to take the Chair, retiring in the late 1980s because of pressure of other commitments. Robert was the ideal person to take over having resumed his connection with South Africa where he was travelling regularly on behalf of the Triangle Network, an organisation founded by him with the sculptor Anthony Caro to promote the exchange of ideas between artists in different countries. He was well placed to extend his itinerary once a year to Swaziland and build up a close relationship with Rowan Howe, Chairman of the Swaziland Board from 1986.

The gradual phasing out of the Settlement's traditional business of making loans to individual farmers for land purchase opened up possibilities of, on the one side, building up a portfolio of commercial property in Swaziland as an income-generating asset base and, on the other, greatly expanding its giving to deserving causes in the country, particularly linked to agriculture. Robert quickly grasped the advantages of converting the top company into a charity to reflect the change in the underlying activity and in 1997 the Swaziland Charitable Trust came into being in the UK with both a branch and a wholly-owned commercial company in Swaziland.



In its new form SCT, under Robert's leadership in the UK and that of Rowan Howe in Swaziland, consolidated its position as the leading private charitable giver in the territory. Robert's ability to work with people of all backgrounds, financial shrewdness and enthusiasm made him an inspiring Chairman. With his support Vicky McDonaugh, appointed a trustee in 1998, opened a new chapter in the form of the Orphan Support Scheme and was a natural successor to the Chair in 2004. However, Robert's experience and wisdom continued to be available through his membership of the board until 2013, by which time his son John was able to accept an invitation to join. Robert will be remembered as an outstanding Chairman of both the Settlement and the Charitable Trust, carrying on the tradition of the founders more than 100 years ago and adapting the organisation to meet the changing needs of Swaziland's population at the present day.

Robert, your colleagues salute you.
NHB 21.10.14

Robert Loder visiting the school garden at Vusweni Primary School in 2003. SCT fencing made the garden possible.

The Riddell Memorial



Hhohho AME in northwest Swaziland is the lucky beneficiary of Walter Riddell's desire to commemorate his father. Sir John Riddell was Chairman of the SCT for many years and when Walter visited the school in 2007 he was impressed by the head teacher's enthusiasm and drive. It was decided to build

and equip a computer room there. It is now in use and we hope that Walter and his family will visit Swaziland in 2016 and ceremoniously unveil a plaque to the memory of his father.

Hhohho AME Primary School: The school committee, SCT chairs from Swaziland and the UK and SCT sponsored children join head teacher Mrs Mazibuko in the new computer laboratory.

A dance of welcome at Hhohho AME



Girls perform the traditional uMiso dance wearing woollen sashes, beaded umdlamu and emafahlawane - ankle rattles made from moon moth cocoons.

How you can help



Give as you Live™

To make a donation, search for orphan support in Swaziland at www.theBigGive.org.uk, text donations with *Just Text Giving* or support us every time you shop online with *Give as you Live*.

Help an orphan
stay in school

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