

Newsletter No. 14 - March 2019

The next generation SCT graduates help



SCT graduate teacher Mrs Bongiwe Kunene, SCT manager Phindile Ndabandaba, Deputy Head Mrs Chorah Dlamini and SCT chair Vicky McDonaugh with sponsored students.

This 2018 visit saw fulfilled one of the dreams we had when we started the orphan support scheme, namely that students educated by sponsors would in their turn help other orphaned children.

Bongiwe Kunene was sponsored for her entire education by Caroline Egremont and is now teaching at Embo Primary School. She has selected children in her care who need assistance. She keeps an eye on them and makes sure that our manager, Phindile Ndabandaba, is kept in close touch with the school. When she was 16 Bongiwe wrote "I want to help people who are sick to become well again and don't leave orphans behind like me because it is painful to live without parents" as a teacher now she can help children like herself.



Dvokolwako maths and science teacher Nhlanhla Mawalela.

Nhlanhla is teaching maths and science where he was educated, at Dvokolwako High School. He was sponsored by the proceeds of the Luxembourg Christmas fair for all of his education. He walked the 9 kilometres every morning to get there and back in the afternoon. In 2010, he wrote "I am now looking forward to form 5 which is the class that will determine my future. I have all the necessary equipment needed for my education..... I have to work hard until I reach my destiny". He told us that he explains his background to his students, never hiding the challenges he faced.

The next generation

Future teachers



In 2007 a fund raising event was held in Wrington near Bristol. Money was raised by Hazel English and her friends to educate Sinethemba. She has consistently worked hard and excelled at school. In 2017, she was head girl at St Anne's High School, Malkerns.

She is pictured here in her first year at Ngwane Teacher Training College. She wants to specialise in Maths and Science.



Sakhile graduates in September 2019. She achieved 90% in her teaching practice and also specialises in Maths and Science.

Sakhile had to work extremely hard to get into Ngwane College, getting up at 2am to do her homework, she cooked breakfast at 4am then caught the bus, travelling 45km to her high school and returning at 7.30pm.

She was sponsored throughout high school by Virginia Fraser.

Nurse graduates



Bakhona graduated from university last year with a degree in nursing. Sponsored through primary school by the late Brenda Mackenzie, he is pictured with Sharol, Rob and Gcebile Mackenzie.



SCT tertiary education fund

With generous donations from Martin Winter and Sir Richard Gozney, we have started a fund to help our best students emerging from High School to train or to go onto further education. The government of eSwatini does pay for certain courses, particularly in shortage areas, but the grants do not always cover accommodation costs and travel. We envisage helping only the very highest achieving graduates like the 3 seen above. With the orphan support scheme now in its 14th year we have some students who have been supported all the way through their entire primary and secondary education, we feel very strongly that a tertiary fund is essential. Any further donations to the fund would be very welcome and a huge thank you to Martin and Richard for starting us off!

SCT to the rescue.....

98 school children saved

By Keith Fossey, Chairman of Swaziland Schools Projects



SCT Manager Phindile with Hawane High School students from Jack Dobson's bursary scheme.

In December 2017 Father Jack Dobson became very ill. Living in Mbabane in Swaziland, Jack had, over many years, been administering a bursary scheme for thousands of children who otherwise would have been unable to go to school. Jack was also associated with a UK based charity called Swaziland Schools Projects (SSP) who paid into his bursary scheme. In his younger days, Jack had also built countless classrooms, toilets, teachers' houses and kitchens with funds supplied by SSP. With the school year starting in January 2018, something had to be done as Jack could no longer do his amazing work.

As Chairman of SSP, I did some web research and spoke with Rob Mackenzie of SCT. I then went to Swaziland and met SCT Board members Charles Gilbert and Angus McLeod. That discussion led to a successful partnership approach to the problem. Phindile, the SCT manager, visited all the schools and where possible talked with the children about their circumstances. In the meantime, I arranged for the residue of money from Jack's bursary fund together with a contribution from SSP to be transferred to the SCT.

In due course, and after much hard work, Phindile was able to confirm that 98 children at 23 secondary schools needed to have their fees paid and the money transfers were made to the schools. So, thanks to the vision of Charles and Angus and the amazing work of Phindile, the children were able to continue their education. On behalf of the Trustees of SSP, the Dobson family and the 98 children in secondary school, can I say a huge "Thank You" to the SCT for their actions.

Supporting schools

Bringing 21st-century technology to rural schools



Students enjoying honing their skills in the Hhohho AME Primary School computer lab. Opened in 2016 by Hugh Riddell as a memorial to his father, it is the only fully equipped computer classroom in any primary school in the country. Mrs Mazibuko, the headteacher of the school, now retired, was there to greet us as was the IT teacher Phumlani Magongo.

Promoting agricultural education



At Elwandle School, the broiler unit built with a donation from one of our most loyal supporters, John de Havilland, is producing an income for Mrs Mamba to spend on supporting orphans in her school. She is the most enterprising of head teachers and has secured a regular market for her chickens helped by her investment in a deep freeze.

Building staff houses in remote rural schools

At Holy Ghost primary school, Mrs Magagula, pictured here with a builder, examines the shell of her two new staff houses built with a donation from the SCT. Rural schools suffer if teachers can't stay on site. The results at the school have improved immeasurably since Mrs Magagula took over, we have 7 students sponsored there, the enthusiasm and grit she shows in the very challenging circumstances she faces, are admirable. It is very rewarding for me as an albeit retired teacher, to help my colleagues in eSwatini.



Building kitchens in drought-prone areas



The new kitchen at St Benedict's school seen here replaces a leaking corrugated iron structure. The headteacher Mr Mango, showed us the now rainproof store room, where the precious bags of meal are kept. The government has maintained its supply of lifesaving food throughout the drought years. I am pleased to say that the rains have been much better this year. The school serves one of the poorest regions in the country and we support 10 children at the school.

Yebo Art Reach

Robert Loder Memorial Project



Vicky and Nqobile, Rachel and Seiphati from Yebo Art Reach and Phindile at the new arts centre.

To commemorate Robert Loder's lifelong interest in African art after his death in 2017, it was decided to support this non-profit organisation which runs creative projects around Swaziland. Yebo is passionate about promoting the fine arts and enabling the growth of eSwatini's creative economy, whether through the medium of sculpture, painting, printing or mosaic making.

Initially, our grant will pay for the refurbishment of the above studios where public art, for instance murals, can be made. Yebo was established in 2010 by the



Swazi artists designing Christmas cards with Yebo Art.

Armstrong family. Pete Armstrong is pictured below with some of the volunteers who were making designs for the vivid cloths they sell in their shop. He aims to showcase the best of Swazi art and design. His son, Dane Armstrong, is running the Art Reach project; he will use art in the community as a tool to tackle issues such as climate change, women's rights and youth unemployment.

Supporting the vulnerable

Education for the blind



At St Joseph's School, we visited the only education unit for the blind and visually impaired in eSwatini. Below Mr Mzileni demonstrates how exam papers are turned into Braille. It is a very long and laborious process but it means that the students can do exams and get further training in a country



where disability makes earning a living very difficult. Mr Mmabatho above himself a pupil at the school has returned to teach blind children; he is helping them learn to count.

Education



At Manzini Central High School, we talked to Fikile Gumedze who has been sponsored by the Burns family for all of her education. She is pictured here with her exam piece for sewing. She hopes to be a nurse and has shown immense courage throughout her young life, being from a child-headed household. Also graduating from Manzini this year is Lovava Sihlongonyane, entirely educated by his sponsor, Lavinia Davies. She has offered to help him find a job by paying

for driving lessons. Both students have been on the scheme for 12 years and it is hard to thank sponsors enough for their help. I am lucky enough to have got to know these students well over the years and I am very proud of them.

Hospice care



Visiting Sister Elsa at Hope House is always a pleasure. The wonderful gardens and pristine little houses, albeit with very sick people in them, are a testament to her devotion to the terminally ill of Manzini District. The SCT have recently refurbished all the entrances to the bungalows making access in wheel chairs easier.



Above: vocational lessons at the high school for the Deaf. Below left: the high school campus.



Thanks to a generous donation from the Ronald Smitherman fund, the SCT have been able to sponsor a teacher at the primary school for the Deaf in Siteki. Njabuliso, pictured below with the head teacher Mrs Thobile Dlamini, was educated here and will now return to his school to reopen the CDT classroom. We are hoping to raise some money to help the school with a new roof as theirs leaks into the girls dormitories.

At the High School, we visited the Home Economics department where the sewing machines were donated by the SCT as well as hair dressing equipment. Students were happy to sell some of the garments made. The head teacher Mrs Thwala explained that she also wanted to add agriculture to the curriculum and build a feedlot and a piggery. The aim is to make the school more self-sufficient.

In the welding classroom, we were told that the students get frequent orders for their work but they run short on materials.



Supporting self-reliance

Guba - designing resilient systems for living



Thanks to the Bryan Guinness Trust, a new preschool with an interactive play-scape was built. There is a jungle gym, a zip line, a floating weaver bird nest and a game of snakes and ladders. Yebo Art Reach artists helped create what is one of the most imaginative play spaces we have ever seen.

Kwakha Indvodza - inspiring respect and responsibility



Kwakha Indvodza means 'Building a Man'. As eSwatini's only male mentoring organisation, it uses role play, games and media to encourage a respectful and responsible attitude towards women. The courses include financial literacy, male health and practical skills. The SCT donated tools for vocational training.

How to donate

To make a donation, send a cheque or visit www.theBigGive.org.uk and search for orphan support in Swaziland.

Swaziland Charitable Trust (Reg. Charity No. 257666)

C/o- 59 St Budeaux Close, Ottery St Mary, Devon, EX11 1HR, ENGLAND
PO Box 245, Manzini, SWAZILAND

Tel: +268 5052618 ◆ Email: sct@africaonline.co.sz

www.swazilandcharitabletrust.org

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