



The Catherine Bullen Foundation

Making a difference in rural Namibia

NEWSLETTER

No: 16

December 2012

Eiseb Project boosted by German Initiative

As reported in our last newsletter, our current project is the construction of a third dormitory at the Eiseb Primary School Hostel to alleviate chronic overcrowding. Also part of the project was to purchase new beds for the children, refurbish the current hostel buildings and provide showers and toilets.

During their visit last March, Linda and Roger, learnt of a funding programme known as the Namibian German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP) whose aim is to address the development needs of the Hereo, Mbanderu, Nama and San people who were dispossessed by the Imperial German government during the colonial era. The Eiseb Hostel is one of those earmarked to receive assistance from this programme. Both Komeho, our ngo partner in Namibia and the Foundation have been in touch with the NGSIP and the regional Ministry of Education. The result has been that the NGSIP will purchase new beds for the children, refurbish the current hostel buildings and provide showers and toilets, leaving the Foundation to concentrate on providing the new dormitory.

We are currently in contact with the Ministry of Works for the Omaheke region to obtain a revised estimate allowing for the alterations to the project. The Foundation and its supporters have so far raised just over £40,000 and are actively seeking grants and donations for the balance.

In October, Linda and Roger met Mr Maienga, the new headmaster of Eiseb Primary School, who had only been in post, two weeks, and was keen to learn about the project. He also expressed a wish to start a library at the school. With this in mind, when Roger and Linda returned to Windhoek, they met Margaret Reiff from the International School of Windhoek. They are re-stocking their library and it is hoped that the surplus books can be donated to Eiseb.

Omuhatutura Primary School Hostel Kitchen up dates

One of the outcomes of the construction of the kitchen and covered seating area was that this brought the hostel up to a standard that qualified for a government subsidy on a per pupil basis which is paid each quarter. The headmaster, Mr Steve Kavari has used this subsidy to provide a more varied and nutritional diet for the boarders supplementing the maize porridge they were receiving three times a day. Also, he has employed a further three people to look after the hostel making a total of five staff to look after the 150 children who stay there during the week. This is another example of how our projects have indirectly provided employment and helped the local economy in an area of high unemployment.

It has become apparent that the initial plan to have wood burning stoves has proved impractical, mainly due to the heat produced in a confined area and health and safety concerns. Therefore, it was decided to replace these with two gas burning ranges. We are very grateful to Kondjeni, our architect who raised the necessary funding for these from her fellow architects in Windhoek. She also raised enough money to buy aluminium pots, gas cylinders and to provide the outhouse to house the cylinders in a secure place. Installation work will take place over the next month during the school holidays.



One of the gas ranges with the aluminium pots in Komeho's Windhoek office waiting transport to the school.



The staff of Omuhaturua Primary School Hostel, left to right, 'Follo', Sonia Hangero, Erwin Tjomuho, (Chief Matron), Menesia Kotukaru and Gotlob the cook.

Medical Outreach visit to the bush and blanket distribution.

One of the outcomes of the clinic is treating those who live in small settlements in the bush who do not have ready access to the clinic. Unfortunately, the resident nurse does not have a vehicle at her disposal, so visits are on an ad hoc basis. When staying at the clinic, Roger and Linda are able to use their vehicle to carry out such visits, and did so in October. The trip is always an experience travelling deep into the bush on sandy meandering narrow tracks which pass through gated homesteads. One gingerly gets out of the vehicle to open and shut the gates keeping a look out for snakes in the high grass. As well as medicines, there are blankets for distribution to the San women and children knitted by Joan Garrard, Lil Clarke and Shirley Young from West Mersea and Angela Warner from Colchester. There were also jumpers which had been left in Windhoek by Hilary Dean-Hughes for the Foundation. One of the San settlements visited was Otjetru where medicines and vitamins were dispensed and blankets and jumpers handed out.



Left: a San mother waits for her medicine to be dispensed: Right: Linda examines a small child.



Distribution of blankets, jumpers and hats to the San children.

Baby clothes and blankets donated to Gobabis hospital.

West Mersea resident, Sandra Rae knitted some baby clothes and donated them to the Foundation. During their last visit in October, Linda and Roger were able to present them to the Premature Baby Unit in the maternity ward in Gobabis Hospital. This is the regional hospital for the Omaheke region and is where patients from the Otjimamangombe clinic are referred to.



Donation of baby clothes and blankets to the Premature Baby Unit at Gobabis Hospital.
Left to right: A San mother, Roger and Linda Bullen, second San mother,
Maternity Ward Matron, Jacqueline Kananguizi and the Ward Sister.

Friend's of Namibia meet the Olympians

As the Chairman of the Friends of Namibia, Roger accompanied by Linda, together with the committee were invited to attend two receptions during the summer at the Namibian High Commissioner's London residence to welcome the Namibian Olympic and Paralympic teams, which is an experience that none of us will ever forget. We were all to return to the residence in September for a reception hosted by the FON to mark a half-century of UK–Namibia solidarity and partnership and the fifteenth anniversary of the Friends of Namibia Society. We were able to welcome back the Paralympic team with their gold medallist, Joanna Benson.



Left: Linda with boxer, Mujandjae Kasuto, and committee member, Tony Stevens. Right: Roger with Paralympic sprinter gold medallist, Joanna Benson.

Ten years on

It is hard to believe that ten years have passed since Catherine died on 23 August 2002. This was widely featured in the local press at the time, and ten years on they featured the work of the Foundation which bears her name. Below is the article that appeared in 'The Gazette' by Clare Jeffs.

IN life, Catherine Bullen was a bright and hard-working student whose ambition was to become a doctor.

Ten years after her death in the African bush, aged 22, she is still the guiding light for the West Mersea organisation charity set up to carry out the work she never had the chance to start.

The Catherine Bullen Foundation, started by her parents Roger and Linda, has raised thousands to help some of the poorest people in Namibia - the country where she died while on safari in August, 2002.

Catherine, a pupil at Colchester County High School for Girls, knew exactly where her career path lay.

Focused since the age of ten on becoming a GP, she excelled at school and won a place at Bristol University reading medicine. She was one of the top students of her year.

It was a fifth-year elective placement that took her and her best friend, Stephanie Chalmers, to Africa.

Mum Linda said: "She came bouncing in one day and said she wanted to do her placement in Tanzania and Zambia.

"She wanted to see the contrasts in medical care."

When in remote Oshivela, Catherine suffered a virulent

I feel strongly she is saying: Carry on. You're doing good

By CLARE JEFFS
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attack of gastroenteritis and desperately needed lifesaving aid. It could not be found.

Despite Stephanie's valiant efforts, Catherine died, leaving a void in the lives of her parents, brother Leigh, sister Kim and the rest of her family.

The idea to set up a charity came after her funeral, where more than £5,000 was received in donations.

Dad Roger said: "We felt we had to do something to carry on her legacy."

Linda said: "That is when we thought: 'Should we do something here or in Namibia?'"

"Catherine had written such a wonderful travel log and, to us both, it shone through that it was where she wanted us to go."

Catherine had mentioned that water was the theme of the 2002 Earth Summit in Johannesburg.

That is how a water borehole for the Omuhaturua Primary School in Otjimanangombe, eastern Namibia, became the launch project for what was then the Catherine Bullen Memorial Fund.

Thanks to donations and fundraising, it was followed in 2008 by the construction of a £100,000 medical clinic in the village and the donation of a £22,000 ambulance.

The opening of a kitchen and seating area at the primary school hostel brought the total raised by the charity to £250,000.

Now the Bullens want to raise £92,000 for a dormitory project for the primary school at Riseb, a village 170km from Otjimanangombe.

Roger, of Colchester Road, West Mersea, said: "Because Catherine had gone to Namibia and died there, we went there.

"When we go back, we are stepping into Catherine's world.

"I feel strongly she is saying 'Carry on. You are doing something right'. It has been a lifesaver for us. I think without it, we would be very depressed."

Linda, a sister at Colchester General Hospital's orthopaedic department, said: "It is a two-way thing. We help them and they help us."

Help and support of the financial variety has continued to flow unstintingly from the communities touched by Catherine's life.

Roger said: "We have had so much support from Mersea, the hospital and my work, Polestar in Colchester." Catherine's legacy lives on in Namibia and elsewhere. Her best friend at university, Stephanie, now a GP in Wales, has called her daughter, Catherine. In Colchester, her old school named its recently opened dance studio in her honour.

At Bristol University, which awarded Catherine a posthumous science degree in 2003, a memorial tree bears a plaque reading: "May her love for the study of medicine grow in the hearts she inspired."

Back home in Mersea, her parents remember their daughter as an unfailingly loyal friend who championed the underdog.

Linda said: "We have to talk about her all the time. Out fundraising people say, 'Why are you collecting?' or 'Why are you doing this?'. So we tell them her story. It adds to the thought I have that she is still here."



Linda and Roger have always been keen to emphasize that without the support of the Foundation's trustees, volunteers and the wider community none of its work would be possible.

Dance Studio named after Catherine

At the end of May, Catherine's old school, the Colchester County High School for Girls unveiled £900,000 of improvements. Work costing £430,000 has been completed and was spent on putting a roof over the swimming pool, creating new changing rooms, showers and toilets and building a new dance studio. West Mersea Paralympic sailor, Hannah Stodel opened the new facilities, with the dance studio being named after Catherine.



Left: Linda, Roger and Hannah. Right: The plaque commemorating the occasion.

Fundraising

Car Boot Sales

With the West Mersea site at Waldegraves waterlogged in early summer, we finally managed our first Car Boot at Ardleigh at the beginning of July. With lots of stock to sell we returned there for a number of Sundays into September. It is hoped to return to home ground next year.

Jubilee Weekend

The weekend started on the Saturday and continued on the Sunday with the Mersea Food and Leisure Fair where we had our homemade cake stall. On the Monday, the cake stall moved to West Mersea High Street for the street party and sold out. The last event on the Tuesday was a Jubilee fete where we had a china smashing stall, ably assisted by the Crudgington family. The result being that £1,238.16 was raised over the weekend. Many thanks to all those who supplied the lovely cakes.



Our well stocked cake stall at the Mersea Food and Leisure Fair

Mount Bures Festival

For the second year running we attended this two day event at the end of June. The site is perched on the edge of a valley with marvellous views right across countryside. The weather on the Saturday was good but on the Sunday we were hit heavy rain squall that made our stall look like a disaster area, as you can see from the photos below. We raised £131.



Before



After!

Barclays Bank – West Mersea Branch, Coffee morning

Throughout the summer, the Bank has been hosting Friday coffee mornings for various charities on the Island and we were chosen for the event on 22 June. The staff ably assisted by Lil Clarke raised £164, which was matched by the Bank, raising in total £328.

Strawberry Tea

This was organised Mr and Mrs Free at their home at Eight Ash Green. It was by invitation only with the Sir Bob Russell MP attending. A magnificent sum of £355 was raised on what was a wet and miserable Sunday.

Colchester General Hospital – Orthopaedic Awards Night

This took place one evening in July at the Marquis of Granby in Colchester, where tongue in cheek awards are made to those who have excelled themselves one way or the other during the year and held as a fundraiser for the Foundation raising £335.

Colchester Lions Classic Car show

This was held at the Lower Castle Park in Colchester in early September with believe it or not good weather. We attended with our china smashing stall which is always popular for relieving stress for the adults and giving fun to the children who find it amazing that they can smash plates without getting told off!!! £172 raised.



Stress being relieved at our china smashing stall

Shop Collections

We are very grateful to the East of England Co-operative Society who have supported us throughout the year by allocating us slots at their stores. Many thanks to Nicky Wilmott and Tracy Kinns for their help. Our last collection this year was at the West Mersea Co-op in freezing temperatures and we collected £222.13. Total for the year is £1,498.

Seafood Supper

This was a new event for us and proved to be a resounding success. This was held in the nationally acclaimed 'Company Shed' down on the West Mersea waterfront. Fifty guests sat down to a seafood platter of their own choice. Entertainment was provided by two ensembles from the Colchester County High School for Girls, one from the Upper Sixth and the other from Year 11. A total of £600 was raised with a request from those attending to repeat the event. Thanks to Caroline and Tom of the 'Company Shed' for a great evening.

Marathons and Sponsored Events

Our Olympic Sportathon theme continued throughout the rest of this year with the following events.

Charlotte's Challenge

Inspired by the Olympics and her wish to help children in rural Namibia, 12 year old Charlotte Brown from Colchester undertook her own personal triathlon with sponsorship from 'sportsafeUK' to raise funds for the Catherine Bullen Foundation. Charlotte, a pupil at St Helena School, described her personal challenge as follows 'I read an article in my mum's hospital newsletter about the Foundation, and at first wanted to do a swim as a fundraiser. However, I cannot swim far, so decided to do my own small triathlon. I began with running 1.3 miles, my legs ached and I got soaking wet. This was followed by cycling 8 miles around Alton Water, and finally I swam 1 mile at the Dovercourt Swimming pool. I am proud of myself now after I managed to complete it and managed to raise £556. I didn't think I would raise that much, but I have and I know that every penny will make a difference.' Roger Bullen, one of the Foundation's trustees commented 'we are extremely grateful to Charlotte for the hard physical work she put in to raise money for our project in the Namibia and she should be very proud of herself'.

Rob Brown's Individual Half Marathon

Robert Brown is the Colchester General Hospital's Deputy Logistics & Security Manager, and embraced with enthusiasm, the Catherine Bullen Foundation's year long fund raising Sportathon, Its theme for this Olympic year. For several years, he has endeavoured to carry out Charity Runs for well deserving causes, such as the Essex Air Ambulance and Treetops. Robert commented, 'this year I have dedicated myself to raise funds for the Foundation. Catherine's mother, Linda works at the CGH in Orthopaedic Pre Admission in Elective Care, and after she had explained in detail the need for funding to support the Foundation's work in rural Namibia, I decided to carry out this run in 2012'. The run took place on Friday 21st September, and took 1 hr 46 mins starting and finishing at the hospital and raised £600.



Rob Brown presenting his cheque for £600 to Linda surrounded by her colleagues from the Elective Care Centre. At the back is Gordon Coutts, Chief Executive, Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust.

Zumba Class Run July 2012

What does a Zumba class do when their usual venue is not available, well they go for a run, which is exactly what Carol Irvine's Zumba Class did a run around West Mersea and raised £50.50

London Marathon 2013

This year's London Marathon is taking place on Sunday 21 April and we are pleased to announce that Andrea Pisani is running for us again after vowing never to run a marathon again after completing the course in 2010. We are very pleased she changed her mind. To sponsor Andrea, just log on to:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserProfilePage.action?userUrl=AndreaPisani>



Andrea after completing the 2010 London Marathon

Schools

A number of schools in the area have pledged support for the Foundation for the coming year. We are extremely thankful for the support we are receiving from the following schools.

St Mary's Junior School, Colchester – raised £206

Mersea Island School – raised £175

Thomas Lord Audley School, Colchester

Colchester County High School for Girls

TC Education Services – have donated money for goats

International School of Windhoek

Layer Primary School

Layer Primary School nominated the Foundation as their charity for the year and raised a marvellous total of £1,303.57. Linda attended the school on 10 December and received a cheque from the children.



The above photo was taken at the school's charity morning on 15 June 2012. The children organised this completely by themselves: they designed, made and ran a number of stalls, then circulated around each others. They had a fantastic time both in the preparation of the stalls and in the charity morning itself, and raised just over £200 for the Catherine Bullen Foundation.

Xmas 2012 Events

Our final fundraising for 2012 took place at a number of locations. We travelled to Suffolk to Earsham Hall near Bungay for their Xmas Fair on 4 December and raised £106. On 7 December we were at West Mersea Lights up and raised £130. A big thank you to Sheila Telfer of Colchester who made a huge batch of handmade Christmas cards, sales of which contributed to our total sales on the stalls. On Saturday 8 December, a West Mersea Parish Church Group served light seasonal lunches in the Church Hall and raised a magnificent £402.95 for the Foundation for which we are extremely grateful. A Xmas cake made by one of the staff at Polestar was raffled and raised £131 only to be put back to be auctioned off for another £25. Finally, an exercise bike was positioned in Pre-Admission at Colchester General Hospital encouraging staff to clock up miles to reach Namibia for a donation, and has so far raised just over £100.

Donations

We have continued to receive individual donations, both large and small, for which we are extremely grateful. Each donation receives an acknowledgement of thanks from the Foundation and through this newsletter we would like to thank you again for your continued support.

Forthcoming Events

At the date of going to press, we have the following events planned

Sunday 3 March 2013

Indian Lunch, Titash Indian Restaurant – details to be confirmed.

Easter Saturday 30 March 2013

Shop Collection – West Mersea Co-op.

Sunday 21 April 2013

London Marathon. Please support our runner, Andrea Pisani by sponsoring her on:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserProfilePage.action?userUrl=AndreaPisani>

Sunday 28 April 2013

Car Boot car park collection, Waldegraves, West Mersea – volunteers required

Saturday 4 May 2013

Shop Collection – Clacton Co-op.

Saturday 25 May/Sunday 26 May 2013

Mersea Food and Leisure Festival

Home Made Cake Stall – we hope you will be able to support us by baking a cake

Saturday 1 June 2013

Shop Collection – Manningtree Co-op

Saturday 6 July 2013

Shop Collection – Abbots Road, Fiveways, Colchester

Saturday 20 July 2013

Shop Collection – Frinton Co-op Supermarket, The Triangle

Saturday 27 July 2013

Shop Collection – Co-op Brightlingsea

Saturday 10 August 2013

Shop Collection – Co-op Supermarket, Stanway, Colchester

Saturday 17 August 2013

China smashing stall at the West Mersea Lions Fete, Waldegraves, West Mersea

Saturday 14 September 2013

Shop Collection – Co-op Supermarket, Stanway, Colchester

If you would like to help at any of the above or organise an event in support of the Foundation, please let us know. We will add events to our list on the website and in the next newsletter.

Make a difference!

The Catherine Bullen Foundation is working with local communities to help build and nurture a new life for the people in rural Namibia. Because we are a small charity, our overheads are small and are personally covered by the trustees, so that every single penny donated to us goes to the intended project, with spending strictly monitored by the UK trustees and their ngo partner in Namibia. All visits to Namibia are self-financed and no charitable funds are used for this purpose. Please help us make a difference by making a donation, either on line at www.namibia-aid.org.uk or sending it to the address below.

How to contact us

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Wishing you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and thank you for your support in 2012



Donation/Gift Aid Declaration

(The Catherine Bullen Foundation – Registered Charity No. 1110516)

Details of donor

Title.....

Forename(s).....Surname.....

Address.....
.....
.....

Post Code.....

Signature.....

Date.....

I want the charity to treat

*the enclosed donation of £..... as a Gift Aid donation

*the donation(s) of £..... which I made on .../.../..... as (a) Gift Aid donation(s)

**delete as appropriate*

You must pay an amount of Income and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year. (currently 25p for each £1 you give).