



The Catherine Bullen Foundation

Making a difference in rural Namibia

NEWSLETTER

No: 17

Late Spring 2013

Foundation receives major funding boost

The Foundation has just received a major boost to their fundraising for their current project to build a dormitory to relieve chronic overcrowding at Eiseb Primary School Hostel in rural eastern Namibia, with a grant of £15,000. The grant came from a family Foundation which wishes to remain anonymous and supports projects relating to population control, education, health and the environment, at home and abroad. Roger Bullen, trustee chairperson for the Catherine Bullen Foundation commented 'our application ticked all the boxes and met the donor's criteria to such an extent, that it resulted in us getting the maximum amount possible for which we are extremely grateful'. The total cost of the project is £70,000, and with this grant we now have a balance of £9,800 to raise before we can start to build.'

The plight of the hostel was featured recently in a Namibian newspaper. It reported that the lack of accommodation and the remote location of the school has resulted in a gloomy future for more than 200 pupils accommodated in the school's hostel. The school has been struggling to contain a dire shortage of accommodation for their hostel pupils which has now reached a critical stage. More than half the children have been sleeping on the cold floor of their rooms for the past two years while up to three children are forced to share a single mattress in both the girls and boys dormitories. Some children have been sleeping under the beds of their hostel mates due to the chronic shortage of space. Teacher Esther Kazongari has been with the school since its inception over 15 years ago and said that the overcrowding at the school has been a major contributor to their woes. She commented, 'the fact is that we are the only school for a huge area given the remote location of Eiseb, and has resulted in the school having to accommodate up to 200 children in the hostel which was originally built to house 60 children. This is the reality on the ground, we are simply overwhelmed with the demand for hostel facilities, and do not know what else to do. It is disheartening to see the children sleep the way they do'.

Although the school is owned by the Omaheke regional Ministry of Education, the hostel was originally built by the community which can no longer sustain it. The dormitory is part of a larger project to upgrade the hostel, and the Foundation is in partnership with its Namibian ngo, Komeho Namibia Development Agency, the regional Ministry of Education and the Namibian German Special Initiative Program (NGSIP). Roger Bullen commented that 'the NGSIP have advised us that they hope to start work in June 2013, so it would be advantageous to us to have raised the full amount by then, so that we could use their contractors and achieve economies of scale to save costs'.

Omuhaturua Primary School Hostel Kitchen up dates

Although the kitchen was officially opened in October 2011, there have been a number of teething problems that were picked up by Roger and Linda on their self funded monitoring trips. As mentioned in our last newsletter, one was the wood burning stoves that have proved impractical, mainly due to the heat produced in a confined area and health and safety concerns and the other was cracks appearing in the concrete surface of the covered seating area. These items were rectified at no cost to the Foundation. The wood burning stoves were replaced by two gas burning ranges and the concrete surface was replaced with block paving, both of which were completed during Roger and Linda's visit in March 2013.



Gas ranges installed with the aluminium pots, while the lower picture shows the outside secure area for the gas cylinders.



Covered seating after having been block paved.

Otjimanangombe Primary Healthcare Clinic Post 8

The clinic continues to flourish under the leadership of Nurse Angeline Kambato. During her visit in March this year, Linda spent two weeks volunteering in the clinic and was able to witness first hand what a valuable asset it is serving the local community. Some of the cases encountered were a girl with burns to both arms, a small baby with convulsions and a dehydrated young boy. The clinic also received a visit from the HIV/Aids Quality Control Commission to see that correct procedures were being adhered to in the clinic and an inspection team from the regional Ministry of Health at Gobabis carrying out their quarterly inspection. Both visits were successful and the latter were impressed with the tidy pharmacy and Linda's introduction of secure plastic boxes to house the emergency drugs. (Purchased by the Foundation from a Gobabis supermarket!).



Linda thinking out of the box! Posing with her plastic boxes for the emergency drugs. The inspection team were so impressed with this idea, that they are thinking of introducing them to all the clinics in the region.

Periodically, the clinic vaccinates the children in the area against the usual diseases and in March some of the children were vaccinated against polio and diphtheria.



The children from Omuhaturua Primary School next door to the clinic being vaccinated against diphtheria.

As always during their visits, Roger and Linda took the opportunity to take medical supplies into the bush to those who live in small settlements and do not have ready access to the clinic. Visits were made to Okatumba and the San bushmen settlements at Erindiromungondo and Omurambauozongombo. Again, as well as dispensing medicines, birth control options and vitamins, the opportunity was taken to distribute blankets and woolly hats to the San women and children knitted by Joan Garrard, Lil Clarke, Shirley Young and Mary Duerden from West Mersea from the Christchurch and St Barnabas Ladies Groups in Colchester.



On arrival at the San settlement at Omurambauozongombo, this lady was discovered crawling on all fours having suffered an injury to her ankle after being run over by a donkey cart. Thankfully it was only badly bruised and not broken. The wound was dressed and pain killers administered, and by the time everyone left, she was able to walk with the aid of a stick.



At Okatumba, a settlement on the boundary between the Epukiro and Eiseb constituencies, Roger and Linda came across this child who had suffered osteoporosis imperfecta from birth and is unable to walk. Despite her disability, she was such a cheerful little girl and she was given the dress she is wearing as a present from one of our supporters, Johnny and Julia Rock.

Most severe drought in 30 years

Extract from 'The Namibian' – 28 May 2013

'THE central areas of Namibia are experiencing the most severe drought in three decades, seasonal rainfall figures released by the Meteorological Service of Namibia show.'

The 166 millimetres of rain measured at the headquarters of the Meteorological Service in Windhoek during the past rainy season – from October last year to the end of April – is the lowest seasonal rainfall total recorded at that weather station since the 1981/82 rainy season. At Rehoboth, too, the past rainy season has been the driest in 31 years, historical rainfall figures from the Met Service indicate. Only the north eastern parts of Namibia have experienced a near normal rainy season. Over the rest of the country rainfall totals are all well below the normal seasonal figures for respective weather stations, with the Gobabeb research station in the Namib Desert and the Walvis Bay Airport the only exceptions to the trend. At the Windhoek Meteorological Service weather station, the 166 mm of rain measured from October to the end of April is 53 percent below the total of 354,8 mm that could be expected in a normal rainy season. It is also the lowest seasonal total measured at the Windhoek Met office since the drought of 1981/82, when a total of 126,2 mm of rain was recorded during an exceptionally dry rainy season.'

During their visit in March 2013, Linda and Roger witnessed first hand the devastating effect of the failure of the rainy season to provide sufficient rainfall. The result has been the lack of grazing for cattle, with subsistence farmers on communal lands suffering the most. Some of these farmers are having to sell their cattle at reduced prices, or see them die, as it has become a buyers market. Recognizing their plight, the government is subsidizing each animal sold to soften the blow. There is the threat of water rationing in Windhoek, while in

Otjimanangombe the boreholes still have sufficient supplies. The government has also made an international appeal for help, although the plight of the country has failed to feature in the UK press and other media.

Facebook chicken appeal comes up trumps

A conversation with the headmaster of Omuhaturua Primary School adjacent to the clinic, revealed that the rearing of chickens would be a valuable asset to the school hostel. Following this, the Foundation made an appeal on Facebook from Namibia and within 48 hours, friends and supporters in the UK had pledged sufficient money to purchase the required fifty chickens. Following the appeal, a virginmoneygiving site was set up to collect the pledges by Chris Bonner at www.virginmoneygiving.com/christopherbonner which resulted in further donations to date of £858.75 including gift aid and is still live. The chickens will be purchased once the facilities have been constructed to house them.

Fundraising

Fundraising is 'Hot Stuff'

On Sunday 28 February, guests and supporters attended what is now a popular annual event at the Titash Indian restaurant, West Mersea to enjoy a superb curry lunch. A total of £1,135 was raised.



Peter Millar, Foundation supporter, Dilwar, manager of Titash, and Linda Bullen.

Three Bands for a 'fiver'

This event was organised by the Mersea Island Rotary Club and took place at the Mersea Outdoors Centre at East Mersea on Saturday 23 March. Attendance suffered due to the

wintry conditions, but the Club was able to donate £350 each to the Foundation and a Mersea charity.

Car Boot Sales

This year we were able to return to the West Mersea site at Waldegraves Leisure Park although we had to endure some frosty mornings at the beginning of the season. There is no restriction to the size of stall, so when all is laid out we have one of the biggest pitches. We are always on the lookout for paperbacks, DVDs, clothes, toys and any items in good condition. We cannot accept accommodate large items and furniture.



Our ever-growing car boot stall

Colchester Lions Fun Day and Duck Race, May Bank Holiday Monday 4 May

Last year this event had to be cancelled as the site at Colchester Lower Castle Park was water logged. Luckily this year it was not the case and we were invited to attend with our china smashing stall which proved very popular with young and old alike, and we raised £172.



A smashing time was had by all!

West Mersea Lions German Twinning, Saturday 17 May

The West Mersea Lions Club hosted a party from the Bederkesa Lions Club which is situated between Bremerhaven and Hamburg. On the Saturday night they were invited to a seafood supper in the Packing Shed which is located on an island in the moorings off Mersea. We were asked to give a presentation to them on the work of the Foundation in Namibia which of course was a former German colony. They were so impressed with what they saw, that afterwards they had a whip round and donated £300 towards our project.

Mersea Food and Leisure Festival.

This two day event was held on Saturday 25 May and Sunday 26 May, and the Foundation again attended with its homemade cake stall. Our supporters generously supplied cakes which enabled us to start each day with the stall jam packed with cakes. Many thanks to those who made cakes and to Nicky Wilmott who helped man the stall on the Saturday. A total of £662.12 was raised over the two days.



Linda and Nicky Wilmott with our well stocked cake stall at the Mersea Food and Leisure Festival

Oxford Church Charity

The Foundation is to benefit by £600 from an Oxford church charities committee who decided to support our Eiseb project after hearing about it from one of our fellow Friends of Namibia committee members. In addition, they are to support the Foundation at a summer fundraising evening in one of the committee member's gardens in late July.

Shop Collections

We are again very grateful to the East of England Co-operative Society who have allocated us slots at their stores for this year. Collections have already taken place at West Mersea and Clacton Co-ops

Marathons and Sponsored Events

London Marathon 2013

Unfortunately, our runner, Andrea Pisani had to withdraw from this year's marathon as she sustained an injury during training. However, all is not lost as her place has been transferred to next year's event. We are pleased to report that Andrea has recovered and is running again.

London- Amsterdam- Brussels cycle challenge.

In September, Jeremy Stanton and Rob Thompson will be undertaking another cycling challenge to raise money for the Foundations projects having previously cycled from London to Paris to raise funds for us. Details of how to sponsor this intrepid pair to follow.

Schools

A number of schools in the area continue to support the Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the support we are receiving from the following schools.

St Mary's Junior School, Colchester
Mersea Island School
Layer Primary School
Colchester County High School for Girls
TC Education Services

In Namibia:

International School of Windhoek

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

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

Sunday 28 July 2013

Fund raising garden party, Oxford

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
All donations of unwanted china gratefully received.

Sunday 1 September 2013

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

Saturday 8 September 2013

China smashing stall at the Colchester Lions Classic Car Show. Lower Castle Park, Colchester
All donations of unwanted china gratefully received.

Saturday 14 September 2013

Shop Collection –Co-op Supermarket, Halstead.

Sunday 22 September 2013

China smashing stall at the Clacton Lions Classic Car Show. Clacton
All donations of unwanted china gratefully received.

Friday 13 December 2013

Coffee morning, Barclays Bank, West Mersea branch

Sunday 15 December 2013

Namibian Noel, Coast Inn, West Mersea

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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Donation/Gift Aid Declaration

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

Details of donor

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

Address.....

.....

.....

Post Code.....

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).**