



Newsletter May 2015

RotaryGBI International Committee.

Kenya Crop Appeal – Great feedback

In respect of the Kenya Crop Appeal District 1120 Clubs have come forward with £7,299, which exceeded the target that the Friends of Kinajai needed to get Maize Seed and Beans in the ground by 15th March. All monies were transferred and the seeds purchased ready for the 15th. – DISC1120 – leshoskins@gmail.com

Drakensberg Mountains of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.

A great example of Rotary in action from Terry Dunmore - t.dunmore@btinternet.com – concerning the ROTARY CLUB OF RETFORD BREAD* FUND

(*It's called the Bread Fund because we originally paid for bread for sandwiches. This was changed to more nutritious fortified porridge but 'Porridge Fund' did not conjure up the right image!)



It is our conviction that the surest way to reduce disease and eliminate poverty is by education. It is also the least costly in the long term and you should not educate cold and hungry children in dismal rooms.

So what has our club been doing about it? From Retford (Nottinghamshire, UK) to the Drakensberg Mountains (KwaZulu Natal, South Africa), is a long way in miles, culture and needs. But that does not mean we cannot deliver help in a consistent, sympathetic and culturally sensitive fashion.

For 12 years the Club has helped to make dramatic improvements in the education, health and welfare of 350 preschool children working in partnership with friends at the Cavern Berg Resort

in the area and the Rotary Club of Benoni Aurora.

The children are in 10 preschools and crèches in the informal settlements scattered along the Amazizi valley in the shadow of the Drakensberg. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty but much poverty. Primary schooling is available free or at low cost and teachers work hard to deliver good education but in challenging circumstances. It is therefore imperative to make sure that the children are as well-equipped as possible to take advantage of what is available when they move to state schools at the age of 5 to 7 years.



At the beginning we helped the children with the cost of fortified porridge, water storage tanks and knitwear (knitwear? yes, it is South Africa but it gets very cold in the mountains in winter).

The preschools, schools and crèches do not have piped water or sanitation so hygiene is important. The biggest cause of death and illness in the under 5's is diarrhoea. Thanks to fundraising and generous donations plus District Grants and a recent Global Grant we have been able, in cooperation with our South African friends, to make sure that all the crèches have safe latrines, water storage tanks, education materials and, of course, toys.

The Global Grant also funded ten teachers to study early childhood development subjects at college.

Last year a club member and his family donated funds to build a new classroom to replace a storm damaged rondaval (thatched roof on mud brick walls - picturesque but they do not make good classrooms). When members of the Club visited last October (Club members visit every year at our own expense) a big party had been arranged to say thank-you to the donor and to dedicate the building. Many guests were present including the children and their carers, local politicians, the area Chief and Zulu dancers. It was a great day with much fun, food and fellowship.

Eye Surgery in Calcutta

Nan McCreadie - nan.mccreadie@btinternet.com – would like to hear from districts and clubs interested in supporting IOL Surgeries to correct cataract blindness.

Building relations with Kosovo, South Africa, Angola and Namibia

Opportunities exist to build on current relationships through social, cultural, educational and humanitarian projects.

If currently involved or interested in becoming involved please contact Mike Parry – mjparry111@hotmail.com

Historical copies of the Newsletter

On the Rotary GB & Ireland website the most current newsletters are shown, but all of the old ones are archived and can be searched for through the document library - See <http://www.rotarygbi.org/?d=1&s=international>

London Newspaper highlights Medair – a Rotary supported charity

The Londoners who deliver medicine and relief amid the killing of South Sudan's civil war - A family doctor, a CBI executive and a hedge fund manager are helping the aid effort in South Sudan. Martin Bentham of the London Evening Standard meets them



Relief workers: Alex and Lois Fergusson in Juba, South Sudan

High on a rooftop in South Sudan's capital Juba, London GP Lois Fergusson and her husband, Alex, stand in the ferocious African sun describing the killing and suffering they have encountered working in the midst of the civil war blighting the world's newest country.

"The first time they came in with guns, the second time a week later with guns and grenades. I was sorting out an evacuation and at the same time thinking my wife is over there towards the gunfire," says Alex, recounting an occasion last year when the refugee camp in which he and Lois were based was attacked. "There were injuries and deaths on both occasions," Lois adds. "One man we knew was killed."

Such violence has become familiar since the conflict in South Sudan — largely forgotten in the West — erupted in December 2013 following a rift between President Salva Kiir and his deputy Riek Machar.

At least 10,000 people have been killed since then as Machar's rebel force seeks to topple President Kiir. Two million more have fled their homes. It has given an unhappy start to a nation created in July 2011, when a split with its northern neighbour Sudan was agreed after decades of conflict that claimed around 2.5 million lives.

But while many might flinch from entering the country, Lois, Alex and a third Londoner — former City hedge fund manager Damien Mosley — have all left their careers to work for the aid agency Medair. Lois, 31, who married Alex in 2009 after they met as students at Cambridge University, began work as a GP in Newham, but has now spent a year in South Sudan providing primary health care in areas in which medical provision is scant or absent.



London GP Lois Fergusson is working in the Maban Batil camp. She recalls another incident when the Upper Nile State refugee camp, where she and her husband were working last year, was hit by the ethnically-targeted killing which has become common in the conflict.

"People were confined to base in every compound and another aid agency next to us had their compound surrounded. Five people were killed over the next few days. Three were dragged from their cars and executed."

International aid workers were not targeted, but one of Lois's local colleagues was forced to hide for 18 hours under a market-stall table. "Even in the midst of all that we were most concerned about our colleagues," Lois adds. "The primary fear is the physical danger to them. But it is stressful. I get really hot,

which isn't great in this temperature." Her husband Alex, 30, is now co-ordinating the emergency relief teams which Medair deploys in South Sudan.



Former London City hedge fund manager Damien Mosley also plays down the danger, but concedes that its effects are unavoidable. "I feel the blood in my mouth," he says. "Then I feel really tired from the stress when the adrenaline stops." The couple, whose home is in Greenwich, emphasise, however, that their desire to help the suffering overrides other concerns.

LOIS says she and her team save children's lives by giving simple treatment for problems such as diarrhoea, malnutrition and respiratory infections that can be fatal in Africa. The threat posed by malaria can often be countered too.

"One of my saddest days in clinic was when we had a real scarcity of food and we knew that people in camp were really struggling for food," says Lois. "One day we found children outside our nutrition centre opening wrappers on food sachets to lick them out when they were already empty."

Alex says that the challenge now facing their Medair team is to tackle poor nutrition and health in areas where disease outbreaks or other problems emerge.

Sharp hypodermic needles, butterflies and scalpel blades

A hospital has been asked to remove all sharp hypodermic needles, butterflies and scalpel blades and replace them with safer sharps by the health and safety executive. The equipment is going to be destroyed and I offered Rotary's services. All the equipment is in date and functional. Gillian Pearce - gpe9708744@aol.com – is happy to discuss reallocation and if mutually agreeable the transfer of equipment.

Nepal

Are you involved with projects in Nepal – if you are, please let Mike Parry – miparry111@hotmail.com – know so that we can build a better picture of involvement in the country. Thank you. Our hospital has been asked to remove all sharp hypodermic needles, butterflies and scalpel blades and replace them with safer sharps by the health and safety executive. The equipment is going to be destroyed and I offered Rotary's services. All the equipment is in date and functional. Please can you let me know who would like them so I can arrange the transfer of equipment in advance.

Nigeria

Incoming Club President Abegboyega Bash-Lawel – bashyboygns@yahoo.com – writes... RC Agbara is a community club based in South West of Nigeria in District 9110 of the Rotary International. The club is celebrating its 30 years of existence and within this period the club has executed lots of projects addressing both community needs and RI focus points. One outstanding project for the past 20 years now is our Adult Literacy programme where illiterate adults in the community who are interested in education are introduced to and taught basic reading and writing skills that will enable them manage their day to day transaction at the local market and cope with banking activities. Opportunities exist for clubs to assist Agbara Rotary in achieving these projects.

Rotary Jaipur Limb Camp – Bangalore, India



The camp provides Jaipur limbs, crutches and callipers to amputees and people with mobility problems. LN-4 prosthetic forearms are also fitted in this camp. Where appropriate, people are given advice about possible surgery to improve their mobility and are referred to a local hospital for surgery - at no cost. Advice about vocational training and possible placement in suitable jobs is available from a Government agency. Donations can be sent to Treasurer of RJL - PDG Ron Marshall, tel. 01270 875926 email ron.marshall45@gmail.com

Please see the supplementary sheet for greater information.

Disasters

The RIBI web site is regularly updated – as Rotarians we naturally look to the long term sustainable help we can provide but naturally think of the ‘NOW’ – please support the Rotary sponsored ‘reactive’ charities in their on-going work to provide shelter and other essential survival items.

Please ensure that you receive the regular briefings during times of major disasters. The number of enquiries from Clubs seeking information suggests there is a significant weak spot in the communication channel from the International Committee to Clubs via the Secretariat, District International Service Chairs and Club Secretaries in parts of Britain & Ireland.

Next edition



Yes, same image as the editor likes it!

Please keep your International news coming in for the last edition that I will put together – by sharing details we help remove even more darkness from the world and help Light Up Rotary.

The Committee appreciate that the Rotary logos are of both the old and new design, each month small steps towards change are being incorporated,

The International Service Committee hope you find this edition both interesting and informative.

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Liaison Governor 2014 -15

Wendy Watson