



## There she blows! - Water at last



“**ASANTE SANA**” we really do have ‘so much’ to be thankful for. The outlook at the beginning of this year did not look good - the falling value of the pound, together with soaring inflation in food and fuel prices in Kenya meant we were soon looking at a monthly deficit of almost £1,000. We imagined that the economic crisis here in the UK would also lead to many of our sponsors having to cancel or at least decrease the sum they were giving.

In reality only three sponsors have had to withdraw, fifteen new families have made a regular commitment and some sponsors have even increased their giving. In the last twelve months, new friends from Sheffield and from Paisley in Scotland have added to the gifts we receive from fund raising and donations so that so far, the shortfall in income from sponsorship has

always been met - the staff have continued to be paid on time and the children have not had to miss one meal.

Not only that but we have already had three teams of visitors out to Kosele, solar panels installed for security and classroom lights and sockets and a bore hole drilled to provide us with an ‘*excellent*’ well!

Last Christmas my daughter Ellie, bought me a wall plaque with the following words “**Love makes things possible not easy**” We know that life in Kosele is still not easy. We also know that the gifts of finance and time given by those who sponsor, fund raise or simply ‘give’ always involve some personal sacrifice. Thank you to all of you for having the heart to respond, to give, and to make all of the above possible.

“**ASANTE SANA!**”

# The gift of life



**Our neighbour Robert collecting dirty rainwater for use in his home**

Seven years ago when we were completing the final preparations for our year in Kenya we realised that securing an adequate water supply was going to be one of our first and greatest challenges. There had been an attempt to dig a well but this water was undrinkable 'bracken/salty' water and even at a depth of 20 feet it soon ran dry. A thirty minute walk and another thirty minutes to queue and thirty minutes to fill every child's container took us to the only other water source a 'polluted spring.'

So, soon after we arrived in Kenya we built a concrete base to support a 4,200 litre water tank. It then took us another two months to find a tractor with a bowser prepared to make the weekly trip of 7km along a very rough dirt road to our home, with 3,500 litres of water. We still remember the excitement of the day we received that first delivery - followed by the disbelief when we realised that neither we or the tractor driver had any sort of pump to transfer the water from the bowser to the 10' high opening on the top of our tank. Two hours later with 2 buckets a ladder and many hands we had our first full tank of water. 6 years later and the local lads had it off to a fine art and the whole process took less than 45 minutes. For the past six and a half years, apart from the odd few weeks of mechanical breakdown, this old tractor 'miraculously' and 'faithfully' travelled first every 6-7 days and then, as our numbers increased, every 3-4 days down the 5 miles of rough dirt road to our home and school. But at about £20 a delivery it remained an expensive and unfortunately not always reliable solution. The only other solution, to *sink our own bore-hole* was added to our 'wish' list.

In January 2007 a new friend from the Elim church in Bewdley, Annie Austin, made her first visit to Kosele. When she returned she said you NEED a bore hole, and I will do whatever it takes to raise the money to get one! At that point we had no idea how much it would cost, other than A LOT! (The final cost is likely to be about £13,000).

Several years ago Annie suffered a series of full-blown strokes and does not always enjoy the best of health. She has to sensibly and carefully plan where she focuses her energies for her days and her weeks. However, for the last two years Annie made this task her first priority and together with her friends Val, Liz and Bernadette has worked tirelessly to encourage others from Elim Bewdley church and the local area to give towards this project - through numerous table-top sales, sponsored swims and marathons, supermarket bag packs, birthday donations, providing respite care, gift wrapping demonstrations and much more.

Their efforts were then significantly added to by members of the Mead family from Gorleston in Norfolk. Jan Mead was a very dear friend of Annie's and sponsored one of the children in Kosele. In 2007 Jan was diagnosed with a brain tumour and died shortly afterwards. It is an incredible testimony to her character and heart that her husband Geoff and their children Stella, Paul, and Ellie chose to organise an event to celebrate Jan's life and turn it into an opportunity to give donations for the drilling of the bore hole. During the last year Jan's family and friends have organised several other events in her memory to raise more funds. Between them Annie and Geoff have raised all of the money needed for our borehole - a massive achievement.

When Judi visited Kosele in February the water situation had reached a crisis point. The tractor had been off the road for over six weeks and there had been NO rain for over three months. With 36 children in the home and 110 children attending the school we currently need about 1,000 litres a day to provide water for washing, cooking and drinking. Physically fetching that much water every day and then treating and filtering it is a massive and unsustainable task!



During her visit Judi received the final legally required document 'The Environmental Impact Report' and travelled to Nairobi to meet and 'book' the Sparr drilling company, hopefully to start work in the first week of April.

After a few more obstacles and delays the drilling rig finally arrived in Kosele on Monday 15th June and on the 19th of June we received a text to say that after drilling to a depth of 100m we have an 'excellent well!' With an electric pump we will be able to fill our 4,200 litre water tank in less than 30 minutes with *good clean, safe* drinking water. All our plans to grow the school and to develop the farming projects have been made *possible* once again!

**"ASANTE SANA"** to ALL of you but especially to Annie and to Geoff.



## Love your neighbour too!

Although our commitment to the children in the home and in the school has to remain our number one priority we cannot ignore what is happening to our neighbours. Right now conditions for our neighbours are probably as bad as we have ever seen them. Rushing between kitchens and classrooms I often spot people standing at our gates hoping to speak to me about their problems. Often I have to leave the discussion to other members of the team, otherwise I would literally spend the whole day at the gate trying to respond to problems that exceed our resources. However, sometimes someone catches my eye and I have to stop and I have to walk up to the gate. Having spotted Paul I quickly realised that this man was sitting on the ground and as I walked through the gates I soon realised why.



Paul was an epileptic but up until a year ago he was in every other way fit and well. Then one day when he was alone in his hut he fell and had a fit. When he regained consciousness his trousers were on fire and his legs were badly burned. Being treated in a local District hospital had left him with a new skin that had imprisoned his legs. The knee joint was almost fixed in a 90 degree bend. He could not pull his leg up or stretch it out and he walked or crawled in a crab like position. In this way he crawled up to the village before day break and spent the day in the market place begging for food.

Later in the day I went to find the place where Paul was living and this is what I saw.



. In our home we have children who are rapidly becoming young men and women who are ready to love and to serve their neighbours. We moved Paul into a dry room in a row of huts near our home. Each day our boys made sure that Paul ate and had all he needed to keep himself clean. More importantly they simply spent time with him. Sadly, just a few months later Paul got sick with malaria and died. Our hope is that at least Paul *knew*, and the boys now *know even better*, what it means to be part of God's 'family.'



# We welcome you to Kenya



## Sue McDonald and friends

This was Sue's first visit to Kosele to meet her sponsored children Mary and Isaac. The little chap in the middle is called Kevin and before Sue left she had agreed to be his sponsor too!

Last year Sue and her husband Bob did a sponsored walk 95 miles along the West Highland Way and raised over £2,000. During her stay Sue saw that money pay for the installation of solar lighting and power in all of our new classrooms.

Once upon a time all our children used to squeeze into a 10'x15' sitting room for bed time stories. Now there are more than 30 children, they have all grown and many are no longer ready to be tucked up to sleep by 8pm! Thanks to Sue and Bob they now have room for homework, for games, for singing and for dancing. They can spread out, they don't all have to do the same thing at the same time and at last the adults can look forward to this time of the day too!



## Tony and Hilary

This is Judi's mum Hilary who spent a brief 24 hours in Kosele in 2003 and vowed she would never return until there were 'proper' loos. Well Terry has promised to improve the basic latrines but it hasn't happened yet. In fact her return visit came in the midst of one of our most challenging trips: blistering heat, NO water and FULL latrines. This time she stayed for 10 days, resisted the temptation to say 'I told you so!' and, though born a natural leader and organiser stepped back into a 'support' role and is on record as saying (and writing) "I hope I will be able to return!" Thanks mum! X



## Collins and Laura Scott

Laura Scott from Bewdley visited Kosele with her father John. Two weeks after returning home she celebrated her 13th birthday and when her aunt and grandmother asked her what she wanted she said 'just money to send to the children in Kosele' which we duly received. Bless you and thank you Laura for proving that teenagers are not ALWAYS just thinking about themselves.



Electricians installing solar power

## Making Poverty History - A Work in Progress

7 Years into our work we are still very much a work in progress. Thanks to all of our loyal sponsors and supporters we are making great progress.

Despite the credit crunch we continue to meet the bills each month and move forwards on our projects. Proof that your hearts are bigger than the economy

If you are already a sponsor please pass this newsletter on to someone who isn't - when you have read it.

If you would like to become one of our family of sponsors please contact us.

**Thank You.**

## Summer Plans

This summer Terry will be working on:

- Final fixtures and fittings on the bore hole.
- Building new "Ecosan" latrines (making it possible to make compost for farming).
- Renting land so that we can grow more crops and try some new methods of farming.
- Building links with local High Schools to help us when our oldest pupils start High School in 2 years time.
- More training with the teachers, and church leaders.

## More in the next newsletter

Plus reports from other visitors to Kosele this year

### Contact Details

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