



Newsletter No. 6

April' 07

Hello Everyone

I returned from my latest trip to Kwazulu, Natal, South Africa at the end of February so I can now bring you up to date with the latest news from here in London and also news and photos from South Africa. Photo on the right is of myself with some of the AIDS orphans at The Thandukuphila Centre.

Three years ago in March, One Life officially became a registered charity. I never realised at the onset how the charity would grow, become established and have its own web site, a miracle I think. Great things are still happening as a couple of days after I returned from South Africa I had a phone call from a gentleman who having been told about my charity "One Life" was very interested in supporting us. He is aiming to hold monthly discos for young people at a venue near Oxford Circus; these will all be held in aid of charities, the first one to be held on Saturday April 14th and this in aid of One Life. He has also committed to supporting the educational needs of one of our 5 year old crèche children who is due to go to school next year. He is also donating £100 to me to put towards next years trip to South Africa as I am no longer in a position to fund these trips myself. This I have been doing for the last five years but am now unable to continue.



Larkwood Infant/Primary School are showing an interest in sponsoring one of our children's educational needs so along with the wonderful support we receive from Chase Lane Primary School/Nursery Unit I feel truly blessed. While I was out in S. Africa I was able to visit the school and classroom of Qiniso Msweli (pictured centre), the eight year old girl sponsored by Chase Lane Primary School and links are now being forged between Chase Lane School and the school of Qiniso. I was able to take photos of her in her classroom and with her friends.

Other photos from my trip can be found on my web site www.onlife-online.org.uk under Galleries - South Africa Photos 2007

I brought back with me photos and background information of 17 more orphans in need of educational sponsoring. I have however been lucky enough to have already got sponsors for 11 of them but if you know of anyone who is interested in supporting one of these children please do contact me (see contact details at bottom of last page.)

Money donated and raised from Fundraising Events between December 2006 and the end of February 2007.

December	£700	Anonymous donation for Higher Education.
December	£356.92	Chase Lane Primary School / Nursery Unit (Nativity Play)
January	£100	Associazione Italian – Willesden & Brent (Johnny Elcino)
January	£300	Birthday party proceeds (Anna Barnard)
January	£103.82	Mini Table Top Sale (St Anne's Parish Church)
January	£170	Prince of Wales Public House (Debbie Smith)
January	£416.24	Chingford Assembly Hall (proposed by Debbie Pipe – trustee)
February	£130	Prince of Wales Public House (Debbie Smith)
February	£202.26	Chase Lane Primary School / Nursery Unit

My grateful thanks to everyone for their support.

Future Fundraising events.

April 8th - Mini Table Top Sale (St Anne's Church Hall – after 10am Easter Service)

April 13th – Ploughman's Supper / Charity Auction (St Anne's Church Hall – 8pm).

April 14th – Saints & Sinners Charity Disco / Nightclub (Oxford Circus) (Jeevan Retnam)

May 12th – Annual Sponsored Walk (Nelson's Column to Buckingham Palace then five laps round St James Park and back to Nelson's Column)

If you wish to sponsor me on this walk I would be very grateful,. The funds raised are for food, medication, blankets, foam mattresses, nappies and transport to clinics and hospitals for the Kwazulu Aids Orphans.

My trip back to Kwazulu, South Africa was wonderful although the extreme heat and humidity rising on occasion to between 40 and 48 degrees and a nasty spider's bite which became infected took its toll on me and it has taken me a full three weeks to recover. Any future trips will be made in the months of April or May when the weather should have cooled down considerably.

AFRICA NEWS

My trip to South Africa was very worthwhile and wonderful as I was able to get far more involved this year with the projects that One Life supports; that is Hope Project and The Thandukuphila Centre, Nseleni. I accompanied Hope Project workers in their daily life with the project and I do not know how day after day in the extreme heat I experienced that they can give so much of themselves to the children and the sick and needy often working into the evenings. It was the same at The Thandukuphila Centre where Nancy dedicates her life to the children connected to the centre and all the worries that go with this responsibility. Sometimes there is not enough food to feed the hundreds of children who come to eat before and after school, then before Christmas Nancy was told she had to vacate The Thandukuphila Centre building by the end of December which she was advised not to do by a legal aid lawyer. I heard a couple of days ago that Nancy has now been told that she and the children can remain in the centre. This is indeed a big relief to Nancy and all concerned.

On my first weekend back in South Africa Sanjay Patel and his fiancée Sam came to visit me. I mentioned them both in my last newsletter (he is a paediatrician and she an anaesthetist who both worked at Whipps Cross Hospital here in London until September last year when they went to work in hospitals in Pietersmaritzburg, Kwazulu for approx 10 months). They are

totally enjoying their South Africa experience and are getting married on April 4th in the beautiful Drakensberg Mountains out there. On the Saturday of their visit they joined myself and Everhard of Hope Project in visiting some of the rural areas where food is provided for the children affected by the Aids Virus and where help is also given to African adults in need of food and medication and transport to clinics and hospitals.

We went first to visit Gogo the 103 year old blind African lady who the charity supports with money for food and any special needs she has. This was a wonderful and tearful reunion for Gogo and myself, she will be 104 years old on April 16th this year. We then visited two women who had taken in and were looking after ten orphans. Hope Project takes food to these women for themselves and the children. One of the women has her own 7 year old physically disabled little boy who cannot walk at all and has to be carried around. Hope Project discovered that the women and children were sleeping side by side on the cement floor without even a blanket to lie on or cover them. Whilst I was out there we were able to provide them with blankets and towels and balls and crayons and paper for the children to play with. The women told us of many other orphans in need of food and care and there are now well over 60 children coming together where these women are for the food provided by Hope Project. This is now a newly established and rapidly growing feeding centre. On the right are two of the children at the new feeding centre waiting for food.



On the Sunday of their visit Sister Emmanuel and Sister Petra from the small convent who accommodate me throughout my visits, myself, Sanjay and Sam were invited to the private game reserve of the son of Mrs Reg Anthony the editor of the Zululand Observer newspaper. This was a wonderful end to their short visit. She invited me to write an article on the wonderful support my charity receives from you all here in the U.K. This I did and I am now waiting for a copy of the article to arrive here.

Hope Project have wonderful African volunteer helpers who themselves live in the poorest of conditions in broken down homes. Their dedication to helping the children is wonderful.



I visited many families with Hope Project and went with them to deliver food to all the outdoor feeding centres. One family we take food to live way down a rough dirt track in a most rural area totally isolated from anyone else. When discovered they were mostly naked and very hungry. There are a mother a father and eight children with another baby due shortly. Their eldest daughter aged 17 is the size of a seven year old child and functions at that age. The living conditions of this family were so bad that I was moved to tears and had to turn away. We took



food, baby clothes for the new baby and balls for the children to play with and I am now waiting to hear if One Life can help with funding to make the shack they sleep in more habitable (see photo on right). It was just full of gaping holes and will be of no benefit to them at all when winter arrives. The mother cooks outside with a fire made from any wood they can find on top of stones and the she only has one cooking pot in which to cook food for all of them. I feel sure that there are many other adults and children living like this and I want to help in any small way the charity can. I cannot get this family and others I met



out of my mind.

There are the same problems around Nseleni where Nancy runs The Thandukuphila Centre and out in the more rural areas. I went with Nancy to visit one child headed family who had written to say that their living conditions were unbearable in winter and also when the heavy rains

came. This family live in the squatter's village in a broken down small traditional round house. I found the door hanging off and Purity age 16 the teenager who is totally responsible for herself and her siblings frightened because of the high percentage of rape to young girls. Her roof was patched up and very inadequate with gaping holes in it and the window was broken. The small house was empty apart from two small cooking pots and a plastic bucket where she stored food from the food parcels provided by Nancy. Whilst I was there, with money donated by some of you for just this kind of thing I bought a new strong door which is now in place. I paid for electricity to be connected and the rental for a year which is only £60. I bought Purity a two ring electric cooker, an electric kettle and an iron and I was waiting for a quote for a new roof when I heard that the local council are in the process of building ten small one or two roomed houses with running cold water to be used for families living in dire conditions. Purity and her siblings will be the first to move when the houses are complete. Purity is two years behind in her schooling due to the death of both her parents and having no one to fund her through school. When she finishes at the end of 2008 she told me she wishes to study to become a social worker to help her own people. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of a college place then this young girl. College fees cost anything from £600 per year to double that amount. If anyone would like to help by donating a small amount of money to be put by for Purity's wish to become a social worker I would be very grateful. I really want to help this girl.



I was able also with Nancy to visit the family of another of our sponsored children, a young girl of 13 with AIDS who is now responding well to the Anti Retroviral Drug treatment she is receiving. She is one of 13 orphans looked after by her grandmother, the youngest being a 7 month old baby (see photo on left). This family receive fortnightly food parcels from the Centre but some of the children also eat there twice a day. They live and sleep in three small rooms one which has a gaping hole in the wall which I am hoping to help get fixed shortly as wild cats get in and steal their food.

Whilst with Nancy I was able to visit our new Satellite feeding centre which One Life mostly funded. The crèche is now up and running (see right) and children in the more rural areas are able to go there before and after school for food. It was wonderful to see the results of One Life's efforts to help the AIDS orphans.



Whilst I was in Kwazulu I was able to purchase and give out blankets, towels, food, balls etc to families in dire need and with the help of Sr Emmanuel, who at the age of almost 83 is still amazingly active in supporting the projects, we were able to borrow, free of charge, a brand new child's wheelchair for the seven year old physically disabled small boy who I met whilst working with the Hope Project team. This caused great excitement for him and the other children and has helped to enhance this small boy's life. I have also just sent out for him two feely books one of lions and other wild animals and the other with farm animals each of which make the appropriate animal sounds when sections on the right hand side of the book are pressed. I want to encourage him to use his hands as he only seems able to use one adequately but appears to have some strength in the other.



We had a break in one evening at Hope Project and their newly purchased first ever computer was stolen with the printer and all my photos which earlier that afternoon had been transferred onto it from my camera. Also taken were the fans, telephone, money and the children's rice and eggs. This came as a terrible shock to everyone. Hope Project emailed me a few days ago to say that they had just been donated two tons of rice for the hundreds of children they feed,

also eggs, money and the offer of another computer. This more than replaces what was stolen so we are truly blessed. Any photos I took after the break-in are now on my website under Galleries – South Africa photos 2007.

It is good to be back home but I am already looking forward to my trip next year when it is slightly cooler. This year's trip was a memorable trip for me but there is not enough space to write about all my experiences. I did come back though shocked and horrified at the living conditions of some of our children out there and also of many of the remaining adults who have survived the AIDS Virus.

Please do continue to support what I do by sponsoring the children for their educational needs and if possible by contributing to the sponsored walk so we can help these children to have some of their basic needs now met. There are so many and it is hard but we are making a difference, I see it every time I visit there.

As always I want to end by thanking you all for your loving support of these innocent children caught up in poverty, grief at the loss of their parents and a sickness they were born with and have to live with. (Many of course do not survive but the Anti Retroviral Drugs now given to the children are making a remarkable difference).

I hope that this coming summer is a good one for you all

With All Best Wishes.

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