

Building an educated future for Kenyan Children

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Registered Charity No: 1101103

Dear Reader

The somewhat doom-laden comments in my 2009 newsletter on the state of Kenya have been revised upwards this year. A period of extended rainfall has ensured that crops have grown and have been harvested and hunger has been kept at bay for a year at least. The country looks beautiful. The semi-desert conditions are just a recent memory until, I suppose, the rains fail again and the huge herds of goats repeat the same damage inflicted over centuries. A relatively peaceful referendum on much needed constitutional change has kept political activists quiet. The fear remains that change will not be implemented. The next national elections are due in August 2012. The success or failure of the new Constitution will be obvious at that time.

The charity has gone from strength to strength over the last twelve months. Two beautiful primary schools have been handed over to local communities and two more are 'work in progress'.

There is no doubt that standards of education have risen since we became involved. This can be shown statistically. The 'mean scores' in the annual national primary school exam results have risen slowly but surely and the average score of successful scholars winning Langalanga scholarships has risen dramatically almost every year (see www.langalanga.org.uk). We can also see that in those schools from which we take our scholars, but have been unable yet to offer the full KST treatment, less progress has been achieved. However, we are not satisfied with the rate of change of improvement in our schools. We have struggled to find reasons and have concluded that a more holistic approach to education is needed. We need to "reduce the number of excuses for poor performance".

We have done this, in part, by reducing class sizes from 80-90 pupils to 40-45 where necessary. KST pays for half the salary of qualified teachers and the parents pay the other half. We now have 31 such teachers on our books. The annual bill is enormous, but we believe it is worth it.

We now realize we should devote more energy to our latest initiative of providing "Food for Thought". The insane idea that starving children can learn anything much on one meal a day has been forcefully understood.

Perhaps the most far reaching and thrilling initiative is our intention to build a high grade affordable, day, secondary school for children of all faiths and of no faith from many of our primary schools. It will be funded by the Woodard Corporation and will admit its first pupils in February 2012. More on this exciting project is overleaf.



KST trustees: Harry VC with Sue Phelps, Peter Ellse, Graham Turner and Alison VC behind and Patron Sheila Ravenscroft, with Bernadette Slee, Annie Owen and Charlie Hopkinson at the front. Nigel Farthing was not present on this occasion.

I want to thank, again and again, the many kind generous and selfless donors who have made much of this possible. We have received extraordinarily generous donations from corporate and family trusts and from individuals. Tens of thousands of young Kenyans will benefit from their concern over the years. My trustees have provided me with constant support. Without them I can guarantee very little would have been achieved. Special thanks go to our project manager, Mr Mathenge, for his outstanding help and professionalism.

Yours sincerely,

Harry Vialou Clark

Newsletter 2010

ITEM 1

Now the biggest and best news of all! It has long been known that there is a pressing need for a secondary school in the area of Langalanga. Hundreds of children from some of KST's beautiful primary schools terminate their education at primary level because there is no affordable secondary school nearby. There will be soon! The Woodard Corporation, consisting of 47 schools in England, has decided to raise the money for KST to build a magnificent school in Kenya for 540 children to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of that remarkable mid-Victorian, Nathaniel Woodard.

21 March 1811 was a good day for young Kenyans!

The school will be known as the **Woodard Langalanga Secondary School**. As this goes to print the final engineering details are being drawn up. We propose to hold the 'ground breaking ceremony' on 11 February 2011 being the best date that does not interfere with celebrations in England a few weeks later. There are currently 47 schools in the Woodard Corporation all of which will be celebrating and helping to raise money for our Kenyan school.



Harry VC looks out over Plot 68, the site of the new school.

Chief Peter Kariuki has played a major part in securing the land for the proposed Woodard Secondary School. He is a board member of our scholarship selection team and a knowledgeable and trusted leader of the local communities. He is an imposing and amiable figure who has the habit of being there whenever he is needed.



ITEM 2

We handed over **Ngumo Primary School** in January 2010. This formerly hotchpotch collection of low grade timber and corrugated iron classrooms, and a miscellany of incomplete and unsafe stone structures, has been transformed into a rather attractive school on a ridge overlooking the Great Rift Valley. Currently 466 children learn there. It was quite a good day, but a little spoilt by political posturing. Pity - but too bad!



Entertainment at Ngumo. Dancers encourage Harry VC to join in and pupils perform a play with a message that education is important. (N.B. the boy on the left is 'Colonel VC'!)

ITEM 3

In February we handed over **Ndogo Primary School**. Funded by Ardingly College, a Woodard school, it is unique amongst our schools not just because of its remote location but also because of the staff housing and electricity we have provided. A “Food for Thought” kitchen has been built and paid for by Ardingly pupils. At the time of writing we now have enough money to install a high quality, efficient wood burning cooker. About 200 of some of the most deprived children in Kenya will benefit when we can raise enough money for a sustainable food programme. The total package of a magnificent new school, library, inclusion in the Langalanga scholarship scheme, sufficient teachers, food, water on tap, hope and a good headmaster make this an interesting attempt at social engineering.

The completed site of Ndogo Primary School from the airand on the ground



FOOTBALL

The PAC3000 Football Tournament has been so popular that we now have 21 teams competing. The RAF and Army Football Club have been magnificent in their support. The energies of hundreds of young boys and men are now channeled into what many regard as the new ‘religion’.

The dedication plaque at Ndogo Primary school

TWINNING NEWS

Thanks to the Coven and support from TTS the Kenya-England schools twinning idea is gathering momentum. A number of ventures have been initiated to the benefit of children in both countries.



A school kitchen — room for improvement?



ITEM 4

- “Food for Thought” is another attempt to raise standards amongst our children. This new initiative is the brain child of three of our lady trustees calling themselves the Coven, for short.
- On a recent visit to Kenya they saw very clearly the horrors of malnutrition and decided to do something about it. We first need money for kitchens and for fuel-saving cookers.
- Administrative arrangements have been investigated and kitchens, cookers and food costed. Very carefully targeted and well managed charity work for young children appeals to donors – and we need lots of them!
- On behalf of thousands of our children I thank Sheila, Annie and Bernadette for their love and determination to help.
- The Coven will succeed, I am certain.

ITEM 5

Our two most complicated and costly projects are now about 70% complete. **St Peter's Huruma Primary School** caters for the poorest of the poor. There are 457 of them. "Huruma" means "Pity" or "Sympathy" in Swahili. An interesting but apt name for this school!

Karunga Primary School is perhaps the biggest and most challenging of all our schools so far. 672 children from the shanty town of the same name cope with trying to learn here and are aching for the project to end. The heavy rains have slowed us down but at least the children do not look starved.



The Wendy Birrell Memorial Building nears completion at St Peters Huruma.



Demolition of the condemned buildings at Karunga Mud everywhere!

..... and happy children play in and around their new classrooms.



ITEM 6

The 31 teachers that KST and parents now employ work in 13 of the 20 schools from which the Langalanga Scholarship Fund takes its scholars. All are all unemployed, but qualified teachers. The Kenya Government cannot afford to fill all vacant teacher posts so rely on others to do their work for them. It costs KST about £20 month per teacher or £240 a year.

Our total annual bill therefore is about £7500.

This vital add-on to our work needs donors.

Do please help if you feel moved to do so.



Packing boxes in the garage..... arrival, a little battered, in Gilgil the new library at Ngumo.

ITEM 7

Hidden in the shadows are others who work tirelessly for young Kenyans. Alison and Anne have packed up a huge number of cartons of donated books for our nine libraries. Steve takes them away and, as if by magic, they reappear in Gilgil, at no cost to the charity, for distribution to selected schools. The team is now concentrating on books suitable for the new secondary school.

Patrons: Sheila Ravenscroft, Sarah Beeny.

Trustees: Colonel HE Vialou Clark, The Hon CHK Hopkinson, Ms SC Phelps, Mr P Ellse, Mr GN Turner, Mr NC Farthing, Mrs AM Owen, Mrs AJ Vialou Clark, Miss B Slee.