



Kenya Children's News

www.kenyachildrencentres.com

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There are many ways that you can help the children. Here are some examples of people's kindness:

A Wonderful Wedding Gift

Brent and Chrissie Escott already sponsor two of the girls at Ngoingwa. They were married in December and held their celebration dinner at the fabulous Tithe Barn near Petersfield. They decided that they would ask their guests to make a donation to Kenya Children Centres rather than receive wedding gifts themselves.

A page was set up on our website so that guests could make their gift on-line. More than £2,000 was given towards the cost of fitting out another family unit that will provide accommodation for another 10 girls this year.

Tenth Anniversary Concert

A brilliant evening of song, dance and comedy was held on Sunday 10th May to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Kenya Children Centres at the Corn Exchange Theatre in Wallingford, near Oxford.

Following the great success of "Crossing Continents" in 2008, Gay Goodall produced a brand new version of the Revue, with a wide selection of music from west end shows, light opera, jazz classics, popular songs and comedy sketches. The evening started with champagne and canapés for the 175 guests, hosted by the "Old Post Office" restaurant opposite the Theatre.

Tenth Anniversary of Kenya Children Centres

The Thika Centre for Good Future was started by Alice Jukes in May 1999 with just 4 orphaned girls. Over the 10 years, the numbers have increased and the girls have grown up feeling loved and valued in a safe and caring environment. Today, we have expanded into a large new purpose built house at Ngoingwa with capacity for 40 girls and eventually the Centre will be home 120 girls.

There was a big celebration to mark this milestone on Saturday 16th May at the Ngoingwa centre, attended by more than 200 guests including volunteers, sponsors of the children and UK guests as well as representatives of local and national government. The guests were entertained by the girls singing and dancing as well and by performances from local entertainers. There was plenty of traditional Kikuyu food and lively music for everyone to join in and enjoy themselves.



During the afternoon the Goodall Clinic and Community building was officially opened by Gay Goodall and dedicated to the memory of her husband Bernard, who played an active role in the early days of the project. A stone was also unveiled at the entrance to the children's home to mark its official naming as "Eaton House". Two local comedians rounded off the afternoon by persuading the guests to donate more than £3,000 towards our building fund. This happy event was covered by both the national press and TV.

Reflections of a Project Manager in Kenya!

It became clear that we needed an experienced manager to introduce more effective procedures and systems to control our expanding enterprise in Ngoingwa.

So David Mickey, who normally looks after our finances in the UK,



volunteered to spend a few months in the sunshine! He kept a diary while he was there to record his experiences and here are some of his observations.

"My first impression when I arrived was people, everywhere, walking. Then we arrived at the orphanage and the girls were there to meet me. I welled up inside with all the joy in the world at meeting these charming, wonderfully polite and lovely young ladies whom I would be getting to know over the next few months.

Lillian, one of the housemothers, offered coffee and fruit, but I refused as I had just

The show included a description of the Kenya Children Centres project followed by a performance by a group that looked like Abba! The evening was a rousing success and concluded with strawberries and coffee in the foyer of the theatre. We are indebted to all the people who contributed their talents and time to this event. It raised over £4,000 towards the cost of fitting out another family unit for 10 girls at the Ngoingwa Centre.

Tweeddale Primary School

On our latest trip to Kenya, we carried 5 suitcases containing videos, books, soft toys and other goodies for the girls. This was just part of the contents of 15 large boxes generously donated by the staff and parents at Tweeddale School in South London. The books will form the nucleus of a library for the children and help with their home tuition. The infants will enjoy watching the Bob the builder videos and the Walt Disney films!

Would you like to Help?

Please let us know if you have a good idea for raising funds for the girls. We also need caring people to become "Friends" or to sponsor one of the girls. Find out more about it at www.kenyachildrencentres.com

Christmas at the Ngoingwa Centre

Christmas was a great celebration for 19 girls after they moved into their new home in December. After delays caused by rising material costs and the collapsing pound, we managed to complete the top floor of the first children's home at the Ngoingwa Centre. The children now have more living space and places to play outside as well as their own goat and vegetable garden!



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had breakfast. A few minutes later she took me aside to explain, in the most polite manner, that a Kenyan woman expects to provide food to any visitor and that, maybe, I would like to reconsider the offer. I reconsidered. I found, over the months, that this tradition of providing food to any visitor is absolutely, 100% true.

Another day, I learned that a petrol tanker had caught fire while unloading at a petrol station. The driver, sensing disaster of explosive proportions, actually got into the burning tanker and drove it onto the road away from the petrol station. The Thika fire apparatus arrived only for the fireman to discover that there was NO water in its tank. A crowd formed and began to stone the fire fighters as several other vans caught fire. It is quite clear that Kenyans believe in instant justice.

What else did I learn?

- There is dust everywhere and it is all red
- "Kenya Time": when someone says that they will be with you in 15 minutes you always add at least an hour, usually more!
- Knives and forks in restaurants are scarce. Everyone eats with their fingers or, rarely, a spoon
- No hot water anywhere except in my electric shower which only dribbles
- Absence of a radio station in English that plays anything other than soul and rap
- There are three methods of transport: Boda bodas are bicycles with a cushion over the rear wheel. Tuk Tuks are three wheeled motor bikes that are very loud and have one speed--walking. Matatus are vans that (officially) hold 14 people but usually many more. They have two speeds--stop and flat out!
- No frozen vegetables in the supermarket and so everything is fresh
- The Kenyan people are warm, generous and happy and they made me welcome everywhere I travelled
- The scenery and the wildlife in Kenya are spectacular.

After three wonderful months, my work was done and I had to return home. The girls crowded round me to say goodbye. It was an emotional moment. Seeing their happy faces reminded me that if it were not for all the people at the Centre, these little children would be destitute somewhere on the streets of Thika, scratching a living in the countryside or even not be alive. But now they have the opportunity of a wonderful future and the possibility of fulfilling their dreams.

Cycle Kenya – A Challenge for 2009



Come and join the challenge of a lifetime. Cycle through the spectacular Kenyan landscape around Mount Kenya, the wonderful wildlife and historic culture of the Kenyan people. Kenya is the heart of African safari country, boasting the most diverse collection of wild animals on the continent. Complete the trip with a visit to our Children Centre at Ngoingwa and meet the orphans that you will be helping.

Already 20 cyclists have signed up for the trip but there are still places for more! It should be great fun as well as an incentive to get a bit more fit.

You will leave the UK on Saturday 21st November and be back on Sunday 29th November. A full description of the itinerary and lots of other information can be downloaded from the website www.kenyachildrencentres.com/page61.html. If you would like to take part, send an email to Liz at liz.eaton@kenyachildrencentres.com

Thanks to all of our Sponsors, Friends and Supporters for your generous support and encouragement.

Wilf Eaton