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Welcome to the third Mamelodi Trust Newsletter! A great deal has happened since we published the last one earlier this year and we hope that you find this update interesting. Contact details for the Trust can be found at the end of the Newsletter so please get in touch if you would like more information.

Steve and Mary Bacon visit Mamelodi

On a recent five-week stay in Pretoria, Steve and Mary spent a good deal of time in Mamelodi visiting the schools supported by the Trust, meeting staff and pupils, seeing at first hand how the Trust's funding has been used and discussing future priorities with head teachers and governors. They received a warm welcome wherever they went in the township and were much encouraged by the way in which schools were using their new resources. On their return they reported the continuing growth of the squatter camps in Mamelodi and the chronic under-funding and over-crowding of schools. In a meeting with education officials in Mamelodi they discussed the need for further professional development and training of teachers and school leaders and possible ways in which the Trust might support such initiatives. They also discussed proposals for some renovation work at Meetse A Bophelo Primary School where the ramshackle classroom conditions are still very poor and urged the authorities to take appropriate and urgent action.

Report from Tshegofatsong Special School



Funding from the Trust last year had been used to renovate an old and dangerous climbing frame and to build a new, wooden one. The school were delighted that the children now had somewhere safe to play where they could develop their motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Writing to the Trust the head teacher said "We highly appreciate the contribution you have made. It will really make a difference and add value to the quality of teaching. Thank you for bringing a smile to the learners with special educational needs."

Report from Sikhanyisele Primary School

Last year's funding from the Trust, the first for this school, has been used wisely to purchase a range of educational resources which are now in use in classrooms. A particular feature of their purchasing has been the acquisition of book boxes which are now located in many classrooms. These keep the books safe and also allow them to be moved easily between classrooms. In addition to books, the school bought maths and technology learning materials and educational toys for the foundation phase.



Report from Zakhele Primary School

A major part of the funding for Zakhele School was used to replace all their reprographics equipment. The shortage of books means that schools are often very reliant on producing their own materials for learning and when their old photocopier finally died last year they were desperate for new equipment which they just couldn't afford. They were delighted to be able to use Trust funding to buy new reprographic equipment. Other Trust funding supported a variety of school expenditure including a new stove for cooking the midday meal, outings for pupils and the purchase of essential services such as electricity, water and gas.



Report from Meetse A Bophelo Primary School

Substantial funds last year enabled the school to create a staff room where teachers could meet to discuss their work, share ideas and build their teams of teachers. They also purchased a whole range of learning materials for the pupils including maths and science equipment which previously was non-existent in this school. The Trust paid for two new gas cookers and continues to support the feeding scheme for children by paying for gas to heat the midday meal. The classroom conditions are still dreadful (we failed to photograph the huge rat which ran across the room!) and only some of the dilapidated classrooms can be used. Despite the walls falling down, and the broken windows, some classrooms are still in use although the 2,500 children have to attend school in two shifts, each only receiving half the education they are entitled to. The Head teacher and staff remain confident that things will improve in time and are constantly grateful to their many friends in the UK who are supporting them via the Trust.



Helen Bacon appointed Mamelodi Trust Representative in South Africa

Helen has agreed to act in a voluntary capacity to help the Trust achieve its objectives on the ground in Mamelodi. She is working closely with the four schools, helping them to define educational and funding priorities and liaising between the Trustees in the UK, other partners in South Africa and the schools themselves. She is providing the Trustees with constant feedback and information.

Teachers work in Mamelodi Schools

Once again this summer saw several experienced teachers working in Zakhele and Meetse A Bophelo Primary Schools.

Laura Beverley and two colleagues from Ringwood Primary School in Hampshire helped teachers to develop their teaching skills and shared new ideas on teaching and learning. They worked really hard to help the school to develop particularly in literacy and numeracy. Two of the teachers were part-funded by the Trust but otherwise funded themselves. This was Laura's third visit to Mamelodi – once you get the Mamelodi bug it's difficult to shake off!

Jenny Murray, an experienced advisory teacher from Nottingham, also returned to Mamelodi this summer, at her own expense, and was extremely supportive in our schools. She has been tireless in raising funds for the Trust in the UK and we were grateful for the input she made during her visit.

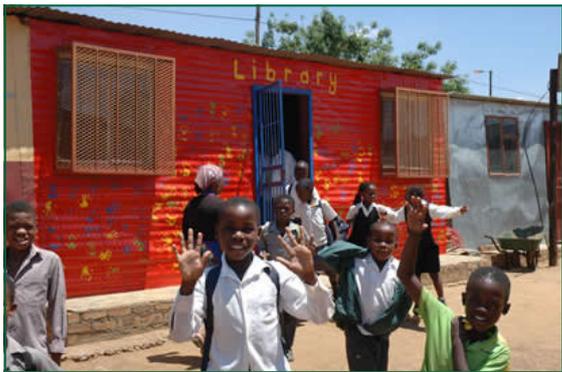


Gill Taylor, also an experienced advisory teacher, this time from Derbyshire, spent several weeks in Meetse A Bophelo School working with teachers to develop their literacy teaching skills. Again, Gill funded this trip herself, but liaised closely with the Trustees to ensure that her input was in line with our objectives. We know that the teachers really valued her contribution and were inspired to try out new ideas to enrich their teaching.

University of Pretoria links with Mamelodi

A number of initiatives are developing between the University of Pretoria and schools in Mamelodi. The University has a campus in Mamelodi and is very familiar with the problems in the township. They have helped Meetse A Bophelo School implement HIV/AIDS training for staff which is now complete. The staff now feel better equipped to deal with the many HIV/AIDS issues that arise in school on a daily basis. A dedicated Support Room has now been set up at the school where children with a variety of problems can be counselled and supported.

The Governors of Meetse A Bophelo School recently held an Awards evening where outstanding achievement by members of staff in a variety of fields could be celebrated. The event was held in the excellent conference suite in the University which made the evening more of an “occasion” than it could possibly have been in the school. Several University staff members indicated their willingness to support the school in different ways.



Students from the University decorated a “shack” at the school inside and out ready to be used as a library to house the few books which the school now owns. In response to the lack of books in the classrooms, Gill Taylor had helped the school to

set up a library to encourage pupils to access books. Other student projects are envisaged for the future.

Naace continues its commitment to Mamelodi

Substantial funds were again raised by Naace at their annual and half-year Conferences. Although Steve retired as General Secretary of Naace nearly two years ago, members continue to be interested in Mamelodi and we are grateful for their valuable support. The Trust was very grateful to the Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority who raised money for Mamelodi at their summer ICT Conference this year.

Schools and churches raise money for Mamelodi

Schools familiar with the work of the Trust continue to raise money to help schools in Mamelodi. Turnditch School in Derbyshire gave their Leavers’ Service collection to the Trust and Highfields School, also in Derbyshire, held a sponsored walk which raised a very generous sum. They also held a parents’ evening to celebrate the work of the South African musicians who had been working in the school this year and they too raised money for Mamelodi. Desborough School in Maidenhead raised money for the Trust as did St Giles’ Primary School in Derbyshire. Hazelwood and Hognaston Sunday Schools also swelled the coffers and churches in Cromford in Derbyshire and Sherborne in Dorset have also made donations. It’s worth remembering that every penny raised goes directly to schools in Mamelodi, the Trust covering any incidental administration costs from private sources.

Bolsover International Food Fair

Derbyshire County Council organises this event every year and in 2006 again raised money for the Trust. We are very grateful to the County Council for their support and for the fact that they are seeking ways to establish a variety of links with the community in Mamelodi. A Derbyshire County Councillor held an event at her home in the summer which raised a substantial amount for Meetse A Bophelo School.



Funding grants to schools November 2006

The Trustees have recently approved grants to all four schools currently being supported in Mamelodi – Meetse A Bophelo, Sikhanyisele and Zakhele Primary Schools and Tshegofatsong Special School. Funding will be used for a variety of purposes to improve teaching and learning in all four schools and, as always, will include the purchase of books and learning resources. As previously, funds will be transferred to schools via the British Council. Schools will sign up to a contract with the Trust and will be required to implement careful audit checks. Additionally, the Trust has secured an arrangement with a major book supplier in South Africa who will not only provide schools with advice on the range of educational books available, but will also offer a substantial discount on all purchases made with Trust funds.

A new project for the Trust

Earlier in this Newsletter you will have read about the library shack at Meetse A Bophelo School. This small tin shack has been renovated and painted and will serve for a while, but it isn't a long term solution for the school. The shack is not weather proof and is unsuitable for long terms storage of books and, in the summer months where the outside temperature is often up to 40 degrees, the corrugated iron shack simply acts like an oven. The head teacher is enthusiastic about providing a central location where the love of reading can be celebrated, where books can be kept safely and where groups of children can work with their teachers. But without outside support this can only be a dream. The Trust is investigating the possibility of first building a weatherproof room, suitably insulated and secure, which the school can use as a library. Secondly, it will need to find funding to equip the library with shelves, other furniture, books and possibly a computer connected to the Internet. The Rotary Club of Sandy in Bedfordshire is keen to support the equipping of the library once we have a go-ahead on the accommodation, and the Young People's Group at Hazelwood Church have just raised £500 to kick start the project. The Trust also has some funds ready to donate once the cost of the project is clear. This is an ambitious project – we'll keep you posted.

Thanks to everyone

We mentioned earlier some of the schools and other organisations who have contributed to the Mamelodi Trust. We also want to thank the many individuals who are contributing via single donations or who are making regular contributions by standing order. These all make such a difference to what we can achieve in Mamelodi and whenever we go there we always take your personal greetings to the head teachers and staff so that they know that so many individuals are helping them. **Thanks to everyone!**



Further information

Please visit the Mamelodi Trust website:

www.mameloditrust.org.uk or phone: 01773 829849

If you wish to make a regular donation, or to donate via Gift Aid, please request the appropriate forms from Steve Bacon.

email: steve@farnahgreen.com

or use the above phone number.

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