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News and Reports from Far and Near
December 2009



Supporters' News

As we approach Advent, we are reminded that we sometimes have to be patient in our waiting, even though it is our nature to want things to be done quickly. This is especially true for those of us who work in charitable organisations like HHI, when we have to communicate with those of a different culture, those who speak different languages and those who live and work many thousands of miles away.

But, in this edition of *Tidings* we want to give thanks for all the good things that have happened since we wrote to you last. The container, which we loaded up in May, arrived safely in Monze in August. It was soon emptied by the staff at the compound who had eagerly awaited its arrival. The walking aids, bicycles, sewing machines and all the many gifts you sent are already being put to good use.

In India, the Orphanage has been officially opened and received its first intake of children. The community there is eagerly waiting for the time that they can accommodate even more children and we think that our Christmas appeal this year should focus on helping them to achieve this.



In our last edition, we told you about our desperate need for storage space and asked for your help. We are pleased to say that the help came and we now have a facility in Mamhilad which is filling up rapidly with wheelchairs and other walking aids.

Thanks to all of you who turned out on a dark November Evening for the Supporters' Evening. It was a joyful occasion with singing that rattled the rafters - but more about that later.

Thanks again to you - all our supporters. Without you, what you read about in this newsletter would not have taken place.

We remember Isaiah's joyful anticipation of the end of his waiting when he declared 'unto us a son is born'. And, thinking of the coming season, we won't be sending out Christmas cards this year. Instead we will be including with this mailing a bookmark which describes a little of what we do. It might just have a longer life than a card.

With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all at HHI.

Christmas Appeal

Asha Kiran Ashram

Our centre for mentally and physically disabled children in Tamil Nadu, is now open, and already proving a great boon. The children are developing in ways that no one would have thought possible. We have agreed that we will help fund this marvellous work by sending out 50,000 Rupees (about £650) every month. This is a step of faith which means that we need to raise an additional £7,800 to cover basic running costs over the coming year. As we celebrate the coming of Jesus as a helpless child, can you help us to provide hope to these helpless children?

Thank you very much



Thank you to Mountjoy Christian Centre who hosted our Supporters' Evening

Thanks to all those who made the Supporters' evening such a warm and successful occasion.

Thanks to all those whose legacies have supported the work of HHI

- dictaphones/portable recording devices,
- shoe making/repairing materials,
- electric fans,
- long lengths of dressmaking material, and
- bandages and other medical/surgical sundries.

If you are able to provide any of these, please contact us at the office.

Sometimes we receive requests for 'one-off' items which are not in common use. For example, last month Dr John Phiri asked us to try and source elbow-length latex gloves for obstetric use. We plan to put such requests on the HHI website in future; you cast your net and who knows what may turn up. (See the three questions elsewhere in this newsletter)

Alternative Gift Catalogue

This has proved a great success this year and we have already processed many orders. If you are panicking about that late present, please remember that any orders received by us on Monday 21st December will be despatched that day by first class post so should be with you for Christmas.

If you feel that you are able to respond to our Christmas Appeal, please include your donation in the envelope provided.

Answers to the three Questions

1. An ultra sound scanner
2. An ultra sound scanner
3. A PA system for the top of a car to provide a mobile announcement facility. (Does anyone know where we can get one!!!)

Money raised through this year's harvest donations received from churches, schools and individuals has been able to pay for two solar panels, wiring, batteries and installation costs. The panels have been installed on the roof of the work shops. When the batteries are fully charged, they will provide electricity for a week even through cloudy weather. The printshop work is now able to go ahead without delay and solar power will be extended to the restaurant in time. We are so pleased that we have the beginnings of an environmentally friendly, sustainable compound which we hope we can build on.

Container News

With the impending demolition of the church hall at the Stow Park Church Centre, we were forced to seek alternative premises to store all your donations prior to shipment to Zambia. With the assistance of Welsh Assembly Member William Graham, we have been given, rent free, a storage room at Mamhilad, 10 miles from Newport. We thank Kevin Johnsey, managing director of Mamhilad Park Estate, for his generosity.

The new space is considerably smaller than the church hall so we have to be ruthlessly selective about what we can now accept. We have contacted our management group in Monze, Zambia, and they have identified the following items as 'high priority':

- wheelchairs,
- crutches,
- walking sticks,
- good quality children's, medical and reference books,
- spectacles,
- bicycles in good working order, tools (woodworking, engineering, building, and plumbing),
- manual typewriters (in good condition and with ribbons),

Thanks to *Grahams Estate Agency* and *Johnsey Estates* for our new storage facility in Mamhilad

Thanks to *Brunel shipping* for their cheerful and efficient carriage of the container.

Thanks to *Ruth Dixon* and *Amrysain* for organising no fewer than three *Barn Dances* in support of HHI

Thank you to *Bank Farm Trailers* for providing a free trailer for HHI to use to transport the items it collects.

Thanks to *Westdale Press, Cardiff*, who regularly produce our catalogues at no cost. Thanks also to *Stow Park Church Centre* which continues to provide free accommodation for the HHI office. Both of these make important contributions to keeping our overheads down so that we can spend every penny possible in Zambia or India.

Finally, thanks to all of those who donate regularly by standing order. It helps us greatly in our planning.

Christmas Tree Festival

Stow Park Church Centre. 11am to 4pm, 17-19th December

Come and see a range of local charities who will each decorate a Christmas tree to display their work. The children will love it.



Zambian Highlights by Jute Williams



Goal posts donated to HHI in 2008 by Newport and Districts scouts were unfortunately too long to fit on to the 20ft container which we sent out to Zambia in 2008. However, all was not lost. After they had waited in storage until 2009, we managed to send them to Monze in a 40ft container .

They have now been received with great ceremony by Monze Education Authorities, who have promised them to the school achieving most in their sporting activities.

This is good news as Zambians love football and this year Lliswerry High School pupils have kindly donated some of their unwanted football boots.



The sick children in Monze Mission Hospital have benefited from fruit and herbal porridge which has been purchased with money raised through the HHI 2008/9 alternative catalogue scheme. Ward sister Rhona was delighted to be able to supplement the children's diet and aid their recovery. We hope we can continue to help these vulnerable patients in the future.

The container arrived safely in our HHI headquarters on August 20th which coincided with Chris's and my visit to Monze. It was an amazing experience to witness the items being unloaded after their 5,000 miles journey. The items are distributed by HHI with the co-operation of Sky FM, the District Board of Health and Holy Family mission. Wheelchairs have brought dignity to those who used to crawl; blankets, clothes and shoes have brought comfort to those who were cold and in rags; tools have enabled work, and medical supplies and equipment have allowed the hospitals to function more effectively.



These words of thanks were emailed to the UK from a member of staff in Monze: *We thank the people for this container that has come with a lot of things that will really boost the work of HHI here in Zambia. I have never known of an organisation that can just give out clothes and bicycles..... without paying for them. I really thank you for this cheerful gift and show of love for one another. Bingi Miti.*

It was a real joy to see the wheelchairs giving mobility to those with handicaps and to see how everything sent across is being put to good use.

Even the financial report was presented with a touch of humour and gave us all a very clear picture of where the money is being spent.

We had a timely reminder from Ron that we need to continue to let our lights shine as we work, in Christ's name, for the communities we are supporting overseas. And talking of lights shining, it was good to put faces to two names - Hazel and Ceinwen - whose Friday stall in Pontypool market funds most of the cost of the container.

And, after all this nourishment for the spirit, the evening concluded with an **excellent** buffet prepared by Shirley and her team of helpers.

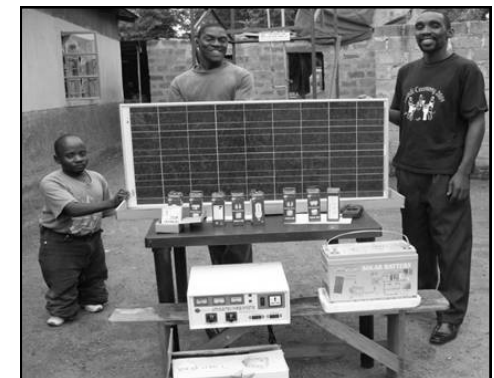
If you missed it this time, then don't feel too downcast, another one is coming. Keep an eye on the next edition of *Tidings* for notice of the date and venue.

(While the main purpose of the evening is to say a thank you to our supporters, we have to express again our thanks for the great generosity of those who attended and took the opportunity to make donations to the work of HHI)

A prayer taken from a path side notice in the Alps:
'The way is steep, but you have to take it and trust in God.'

The Harvest Appeal

Electricity in Zambia is intermittent and costly. All of the vocational training, income generation and communications in Monze rely on electricity. Unfortunately there are many times when nothing can happen because supplies are cut for many hours at a time without warning.



Three Questions

What did Chris Byrne our trustee from N. Wales find surplus to requirements in his local health trust?

What did Monze hospital in its latest communication say they particularly needed?

What is the strangest request we have had from Jonah and his team in Monze?

(The answers to all three questions can be found on the last page)

The Supporters' Evening 3rd November



Our ecumenical ensemble

What do you need to cheer up a dark November Evening? The Supporters' evening fitted the bill nicely. There was some rafter -rattling singing, enthusiastically conducted by Ron and supported by a group of young instrumentalists. There was a brave attempt by Alun to teach us a Tonga song and an even braver attempt to get us to move our feet in Zambian rhythm.

There were some heartwarming stories of lives changed and hopes restored from Trivandrum and Chris Byrne shared his reflections on his first visit to Zambia - including his imaginary encounter with underwear-infesting red mites.

A short film showed the container being unloaded in Monze and it seemed to those of us who helped load it this end, that the huge ventilator, now safely installed in Monze hospital, was lifted off much more easily than it was heaved on. (It might have been something to do with the average age of the labour force in each case.)

The HHI stall in Pontypool Market where Hazel and Ceinwen have worked tirelessly for years to raise money for HHI and in particular to cover the cost of sending the O9 container to Zambia. It is a fantastic effort and to date £6000 has been banked. Do pay them a visit if you can and show your support!



George being interviewed by Chikuni radio station on receipt of the HHI special chair.

Do you remember George Soselo who has been bedridden for over thirty years and confined to his rondaval? During this time he has been cared for by his loyal cousin Gertrude. George's amazing wisdom and positive nature surprised both Chris and me and we promised that HHI would try to help him in some way. An orthopaedic chair has recently been delivered and George can now be supported in an upright position. He can sit in the sunshine and listen to his favourite radio station Sky FM. Something so simple for us to do, but it would not have been possible without the arrival of the O9 container.

Inspirations From India by Edmund Plummer

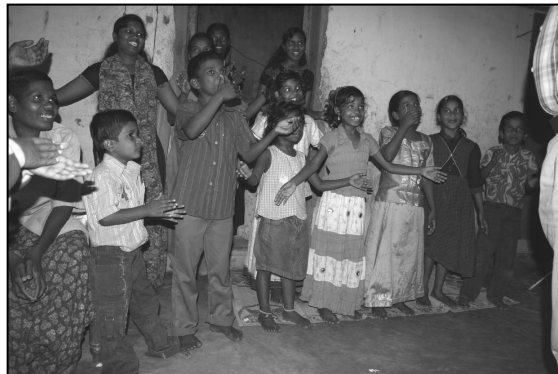
After months of careful planning and building, our centre for mentally and physically disabled children, Asha Kiran Ashram (Rays of Hope House), was officially opened by the local MP on 28th August 2009.



Pastor Santosh has been in constant communication with HHI, keeping us updated and sending us photographs of the work as it developed. He continues to provide us with monthly updates and accounts of the work. The building work was funded by the wonderful

generosity of Newport and Strathaven Scouts and their leaders. The 22 children it accommodates receive high quality care and they are already developing new skills and abilities. The whole venture is a superb testimony to the love of God in action.

Our orphanage also continues to flourish in its new house. Currently there are 16 children. Each of these is cared for by Pastor Bovas and his team. A number of supporters each provide £10 a month to guarantee a place at the orphanage. If you would like to join them, please contact the office.

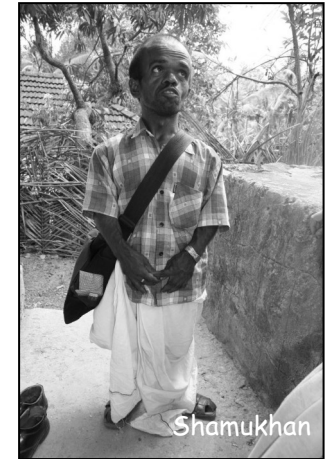


Pastor Sam's home continues to care for 40 needy women and this is financed by HHI with some supplementary income from Indian Christians. We have recently paid for a wall to be built to create a courtyard where the women can safely enjoy sunshine and fresh air.



Your generosity has also enabled us to contribute towards the cost of a much-needed kitchen extension. A supplementary septic tank, to relieve the pressure on the existing one, is next on our list of improvements.

HHI also provides small grants, of around 1,000 Rupees (£13), to enable local people to start up small businesses so that they can provide for themselves and their families. Shamukhan, who is only about 3 feet tall made good use of such a grant. He can now support himself, has a home of his own, with a brand new roof.



We also help with debt relief - the poorest people cannot obtain loans from the banks, and are dependent on loan sharks who charge 10% interest a month. These lenders are ruthless in getting their money back, and will even take a front door or metal sheeting from a roof in payment if the borrower is unable to repay. We provide matching funding so as to enable such people to repay their loans and escape their cycle of poverty.

In November, Tom Sutherland, our partner in India, sent us a list of needs affecting the lives of the people he works with. These included a wide range of medical needs from a waterbed for a paralysed patient to medicines for children with leukaemia. He also asked for money to buy three goats for a family in need and for a persecuted Christian group in Orissa.



Thanks to your generosity, and the alternative catalogue, we were able to meet all of these requests this month. The sums involved are relatively small to us but make a great deal of difference to peoples' lives and wellbeing.