

Health Help International Tidings



April
2021

COMMITTEE MATTERS and COMMITTEES MATTER

The HHI management committee always welcomes help and recently we have recruited a new member, Mr Tim Hatherall – a much needed and appreciated extra pair of hands during the continuing Covid restrictions, particularly in claiming Gift Aid from HMRC.

At the moment, we are discussing the possibility of setting up a **Zoom** meeting accessible to supporters. What do you think? One huge advantage would be that supporters from Strathaven, North and South Wales, together with other areas of the UK (and the world!) will be able to share in one celebration. Can you let us know if you think this is something you would like to support? We would need your contact information (email address, preferably) in order to circulate details about the planned meeting, which will also be posted on our website.

You will remember that we have encouraged HHZ to work with more independence in addressing local needs. Their task has been made difficult by the increasing rate of Covid in Zambia and the slow rollout of vaccines. They are particularly concerned about the way that disabled children have been hit hard by the pandemic – a concern which has been highlighted by a recently published survey. Consequently, they have constructed a detailed plan to support 50 disabled children in their area who desperately need help. HHI have decided to support this plan and we will keep you informed about its development.

We ask that you continue to keep the work of the HHI management committee and trustees, and the HHZ trustees and staff, in your thoughts and prayers.



In memory of Lorna

Lorna, one of our long-time supporters, passed away in January 2020, shortly after being at the Supporters' Event in December 2019. Her husband, John, has made a donation in her memory. It was sufficient to enable HHI to purchase suction machines for Monze Mission Hospital. Dr Ibrahim has gratefully received them direct from the manufacturers, TTM, Germany.

Lorna had her own health issues, and, as a direct result of her condition, had managed to obtain 8 refurbished oxygen concentrators, in the days when we were sending out containers to Zambia. Thus, the reason for this specific donation was that medical equipment would be a fitting tribute to her memory. We thank and praise God for her dedication and support over many years. We all miss her.



The machines arrive safely in Monze

New Year party at Nanga Special School



The escalation of Covid 19 cases in Zambia meant that schools did not re-open after the Christmas break until 1st February. Indeed, some of the boarding children at Nanga Special School were reluctant to return and it was only towards the end of February that the head teacher, Mr Bwuepe, reported that all the 35 children had arrived.

Unbeknown to the children, there was a surprise party awaiting them, which had been funded by one of our loyal HHI supporters - a delayed Christmas party with plenty of 'nshima', vegetables, meat, music and dancing. The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves in their new dining hall, furnished with sturdy tables and chairs beautifully crafted by our HHZ carpenter, Robbie Mooya. What a splendid way to celebrate their return to school after lockdown. A big thank you to the Nanga school staff, HHI and HHZ for their combined efforts in making it such a special occasion.



Better times for Bibian



In our Autumn edition of *Tidings*, we wrote about Bibian's long term suffering with an acute lymphatic disorder which had resulted in the amputation of her left leg. She was well cared for by staff in Monze Mission hospital, but the healing process was not straightforward. There is hope that things are now improving. We have just received these pictures of Bibian with a Zimmer frame being supported by Carole Nzila and Mr Gondwe. Carole, our very efficient HHZ administrator, is also an amputee, and Mr Gondwe, the HHZ Chairman, has been actively involved with Bibian's hospitalisation since last September. HHI is currently supporting Bibian each month so that she can buy nutritional food. Her mother has also been helped with funding for a small sustainable business and we will be providing an artificial limb for Bibian when the time is right.

Bibian has expressed a desire to return to school and this is possible in Zambia even though she is now 22 years old. During the holidays it has been suggested that she joins the HHZ seamstresses to learn how to sew and make the reusable sanitary protection and facial masks for Covid protection. We really do hope and pray that this is the beginning of a new and better life for Bibian.



Wheelchair repairing and replacing



Not only does Robbie Mooya make chairs and tables, but he can also make standing frames and mend wheelchairs. The need for wheelchair repairs is immense in Monze because the terrain is so poor and inadequate for wheelchair travel. Pavements and ramps are few and far between. HHZ have realised that they need to provide a proper wheelchair repair service. Carole and Robbie considered the cost of materials, and a project proposal was drawn up and submitted to HHI. £700 was requested to enable Robbie to travel

to Lusaka and purchase leather, tyres, tubes, paint, oil and many other items needed to strengthen the wheelchair frames and repair the tyres. This money has been forwarded and each month HHI will receive a report on the number of wheelchairs which have been repaired. Robbie has reported that sometimes, after working on a wheelchair on several occasions, it becomes beyond repair. This was the case with Grace Mushiba's wheelchair. £80 will buy a new one for her and it can be purchased locally in Monze.



Grace is a double amputee and her mother struggles to look after her as well as her other 6 children. Grace's father tries to earn money from fishing. He is often away from home but fails to provide sufficiently for his family. HHI has been blessed with donations so that a monthly payment can be made to feed Grace and provide her with a new wheelchair. We are continually grateful for the support we receive and how it directly meets the needs of the poor and disabled in Zambia.

In the Shade of the Banyan Tree

The publication of the Tom Sutherland biography by Iain Park under the above title has proved to be a great success. 250 copies were printed and to date 159 copies have been sold or donated to supporters in the United Kingdom, Australia and Germany.



Tom and his sister Ruth

In addition to the monies raised from the sales of the book the donations received have included 1500 Australian Dollars (£850) sent by the widow of one of Tom's colleagues from his early days in Melbourne and a total of £4,500 from two of the charity's generous supporters in Strathaven, bringing the total money raised from the book's publication to over £7,400.

Iain has been particularly pleased that Tom's family members have felt that the book did Tom justice.

His cousin Tim wrote: *'I have just read your book on Tom Sutherland – it is an important story that needed someone to tell. In telling his story you have portrayed the life of a person completely dedicated to helping the poor and destitute people of Kerala over many years. No one can hope to achieve what Tom has achieved without a faithful band of disciples – and that too is an important story to tell as well. I feel that your book has accomplished both. Thank you for an important achievement.'*

Tom is now leading a more relaxed life in Australia and has found time to complete a book which he has been writing for some time (a novel) and which he hopes will also be sold for the benefit of HHI. He is currently seeking a publisher and we wish him success with that.

Copies of 'In the Shade of the Banyan Tree' are still available from HHI in Newport or online from the SFHHI website at www.sfhhi.org.uk

BGM



Our work through Bethany Gospel Ministries (BGM), on the shores of the lake behind the Neyyar Dam, is going from strength to strength. Over the last few months we have financed a number of life-changing operations. We have also funded feeding projects and provided sewing machines, goats or chickens to help needy families become more self-sufficient.

Each month we also send out Rs. 15,000 (about £160) for Pastor Wilson to use at his discretion for smaller medical needs.

Last month, amongst other things, it was used for chemotherapy, heart medicines, hospital treatment and psychotherapy. A little bit of money goes a long way in India!

So Pastor Wilson is taking on the mantle of Tom Sutherland in many ways. We look forward to continuing to work with him as much as our funds allow.

The Banyan Tree

The life changing work of Happy Valley with disabled children is continuing, despite all the problems that lockdown brings. Philip Mathew writes:

"After the online speech therapy, parents participate in the homework. We visit the children's home once a week for physiotherapy, speech therapy and special class and activities. We will conduct the exam and assessment of the children from 15th to 26th of this month."

Our other medical work continues. Philip has asked for help for a couple of people:

"This is Anhinash, 32 years old a daily labourer. He has a baby one year old. He had a motorcycle accident and was admitted to medical college hospital. HHI has promised to fund the £105 he needs for a metal implant. We are praying for him and his family."

"Vijayan was a labourer — cutting coconut, rubber tapping, rearing goats, cows and chickens. He fell down from a tree and broke his backbone. Now he spends his time in wheelchair. The government gives a small pension. I request to you to arrange Rs 500/- [£5] each month."





Longer term, we want people to be empowered to sustain themselves. So recently we sent out Rs. 50,000 (about £525) to buy chickens and coops for 14 families at Mannyam Church in a very poor part of Kerala. They are delighted to become self-sufficient.

Philip himself has problems. His two younger sons are at university at the same time, and this is straining the family's finances as he has to pay both sets of tuition fees. Two supporters have stepped forward to provide half the hostel fees, but we would like to do more.

Asha Kiran Ashram



The physiotherapy hall has taken another step forward. We have been given a wonderful donation towards this by Blackwood Engineering Charitable Trust, which means that our contribution towards the cost is completely covered by specific donations.

The work of Asha Kiran is continuing as well as it can under the severe lockdown restrictions. Pastor Santhosh writes:

"During this Pandemic period, the activities of Asha Kiran Ashram were done in a different way. Our staff have done a good job by contacting the students and their parents over the phone giving instructions about hygiene, hand washing, face masks and social distancing. Afterwards, the staff visited our students' houses and gave needed instructions. Our special educators and the physiotherapist have done a very good job and through this our students are keeping fine."



"Only a few students and staff were kept in our Asha Kiran Ashram home. The gates were locked and visitors were not allowed. The Government Medical Team conducted Corona medical test and all students and staff tested were found negative."

"Once again we thank you very much for your valuable prayers and help for Asha Kiran Ashram."

Thanal House



We have seen some great progress at Thanal House. The shower / wash room / toilet block has finally been completed, despite the lockdown. This is a project that has taken a long time to finish – it has been a steep learning curve for Salini – but we have got there in the end!

Our next project is to build a secure area where the ladies can do a bit of market gardening. This has been recommended by the psychiatric doctor.

Much of the area is open, and crops grown there are liable to be stolen, but we have been given money by the Soroptimists and a supporter so as to enable an area about 12 metres square to be walled in. As well as providing useful therapeutic activities for the ladies, it will also provide much needed supplies for the home.

The Covid epidemic and lockdown are continuing to cause problems. Salini writes:

"After ten days our stock provisions were all finished. We just prayed. After some weeks one of our relatives brought one bag of rice and one full bag lot of vegetables. It was a surprise miracle from Heaven for us. Also many poor people, came to the main gate of the Thanal to give grocery or vegetables."



"Thanks to God. He loving us lot. He done lot of miracle for us."



The latest news is:

"One of our ladies (Rani). Fall down in the bathroom. We took her in to the hospital. She got fracture on her hand. Can't plaster, Doctor advise to do surgery. It will cost 45,000/- (£470). They said to admit tomorrow. Money not ready, have to take debt."

A debt will incur punitive rates of interest. Can anyone help?

Food distribution

The Indian lockdown is continuing to have dire consequences for many Indian families where the breadwinner has been thrown out of work. Government aid is minimal and often does not get through to those who need it most. So we have continued to feed many families. Pastor Wilson, Pastor Samuel and Brother Philip are all helping with this. Each food parcel costs just £6. Pastor Samuel writes:

Dear Edmund Uncle and dear HHI managing committee,

Loving greetings to you from my Church and from my family.

Thank you very much for your loving kindness and financial support to our Church for the food distribution today. It was really a blessed time and we could distribute 30 food bags to our believers.

Also, we have prayed for the helping hands behind it specially for all the ministries of HHI and for all the members of it. May God bless you richly and meet all your needs on time.

We are so thankful to you and we will continue to pray for you.



Hand-painted leaf cards



For many years HHI has supported the production of very special greetings cards. The cards are made by hand painting the leaves of the peepal tree. The designs for the leaves are the work of Tom Sutherland, a gifted artist, who worked in India for many years.

The leaves are prepared by steeping them in water for several weeks to reveal the leaf skeleton.

Once dried, they are ready to be painted by lower-caste women, either in craft centres or in their own homes. The money earned helps the artists to support their families.

The leaves are skilfully painted to produce very beautiful and truly unique cards.

There are over 30 different designs to choose from including birds, butterflies, flowers, Indian scenes, and Strathaven scenes as well as a range of Christmas cards.

The cards are suitable for every occasion and are blank inside for you to write your own message. They are available from our online shop either by following the link on the HHI website hhi.org.uk or go direct to sfhhi.org.uk which is the website for the Strathaven Friends of HHI. The online shop is a very user-friendly place for choosing and ordering cards. Why not take a look?



Health Help International

(registered charity no.1078353)

Stow Park Church Centre, Brynhyfryd Road, Newport NP20 4FX

tel: 01633 671055 email: healthhelp@live.co.uk



web: www.hhi.org.uk

