

Newsletter Spring 2024

Dear friends of SHOCC

Welcome to the Summer 2024 SHOCC Newsletter. We have included details of progress on our ongoing projects at Kisaki and St Jude's in Tanzania, Christ the King in South Sudan and on a new project we are linked with at Masaka in Uganda. We have also included a report on the Christmas/New Year visit by trustee Dr Kevin Cook to Santa Maria Hospice in Guatemala.

Around this time each year we prepare our Annual Report and finance documents ready to send them to our auditor for examination and then on to the Charity Commission. During the year 2022-2023 SHOCC was able to distribute £168,821 to 11 separate projects; our largest distribution since we became a registered charity in 2007. We could not have achieved this without your continued support and for this, we are most grateful.

Three major school construction projects accounted for nearly two-thirds of these donations; Christ the King, South Sudan (£43,375), Kisaki, Tanzania (£36,068) and Outspan, Uganda (£30,269).

Report by SHOCC Chair of Trustees on his visit to the Santa Maria Hospice, Pajapita, Guatemala

In December and January, I had the pleasure of spending five weeks with Maryknoll Sister Dee Smith and staff at the HIV hospice named after St Mary's. I have visited every year since 2017 except for the Covid interruption in 2021. The hospice opened in March 2004 and, since then, has provided much valued respite care for hundreds of HIV patients. It has also grown by adding a range of projects that help ensure its sustainability. These include a five-acre farm, a large honey production unit, training for women as community para-legals, a new project focused on broiler chicken production and a well-used hydro-therapy pool for patients and staff use. SHOCC has provided £115,000 since 2007 and it always a pleasure to be able to witness, at first hand, funding so well used.

I will look at three of the hospice's programmes; the Christmas patient and staff party, the success of the Dee's Bees campaign, and the broiler chicken scheme for rural women with HIV and their families.

The Christmas patient and staff party



Every Christmas Dee arranges a party for patients and staff. They meet in the hospice grounds near the hydrotherapy pool and lunch is provided. Secret Santa presents are distributed and the delightful Mexican piñata party game is played. This involves a blindfolded player attempting to smash the piñata and release the sweets inside. This is never as easy as it sounds as the games-person ensures that the blindfolded player is never able to make contact with the piñata.

The party is in full flow. Dee is seated centre wearing her Fr Christmas hat. The pool is in the background

The Dee's Bees campaign



In 2022 SHOCC ran a campaign to raise £2,500 to enable Dee to purchase 50 new bee hives ready for the 2023 season that lasts from January to June. We exceeded our target and the hives were bought and installed. Dee now has around 80 active hives each with its queen and bees.

The first honey harvest of the season was taken on January 18th yielding 22.5 litres of excellent honey worth, when sold, around £570. Dee estimated that, with three more harvests to be taken, the honey could bring around £2,500 for the hospice. The first harvest always produces the least amount of honey. The rubber trees are not in flower yet and the hives have not settled down.

Members of the team inspect one of the Dee's Bees hives ensuring the good health of the queen

The broiler chicken scheme

In late 2022, Dee decided she wanted to transfer the skills gained from running the hospice's 800-bird chicken project to local HIV families. Funding was obtained from the Conrad Hilton Foundation and 30 local families agreed to take part. All are headed by poor, rural women trying to make ends meet. Each was given 75 broiler chickens in three batches. Team members visited to advise on feeding, injections and other requirements and to construct a fenced area for the birds.

The first set of results are in. Mortality rates have been exceptionally low with most birds reaching the desired weight of 2.2kgs after seven weeks. The families have agreed to join a rotating fund co-operative scheme whereby part of their profits will be invested in a project bank account to gain interest and be available for future project expansion.

If the results achieved so far, are continued, the 30 families will receive between £300 and £562 of profit depending on how they sell their chickens. Some have sold them as live birds at £4 each; others plucked and cleaned being paid £5.50 per bird and others have sold them as plucked, cleaned and sorted into pieces receiving £7.50 per unit. The rotating fund families will keep half their profits and pay the remainder, £980, into the rotating fund account.

Dee is delighted with the results. Establishing a rotating fund is never easy and broiler chicken projects often have disappointing mortality rates. Dee hopes the project can expand once news of its success spreads.



Dee and Rosa discuss the rotating fund savings scheme at Rosa's farm.

News from some of SHOCC's current projects

Kisaki Girls' School, Singida, Tanzania



We asked and you provided £7,500 to put a roof on the science block at Kisaki. Luckily, the rains were late and the floor was not damaged



Within a week of the money arriving, work had begun on the new roof. Further donations will provide the windows and doors and furniture.

Your fantastic generosity and the proceeds of the St Cecilia's Day concert at the university enabled us to roof the school science block. The concert was such a great success that we are planning a follow-up in November. The photos show the building before and after the addition of the roof. Final work on fitting out the laboratories, plastering the walls and adding doors and windows can now be completed.

St Jude's Primary Academy, Mto Wa Mbu, Tanzania



A photo received from Fr Peter on the 7th March showing the walls competed up to the ring-beam lintel.



The architect's drawings of the proposed reception area and staff rooms at St Jude's. A two-storey building has been recommended to fill a narrow space between classrooms

SHOCC has been involved with St Jude's Infant and Primary Academy at since 2015 when scouts from Cleveland constructed the first two classrooms. Since then, we have funded another five classrooms and seen pupil numbers increase from around 70 to over 450. Results in the November 2022 Form 4 national examinations placed the school, third in the District.

Work began on the much-needed dining hall/community meeting hall in early February following Fr Peter, the project manager, receiving £7,500 from us. One month later on 7th March, the contractor had reached the lintel (see photo 2) and work was on hold until further funds were available. A week later we received the wonderful news that our funding bid to the Loyola Foundation in the US had been successful. They have awarded us \$19,120 (£15,625). This means that construction work on the dining hall can be completed.

We are now concentrating on our next project, a two-storey reception and staff room block. At an estimated £50,000, this will be our largest project to date. To help us reach this challenging target, you can donate via our St Jude's Just Giving site at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stjudes2022>

Christ the King Kindergarten and Primary School, Tombura, South Sudan



A class taking place in one of the new classrooms.

Several generous donations from a Simmarian alumnus have funded the construction of six classrooms at Christ the King School in South Sudan. Pupil numbers have increased steadily and now stand at 529 of whom 55% are girls.

SHOCC has recently linked with the Parish of Great Bookham and Effingham near Guildford in Surrey. They have agreed to provide £10,000 to furnish the classrooms and the furniture is currently being made in nearby Yambio. The Parish has also offered to fund the construction of a women's refuge. This will provide much

needed space for women who have suffered as a result of the civil war and recent inter-tribal violence. It is hoped to begin work on the refuge during 2023.

The Emmaus Project, Masaka, Uganda



SHOCC is working with Simmarian alumnus, Stephen Whelan, Director of the Emmaus project. This seeks to link schools in the Diocese of Clifton with 23 schools in Masaka District, Uganda.

A considerable amount of work has been completed to identify water needs in the Ugandan schools and to determine the best ways of meeting these needs.

Few of the 22 schools in the Emmaus Project have adequate water harvesting facilities. Here, a 10,000-litre plastic water tank is harvesting water for pupil use from the classroom roof. Access to the water is via pipes and taps at the base of the tank. The photo shows a pupil using the water.

The Winchester-based charity, WaterHarvest, started by St. Mary's past member of staff, Dr Mary Grey and her husband Nicholas, has agreed to provide funding. A pilot school, St Jude's Primary at Kayija, has been selected as it has no water facilities at all. It has to rely on an unreliable piped water supply or obtain water from a community pond about a kilometre from the school. As of mid-June, four 20,000 litre tanks have been constructed, tested and are in use in the school

Situation vacant - help needed: We would welcome the help of someone with experience of writing funding applications for not-for-profit organisations. The amount of time involved would not be too demanding and would suit someone retired. Offers of help should be directed to Dr Kevin Cook at cook.k3@sky.com

A final thought ... please remember us in your will: In 2015, Amy Hemmings, a past member of the St Mary's University geography staff, left 10% of her estate to SHOCC. As a result, we were able to renovate the science laboratories of a Kenyan girls' school and complete several other projects.

You can leave a legacy to SHOCC and state, in your will, that you would like it to be used for a particular project.

How to make a donation to SHOCC: Thank you for your continued support in making these incredible projects possible. You can make a contribution to our work via our Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/shocc2021>