



THE MESERANI PROJECT

EDUCATING AFRICA'S CHILDREN

Inspired by the pupils, staff and parents of
Acklam Grange School, Middlesbrough, England.

Registered charity number: 1135670

www.meseraniproject.co.uk

meserani@hotmail.co.uk

www.facebook.com/meseraniproject

Twitter @meseraniproject

Newsletter - March 2015

Welcome to our Spring 2015 Newsletter for all sponsors and supporters of The Meserani Project. Whilst the newsletter is primarily for those individuals, families, schoolchildren and organisations that sponsor our pupils, we hope that it will also be of value to other interested parties.

The big stories over the past few months have been the amazing national examination results of our Form Two and Form Four pupils, our potential link with Virgin Media and the International School of Moscow, and of course Diane's enforced solo visit to Meserani. The predominant issues since the previous newsletter are:

- 158 pupils are currently being sponsored through their education – 119 are at secondary school – nine are studying A' Levels at High School – nine are studying VETA courses at a Vocational Training Centre – eleven are due to start their A' Level courses this year, eight will be applying to Arusha Vocational Training Centre this year, one is at a teacher training college – one has just started as a trainee primary school teacher.
 - 26 new pupils started their first year at secondary boarding school.
- All 32 Form Two pupils passed their National Examinations, with 27 of them being awarded a Credit, Merit or Distinction.
 - There was an 88% pass rate for the Form Four pupils in their National Examinations, with 50% of them being awarded a Credit, Merit or Distinction.
- Two 5,000 litre water tanks were delivered to Lesiraa Primary School, and some furniture was provided for the staff room.
- All of our 137 pupils currently being sponsored to attend secondary school, college or high school were supplied with exercise books and pens for the next term.
 - Six students started their first year at Arusha Vocational Training Centre.
- Eight school leavers were interviewed by Diane about applying for a place at Arusha Vocational Training Centre.
- Eleven school leavers were interviewed by Diane about possible sponsorship through their A' Level studies.
 - Written testimonials were provided for six school leavers.
- Stockton branch of Soroptimists International donated £2,085 to the project.
 - James Wharton MP judged our 'Name the Goat & Sheep' competition.

Our new pupils

24 pupils started their secondary education on 14 January – 14 at Moita Boys' Boarding School and 12 at Kipok Girls' Boarding School. They were all interviewed by Diane, who also arranged for some of our Sixth Form students to give them an 'inspirational talk' about the importance of their education. Diane provided them with everything they needed to start the new school year (metal security box with padlocks, mattress, bedsheets, blanket, towel, mop, broom, buckets, mosquito net, P.E. kit, dictionary, mathematical set, pencil case, pens, pencils, exercise books, ream of file paper, school bag, plate, dish, mug, cutlery).

They were also measured for their school uniform, and fitted out with school shoes. Their school fees were paid directly into the school bank accounts. We wish all 24 pupils every success, and offer a massive thankyou to every one of their sponsors – you have had an amazing impact on their lives.



Our VI Formers
sorting out the Form
One equipment

Form Two National Examinations

The Tanzanian government published the 2014 examination results last month, and our 32 sponsored pupils exceeded all expectations, with a 100% pass rate, and some outstanding individual performances.

The results for our 8 girls at Einoti School:

Pass: 1
Credit: 3
Merit: 2
Distinction: 2

The results for our 8 girls at Kipok School:

Pass: 1
Credit: 2
Merit: 3
Distinction: 2

The results for our 15 boys at Moita School:

Pass: 3
Credit: 1
Merit: 6
Distinction: 5

Einoti girls



Kipok girls



Moita Boys



However, the results for our one boy at Ilboru School – Paulo Saingorie – simply could not have been better. He was given straight A grades for all nine subjects, and his overall mark was 100% Amazing!

Paulo trying on his new school blazer



Form Four National Examinations

The 24 pupils who finished their four years of secondary education last year sat their final examinations in November. The results were published by the government last month, and our pupils performed extremely well.

The results for our 13 boys at Moita School:

Fail: 2
Pass: 3
Credit: 4
Merit: 4
Distinction: 1

Lomnyaki Saitabau - Distinction - seen here with John Bate last August

The results for our 11 girls at Kipok School:

Fail: 1
Pass: 7
Credit: 3

Those pupils who gained Merits and Distinctions are likely to be given a place at High School by the government, to study A' Levels – we will know this in May/June.

Those pupils who gained a Pass or Credit are likely to be given a place at College by the government, to study A' Levels – we will know this in May/June.

It is our intention to find sponsors for all pupils who are not allocated a place at High School or College, so that they can start courses at Arusha Vocational Training Centre.



Lesiraa Primary School

Two 5,000 gallon water tanks were delivered to Lesiraa School, as part of our development of staff facilities. The first of a number of desks and chairs were also bought for the staff room. (Lesiraa School's examination results for 2013 & 2014 have been excellent, despite appalling working conditions for the staff.)



Books & pens for all our pupils and students

All pupils and students currently being sponsored at secondary school, college or high school were given a set of exercise books and pens for the new academic term in January.



Nigivuyoni

Agness



Helen

Lucas



Lelo

Lomayani



Six more students start vocational training courses

Six of the students who had been sponsored through their secondary education were successful in their application for a place at Arusha Vocational Training Centre. They started their first year of a residential course on 12 January.

School Leavers

We have 25 pupils who completed their secondary education in December last year, and were sponsored throughout their four years at secondary school by a variety of sponsors. We have sponsors for 19 of them to go on to further education, 11 are expected to progress to A' Level studies, and 8 will hopefully get a place at Arusha Vocational Training Centre. In January one of the project trustees (Diane Swan), met with the 19 pupils to inform them that we had sponsors for them, and she discussed the details regarding their applications. They will all be met again in June, after the government has allocated them places, and we will ensure that they have everything they need to begin their further education courses. The 6 pupils who have completed their secondary education, and for who we do not have a sponsor to proceed to further education, were all interviewed by Diane, who offered them ongoing support for whenever it was needed, and she also provided them with formal written testimonials from the chairman of The Meserani Project, to use when applying for employment.



Stockton Branch of Soroptimists International



On 26 February we gave a presentation in the conference centre at Stockton Library to the Stockton branch of Soroptimists International. The Stockton branch have chosen The Meserani Project as their primary charity this

year, and they presented us with £2,085 on the night, from a number of events they had organised. The update on the work of The Meserani Project was given by the project chairman, with

contributions from two former Acklam Grange School pupils, Chloe Winter and Stephanie Gibson, both of whom sponsor pupils at Meserani.



James Wharton MP

In December our two project Ambassadors, James Small and Joe Millar, organised a competition to name the goat and the sheep that had been donated to The Meserani Project by the village elders at Meserani Chini Primary School. James Wharton MP kindly offered to judge the competition, and the two winners were Mark Womack and Nicola James.



Nicola James



Mark Womack



Masego



Amani

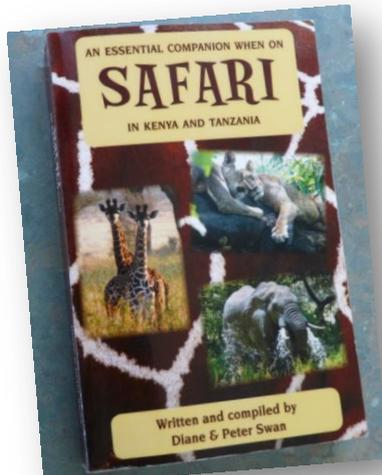


An ideal Mother's Day present!

The safari and wildlife guide recently published by The Meserani Project has now been published as an e-book, and can be bought through *Amazon*, *iTunes* or *Kobo*. It continues to receive five-star ratings on the *Amazon* U.K. website, and we are now receiving enquiries from customers in the U.S.A.

Four book retailers in Tanzania are now selling the book, and all four sell out of

copies as fast as we can supply them. If you have already bought a copy, please submit a review on the *Amazon* U.K. website – if you haven't bought a copy yet, the best way is through the York Publishing website: www.ypdbooks.com - or directly from us (saving you postage, and with a 25% discount!).



Front cover



Back cover

Other news items

- ▶ The 'Adults Trip' to Kenya and Tanzania in 2016 looks likely to go ahead, following the success of last year's trip. There is a meeting on 11 March for anyone who is interested – let us know if you want to come to the meeting.
- ▶ If anyone is thinking of visiting Kenya or Tanzania themselves, either on a budget camping trip or a luxury safari lodge tour, and you would like some advice/guidance/help, then do not hesitate to let us know.
- ▶ Lembris Loisulie and Charles Roberts are in their final year of A' Level studies – they sit their final examinations in a couple of months, and we wish them every success.
- ▶ In April/May this year the Tanzanian government will be informing some of our school leavers whether or not they have been allocated places at High School to study A' Levels, starting in July – we have our fingers crossed!
- ▶ On 5 February two project trustees visited the Birmingham headquarters of Virgin Media, to discuss the possibility of their top U.K. apprentices spending two weeks at Meserani in June this year, working for the project – watch this space for more news!

What next?

- ▶ We are back in Meserani in June to prepare our new A' Level studies students, who will be starting their studies in July.
- ▶ A group of pupils from the International School of Moscow are spending two days at Meserani in June this year, and will be meeting the two boys that they sponsor, as well as providing a laptop and projector for Kipok School.
- ▶ On Friday 3 July there is a Race Night at Acklam Grange School, to raise funds for The Meserani Project – please let us know if you can come along.
- ▶ On the weekend of 4/5 July we have our second *Kili Topping Challenge* – this will be an amazing event, and we would like as many people as possible to take part. Details are on the website.
- ▶ On 10 July a group of 22 former Acklam Grange School pupils and three leaders are setting off for a three-week expedition to Kenya and Tanzania. Most of their time will be spent at Meserani working on the project.
- ▶ The staff room at Lesiraa Primary School is urgently in need of basic furniture – they do not even have desks for the teachers, or cupboards for storage. Lesiraa School's recent national examination results for Standard VII were excellent again this year – amongst the best in the area – and providing basic furniture for the staff room will only serve to motivate the teachers even further.
- ▶ Engutoto School has become an all-boys school, so our five girls have been transferred to Irkisongo Girls Boarding School.
- ▶ On 10 April we are receiving another consignment of medical supplies from a charity in Edinburgh. These will be taken to Meserani in July with the Acklam Grange School Trip, and given to the clinic at Meserani.
- ▶ We need to have further meetings with council members and village elders from Meserani to discuss the issue of the prevention of forced marriages, and the value of education for girls.
- ▶ Next year may well see our first student being sponsored through university, so a lot of research is currently being undertaken in this area.
- ▶ Wherever funds become available, we need to provide more basic text books for Moita School and Kipok School.
- ▶ Dates for your diaries: (details are on the website www.meseraniproject.co.uk)
- ◆ Thursday 19 March – As part of the BBC News Day, the project chairman is spending the day at Acklam Grange School producing a news report on the work of the project.
- ◆ Sunday 28 June – Afternoon Tea Party in Yarm – always extremely popular.
- ◆ Friday 3 July – Our annual Race Night at Acklam Grange School – last year was a sell-out.
- ◆ Saturday & Sunday 4/5 July – the second Kili Topping Challenge – great fun for everyone.

Can you help?

- ▶ **White shirts** (long and short-sleeved, new and second-hand – particularly medium and large sizes), **P.E. shorts**, **tracksuit bottoms** and **ankle socks** are desperately needed as part of the pupils' school uniform.
- ▶ Our A' Level and vocational training centre students urgently need **training shoes**. If you have any unwanted training shoes, in reasonable condition, please let us know.

- ▶ Now that we have students at High School, we urgently need **plain black jackets or blazers** - second-hand would be fine.
- ▶ If you have any **unwanted mobile telephones** (unlocked), with chargers, then we can certainly find a use for them at Meserani.
- ▶ If you have any **unwanted sunglasses** with UV filter lenses, we urgently need these for an increasing number of Meserani residents who are having eyesight problems due to the intense sunlight.
- ▶ If you happen to have an unwanted **overhead projector**, (to project laptop presentations onto a screen or classroom wall), we urgently need these for the Meserani Education Centre, and all of the secondary schools that we support.
- ▶ Like all charities, we are struggling to raise funds in the current economical climate, but this simply means that we have to work even harder to do what we can for those who rely on our support in Tanzania. If any of you feel that you would like to help in any way, there are a number of options:
 - * You could host an African Jewellery & Handicrafts Sale, (we will provide everything for you – we have a large stock of traditional African Jewellery & Handicrafts that we have bought from markets in Tanzania and Kenya).
 - * You could organise a fundraising event yourself, of your own choice.
 - * You may wish to fund a water tank for one of our schools, (all schools are in remote, desolate locations, and currently some pupils have to walk many miles each day to collect water, thereby taking time out of their studies). The cost of each water tank is £347 and we would make sure that the water tank had your name on it – a lasting and meaningful legacy for you!
 - * You may wish to fund a whiteboard for one of our schools. The cost of each whiteboard is £70 for the largest size available.
 - * You may wish to sponsor a pupil through their secondary or further education, or you may know someone who would be interested in doing this.
 - * You may have links or access to commercial organisations who may wish to support our charity. Kipok Boarding School is in desperate need of new classrooms and dormitories, and a commercial organisation may wish to fund a building project.
 - * We have a number of volunteers who we affectionately call our 'Meserani Helpers'. These are not only friends and acquaintances of ours, but many of them are simply people who have heard of the project, and like to help out from time to time. If you would like us to add your name to the mailing list, there will be no obligation at all to do anything – all that happens is that we e-mail you when something is coming up, and if you can help, then that's great, and if you can't – no problem!

Please remember that The Meserani Project does not take expenses out of any money that is raised or donated. All people that work for the project do so entirely at their own expense, and every penny goes directly to the young people whose lives we are changing.

Thank you as always to our sponsors and fundraisers for your continued support – the project would not survive without you, and you are making a real difference to someone's life.

Diane & Peter Swan