

# Newsletter

*Harambee  
For Kenya*



*No 36 June & Aug '14*

*Firstly let me apologise for not managing to get a newsletter out to you for June. We have been so busy that when I overran, I thought it best to wait and send you two in one. We have had quite a lot of news from Kenya that we can share in this issue which is both encouraging and exciting for us. We hope it is for you too.*

*But first here is a message from the Chairman.*

*In the last few weeks we held our AGM. There has been much to be thankful for over the last year, mainly the opening of "Hope Safe House" in Meru, the buying of the land for coffee or bananas and the encouraging news of the boys in Kisii doing so well at school. The purchase of the land has taken a lot of our resources but in the long term should yield a good return. Also the price of land in Kenya is accelerating at a fast pace so the land where the safe house is has almost doubled in value. So the investment was worth while.*

*As we look to build on these successes our major concern is to finance them. Now with the running of two safe houses and the expenditure of boys going to secondary school, for which we have to pay school fees of approximately £550 per year for each boy, if we cannot finance this they will not be able to continue their education.*

*We are thankful for all the support that is given and as you know we do not ask directly for money and do not pressurise anyone to give more especially in these economically difficult times. But we are having to look for ways we can increase our income. May I share some of our thoughts with you.*

- Perhaps more people could sponsor £3 per month which collectively could help cover the cost of school for one of our boys.*
- We have set up an Ebay shop which we can sell any of you unwanted items you would care to donate.*
- We also plan to sell soapstone and other gifts on Amazon but we need someone to help co-ordinate this. Looking on this site the cost of soapstone is expensive and we would be able to do well with our goods.*
- Swimathon... over the last three years we have held a Swimathon which has raised a good amount of money, but we realise this is not for everyone. We are planning another in October time so perhaps those people who cannot come or do not like swimming could do something else. Perhaps between the end of September and December it would be a great chance for Scout groups or schools or just a group of friends to do something different.*
- Other ideas that people have done are, to hold a Kenya evening and do a meal for a group of friends who pay to attend. Others have held coffee mornings with Kenyan crafts to sell too. We can supply you with information and videos for this as well as the craft items. If you like doing boot fairs we have a loft full of things to sell that you can have. Can you do a craft fair where you can sell our Kenyan gifts and artefacts? Perhaps you can organise a race evening...we can assist you with this too. Finally, you may wish to hold a raffle...we have very large soapstone animals that can be supplied to you to raffle off. A number of people have done really well with this, taking a couple of months to sell the tickets and do the draw on a special evening event.*

*Continued.....*

*Trustees:- Roger Dann (Chairman), Lesley Dann, Patricia Musgrave, Jackie Cooper, Mike Wilding, Ben Vince. 21 Cuckmere Rise, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8PG 01435 865502  
[www.harambeeforkenya.org](http://www.harambeeforkenya.org) Charity Reg. No. 1121597*

*Message from the Chairman continued.....*

*To encourage you on how, because of your support, we and the Kenyan Trustees are being encouraged.*

- *The Governor of Kisii District has recognised the NGO part of the charity as being the main charity in the area to care about the street boys, which is something close to his heart. He has donated beds, bedding and food to the project and he says he wants to work closely with us.*
- *Tom, in Meru, following the opening of Hope Safe House, was asked to do a presentation at a conference for NGO's in Nairobi. President Kenyatta was there and as a result of all the displays and presentations public told the authorities to give the NGO's a chance to do what they do best without interference. From this Tom was asked to be a member of the board looking after NGO's in the Meru area.*
- *John, the Chairman of the NGO has been amazed and encouraged at the way the boys in the Meru project have behaved and how well they are doing in school.*

*I would like to thank you all for your support as without you, there would be no Harambee For Kenya. But most of all a big thank you from the boys in Kenya who are always saying "please thank the sponsors, without them we would not be alive or at school". Please remember you are helping to change peoples lives and other peoples views of these children. Long may this continue.*

*Roger Dann.*



*One of the hardest things that we have to do is to find sponsors for the 5 lads who are taking their end of primary exams in October. We are finding it difficult this year. The school year in Kenya runs from January to December so we have to really start searching now. What happens is that once the boys have taken their exams, the local government dictate which secondary school they should go to. If they pass with 350 or more out of 500 marks, they would be sent to a prestigious school. Roger gave you the figures and we appreciate that many people cannot afford this, but we could achieve this if a number of people would consider a small amount per month to help. As the saying goes, "many hands make light work" or in this case "gives the boys a chance". So if you can even consider £2, £3 or even £5 per month this would mean so much to the lads. Or join together as a group of friends, scout group or District/County or family members and support one child.*

*Here is a message from one sponsor, Ellen, on what she and her friends did....."Our Journey began in April 2011 when we travelled to Kenya. During our two weeks there, we spent just over a week at the Harambee Safe House enjoying our time with the boys. However there was one boy that Jenny, Faye, Beth and I all got to know very well. He was such an amazing young man and was particularly interested in the history of England's Monarchy, along with our previous and existing Prime Ministers/Presidents. We later then went on to find out that he would like to be the President of Kenya.*

*When it came close to our leaving date, Hudson spoke to us of a school that he would really like to go to. We (Jenny, Faye, Beth and myself) all wanted to help him but didn't know how. We spoke to Lesley and Jackie to see if there was anything we could do. They told us that we could sponsor him to go to school. We all agreed that we would look into it further when we got home. A few days after we arrived home, we received an email stating the schools tuition costs; it cost £25 a month. Now at the time we were all students so had no/limited income; however we were determined to help Hudson so we decided that we would spilt the monthly cost between us. Since then we have paid £6.25 a month each to help someone achieve his dream of going to this school.*

*I know that I can speak for the other girls by saying that it is the best £6.25 we spend a month".*

*So contact us if you would like to help.*

*So what happens if our boys do not do well at school?*

*If they do not do as well then we will look to send them to the local polytechnic to learn a skill. We have had a really good result with Brian Mombo doing this. He is a bright lad who went to a secondary school but really did not enjoy a formal education. So he chose to do a tailoring course at the polytechnic. The work he is doing is phenomenal and the first garment he made while doing work experience was so good it was sold to a lady for 1200 Kenyan Shillings (about £10). This to many Kenyans was quite an expensive garment and the finish was brilliant. This lad has changed dramatically having been given a chance and is now much more responsible and mature and is already planning what he wants to do once he has finished the course. Without sponsorship, he probably would have, at worst, just taken himself back to the streets or at best, found a menial job and lived in the slum.*



*The trustees would like to thank you all for your continued support and interest in the projects. We are constantly looking for new ways to raise money to sustain them. We have just started to sell items on ebay and will have an ebay shop running very soon. If you have anything that we can sell to raise funds please contact us as we can do this remotely. Equally, if you would like to do a boot fair to help us raise funds, we would greatly appreciate this. We can give you pictures and paperwork about the charity to have on the stall if you wish. Two friends of the charity, Dave & Shirley, regularly do boot fairs. We had the pleasure of being with them the other week when they raised over £200. It was really encouraging to us. In fact two people had knocked them down for something and came back later to pay the difference when they realised it was for a charity. This really blessed us and it was evident that Dave & Shirley had a good rapport with the stall holders and customers. So if you feel you can do the same or similar, please contact us.*



*He also makes lead fishing weights to sell on the stall. As the boot fair is near the sea, and these are sea fishing weights holiday makers like to buy them on occasion.*

*So contact us if you need anything to sell at a boot fair while they are still going or ready for next year. We have a lot of things which can be sold to raise funds.*



*Dave buys cheap guitars from other stall holders and then sits and mends the strings if that is all is needed and then sits and plays them while customers look at the stall. He sold all three doing this....brilliant!*

*They also check the items for marks of authenticity etc .*



# Project News Nyakoe

Well there have been some exciting things happening over the last few weeks but that has brought a few difficulties with it too. But this is not negative, merely bringing us new challenges. Let us explain.

In Kenya there are local government "Governors" who have been voted to stand in the District they serve.

As we reported before, the Governor had sent food as a Christmas present to our project in Kisii. Well more recently he has recognised Harambee For Kenya as being the "major institution that deals with street boys and so his government is going to assist us to rehabilitate these children" He encouraged us to take more children! This would be difficult. But he sent mattresses, blankets, three bunk beds and promised more. The Governor, we are told, is personally concerned with the street children and those that are disadvantaged.

Well this was seen to be positive and then without warning he arranged for each of the "institutions" (we don't see our house as an institution but a HOME for our family of boys) to receive 6 boys. They were sent without notice and although he sent the beds previously, where they should be put had not been ascertained as the bedrooms were already full! Shortly after this we had another 8 boys arrive of their own free will, asking if they could stay because the government officers were shooing the boys away sending some back to families. We have seen this happen in Meru and even Nairobi where the boys are moved on, out of the town! But unfortunately they only move the problem elsewhere.

Roger and Lesley are planning to meet the governor in October when they visit to discuss the idea of a drop in centre which is what we wanted him to help with. This would enable the authorities to work with us to try and find the boys families and liaise with them to help prevent the same issues re-occurring which cause them to run away. This "ethnic cleansing" type of approach does not help the situation in the long term. Watch this space!

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The boys at Nyakoe enjoyed receiving two groups of visitors within a week of each other. Our thanks go to Greater London South East Explorers and Leaders who stopped off at the project while going to and returning from a Scouting project in Siaya. They spent time with the boys, playing football, making music and musical instruments. The lads really enjoyed their company and were thrilled at being able to do some scouting with them.

We thank you for your support and hope that you will visit again in the future

## *Nyakoe Continued.....*

Then leaders from 23<sup>rd</sup> Bromley arrived to be with the boys for about a week. Most of them had been before and the boys were thrilled when they knew they were visiting again.

Gary sent a message via our Harambee for Kenya Facebook page.

*Hello H4K! we are on our last night in Nyakoe and would like to thank everyone UK and Kenya side for making the trip so wonderful. The welcome we received was fantastic as ever by the boys and Andrew has been incredible in making our stay memorable!*

*This trip, as with every other trip, has been filled with both heart ache and heart warming moments. To see the boys succeed against all odds should be used as inspiration by anyone who meets them.*

*Sad to be leaving but will be back again soon!*

Thank you guys for your continued support.  
You are always welcome to visit!



### **Other News**

*We went to Lewisham in July to do soapstone staining and have a stall at a Cub event. On this occasion Bear Grylls (Chief Scout) visited and we presented him with a BP plate. He thought it was amazing and we told him about Denilson and how he had not realised 5yrs ago that he could even draw. We also presented him with a woggle Denilson had carved.*

*Then a couple of weeks later our friend Bill told us that Bear had visited North London and he could clearly be seen to be wearing the woggle.*

*Then at the start of September we went to Gilwell for our normal visit, which is our major fundraiser and Bear was there too.*

*He was being pushed rather quickly from place to place but he was still wearing the woggle.*



*Lesley managed to speak with him briefly just to thank him for wearing the woggle. She told him that Denilson had been proud that he was wearing it. He smiled and said "It is an honour!"*



### **Our Thanks go to the following for their Support.**

The Welcome Baptist Church.  
Dave & Shirley Prout.  
Blackboys C.E. Primary School.  
Amer Albezaz.  
Alan Owens and family.  
Great London South East Scouts  
23<sup>rd</sup> Bromley Scout Leaders  
Arnold Maughan  
Frank from Horam                      Peter Gilks  
Lynne Owen                                David Cooper  
Jenny Manktelow

And all our regular supporters

# Meru

Well Meru has really moved on in the last couple of months. It has been amazing!

Firstly we now have about 20 street boys are not only living in the house, but going to school too and doing really well.

John and Tom had a lot of difficulty finding a school who would take the children because they had had a bad experience of street boys when the government had opened the doors to free primary schooling some years earlier. Only one school listened to reason, which was a Catholic School, to whom we are grateful. But our boys have shown them how well they can do and the school is very pleased with them. We hope the message gets to the other schools about the opportunity they missed and the kudos they could have had from helping these lads.

The banana plantation is doing well and in about a month the bananas will be harvested. We are quite excited about this and hope that the market is good. This year the money should pay back most of the initial outlay but now the plants are established we should have very little to outlay in the future so the money will go well to helping to subsidise the food bill.

We have had some good news that Robin, who we featured last month has been reunited with his family and things seem to be going well at the moment. You may remember from the last newsletter that he had said his mother had threatened him with a knife.....Tom and John would have checked this out with the mother and if they thought what he said had been totally true they would not have allowed him to stay. (Often the children exaggerate because they think we will not accept them. This is why we have to check their stories)It is always our intension to reunited those we can with their families but it is not always suitable to do this. Each case is taken on it's own merits but the best place for any child is their family, as long as there is a stable, loving relationship. We will monitor the situation with the boys we return but as with Robert and other boys in Nyakoe, they will always return to the safe house if they are unhappy in any way. It is nice to think that the boys trust us (H4K) when they are struggling.

Tom is just starting up a food-shack in the town in order to help raise funds to put towards looking after the children. Tom has a fairly good business head and we are encouraged in the way he has seen the potential, costed it out and is moving forward with it. We are looking forward to see it working when we are in Kenya. This could be a good opportunity for our boys to be a part of as they get older and help them to understand about finance among other things. Unless children in any country, are taught they have little chance of understanding, but it is more evident with our boys the need they have in understanding budgeting.

We have quite high expectations of the new boys in Meru as they are so willing to learn and are very comfortable in their new environment. When on the streets they have seen so much violence and discrimination - much more we feel than the boys from Kisii have experienced as a whole. They are really enjoying the advantages they already have in where they live and being fed regularly. To most of them being able to go to school is the icing on the cake.





*The Kenyans have had to make a change to the cooking arrangements in the safe house. When they cooked the fire was so smokey, it was staining the walls in the dining room!!! More painting to do I think!!!*

*It is probably not too much of a surprise because the size of the Jiko (cooker) is so enormous and the wood is often green, the*

*combination of the two would not have helped. There was really good ventilation, but sometimes it is not enough. We are so grateful for the equipment bought us - don't for one minute think we are moaning - it is just that the jiko is about 2ft in diameter which would be used in a room much bigger than ours (like a school canteen). So they simply erected a kitchen area outside. That is OK because now we can turn the old area into storage perhaps....we always need storage! We will have a good look when we are out there and see what should be done to make the space effective. BUT I feel a bit of washing walls down and painting will be done when we are out there.*



*Meet Beckham. Yes that is his "Christian" name and he has never heard of David Beckham! He is nearly 9 yrs old and has two younger siblings of 5 and 3yrs who live with his grandmother. He lived there with his mum who stole all the home brew that was made and money from Gran so she threw her out. Grandmother for some reason told Beckham that she would do Kenjai on him (cut off his head!) So he ran away.*

*He was on the street for about 5 months, begging for food and sleeping in boxes or sacks in the market. He did smoke and was given glue and Khat by a bigger boy. He would like to join the Kenyan Army.*

*Some of you will have heard that Beckham had a lump on his head which looked quite sinister. Well you will be pleased to know he was taken to Hospital and it was sorted out. We have not been told what it was but he is OK now and back to his same old self.*



*Nicholas is quite an inspiration (as are many of our boys). He is 14yrs old, has two younger brothers who live with an aunt and an older sister who stays with a priest at a local church. His parents divorced and father remarried. Mum left the area. His stepmother didn't want him and made him lift as much as 100 litres of water from the river, collect firewood, dig the shamba (their land) and did not always feed him, often giving him leftovers while her own children ate well.*

*He ran to town where he hired a barrow for 70/- (50p) a day so that he could transport peoples goods bought in the market. He made on average 400/- per day (between two of them) From his 200/- he paid half the rental, and 100/- to sleep in a house and buy food to eat. What remained he used to play computer games in the cyber cafe. If he didn't make enough money he would sleep on the verandahs of the shops. He lived like this for three years.*

*He was last in school in year 6 and was in position 3 at that time. When asked what he thought about living at Hope House he was pleased saying "We don't pay for food, shelter or clothes and I will even go to school. The food is very nice and tasty and sweet compared to the street".*

***It never ceases to amaze us how grateful the boys are for such things that our own children take for granted. Our boys joy in what they have and what they are doing is a good reason to continue, however hard it is to raise the funds to keep the projects going. Their happiness is our reward.***

# Gallery

