



## LISA.KENT.MEMORIAL.NURSERY SCHOOL

Registered  
Charity  
No:  
1111569

Issue 5

### Latest Update

Great News! We are now a registered charity. Following on from a lot of work by the Trustees, the charity commission granted The Lisa Kent Memorial Trust charity status on October 2005. Not only does this give the Trust integrity to all who are associated with it, but also enables the trust to reclaim tax from your invaluable donations and sponsorship.

Enclosed is a Deed of Covenant form for any tax payer who wishes to increase their gift by allowing The Lisa Kent Memorial Trust to claim the tax on your gift. Every £100 becomes £128.21.

The teacher training programme is now well underway with Pa Camara, the Headmaster organizing a 3 year training course at the Gambian College of Education. All the teachers were able to participate in the year 1 training during the school summer holidays, after they passed a challenging introductory examination. Although the teachers already have a very good basic



knowledge, it is crucial for the school to ensure their skills are developed and kept inline with improving teaching techniques and syllabus in the Gambia. The Headmaster will shortly be giving up his paid employment (he currently has no income from the school due to insufficient funds) to attend a series of administration courses to enable him to be able to carry out the day to day running of the school on a professional basis. It is hoped that the trust will be in a position to pay him a monthly salary.

The Trust was able to fund the initial year's training thanks to the generous support of Ely Inner Wheel.

We were disappointed to lose the previous headteacher, Yamoundow Jarju, who had been with the school since the outset. Due to ongoing family commitments and health problems she has resigned and I am sure you would join us in congratulating Marian Jarju, our Christian teacher in her new promotion as the new head teacher. We would also like to welcome Ramtou Bangura to the school, who will be in charge of class 2. She has a trainee teacher in support to ensure ongoing forward planning.

#### SCHOOL BUILDING

Since our last visit the 'playground' areas have been covered with a mosaic screed. The Headmaster's office is now completed with glass windows and shutters, ensuring for the first time an administration office, previously using his one and only family room.

The area designated for the library has temporarily been leased out as a village store to generate some income for the school. These are currently being



collected and stored both in The Gambia and the UK, until such a time as there are sufficient available to open the library.

#### ISSUES

Transportation of gifts, books, educational aids and equipment from the UK to The Gambia is exceptionally expensive. We have been quoted £3,000 for a container.

We continue to investigate a number of opportunities, which include using space in a container which is sent every 6 months from Germany.

The Trustees would welcome any input as to how this issue can be resolved on our limited resources.

#### ELECTRICITY

We are currently awaiting for the power to be connected. There is only one other compound connected to the mains and so anyone who decides to be connected to the power supply has to pay a fee to the previous person who has been connected.

## TOMORROW IS OUR CONCERN - written by Robert Edgar Walker

The trip to the school came midway through our holiday, giving us a chance to get a bit of colour and acclimatize ourselves to "the Gambian way of life".

I didn't really know what to expect, although seeing all those programmes on television, had, I guess, in some ways, tarnished reality.

We left mid morning for what was probably a 20 minute walk and already at that time of the day the heat was swelteringly hot. Once we were off the main thoroughfare, we had to negotiate numerous interlinked roads. These were little more than dirt tracks and as the name suggests, they were very dirty, dry and uneven in most parts. These were also, quite often, the locals dumping ground for domestic rubbish and as you can expect, the smells in the heat were somewhat overpowering. As we got further in, the standards of housing and living seemed to deteriorate quite dramatically although there were glimmers of new development, as more and more 'outside' monies appear.

We passed the old school on our way, which was nothing more than a hut the size of a portakabin,. I was told this would have probably housed 150 children!

The new school, just down the road, didn't look much like a school, until you see



the ornate wrought iron gates 'The Lisa Kent Memorial School'. These lead you into a purpose built block, with the headmasters living accommodation on the right, a shop unit and headmasters room on the left and at the end, three identical, self sufficient classrooms, nurseries 1,2 and 3.

As we passed the headmasters office, the words 'We believe the best interest of the child should be a priority' were emblazoned in white italics on the stonework. We were greeted by him, and his headteacher, Marian Jarju, and given a tour of the classrooms. In each, ranging in age, we were greeted by a cocophony of noise and excitement, and in each, welcomed perfectly respectfully and given a rendition of the alphabet and the days of the week, which were both executed in perfect English. In the last classroom, I counted 39 children all aged 3. Apparently not everybody was back in school, being the first day back. Even with numbers this high of a total of 154, each classroom showed controlled discipline and a keenness to show off their newly learned skills. Apparently the building work has moved forward greatly in little more than 12 months and although I have no comparisons from last year, marvel at the standard of work.

You can admire the ingenuity of the polished, mosaic flooring, the man made water system and shower rooms, all completed on both limited budget and overall resources.



The one thing however, that really stands out in my memory about the school itself are the children themselves. Their tireless energy and enthusiasm. I was overwhelmed by their generosity of spirit and gushing emotion. Those big smiles and piercing eyes remain with me. These were eyes of inquisitiveness and perhaps fear. But they were also eyes of hope. Now this may be a strong word hope, but the Oxford Dictionary say that "It is a feeling of trust, expectation and desire". You see we owe our continued support to these children and many more like them if nothing else, as their tomorrow should be our concern.

#### FEAST OF THE SACRIFICE.

Tobaski is the equivalent of the Christian Christmas. The precise date varies each year by about 11 days, their dates dependent on official sightings of the moon. This festival usually coincides with the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, when Muslims slaughter a sheep.



This is a very special celebration when all the family get together in their best clothes, few families can afford a goat to slaughter. Schools & business close for the two day celebration.

#### ***BUSINESS BEFORE PLEASURE***

Thank you for everyone for their support. Without this the Trust would not be able to operate.

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