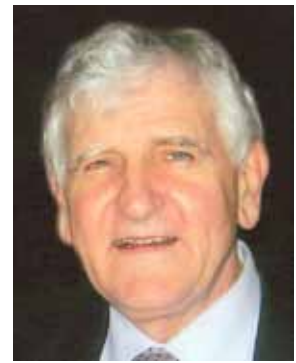




PDG Tony Castley District 9680 Newsletter



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Uganda September 23 /27 2011

We were met at the Entebbe airport by Rotarian Ronald Kizitto from the Rotary club of Mengo in Kampala. We then travelled to the Sheraton Hotel in Kampala (about 1 hour) where we met up with Rotarian Martin Kasasina who immediately arranged for us to be up-graded from a regular room to a beautiful suite which we really enjoyed. Martin is a keen Rugby fan, he was once the captain of Uganda.

Almost immediately after we checked in Dave Everett from the UFF foundation came by and we all joined him in a trip out to his Katuuso School in his aging 4WD which was about 90 minutes out of Kampala along mostly shocking roads.

Katuuso UFF school

Dave and his partner in Sydney Annabelle Chauncey are co-founders of a school which reminded us of the start of the School of St Judes in Tanzania many years ago. St Judes is now 10 years old and now has 1,500 students. Dave's and Annabelle's school is funded primarily through their United Foundation Fund for which we hear Annabelle is a prolific fund-raiser. Only getting started in January this year, they already have a building with 2 classrooms with approximately 40 Kindergarten children in one room and about 40 grade one children in the other. The classrooms have lots of colourful posters and children's work on the walls and the colourful painted desks made the classrooms very friendly and so different from the drab grey bare classrooms we normally see in Third World countries. The children were very neat in their uniforms and they sat at their desks very quietly following the teachers instructions. All these children were previously not attending school. We inspected the start of a new classroom building which will eventually be grade 2 and 3. This new building is being funded by Sue O'Neil's Pink Umbrella Foundation.

We also inspected their rather interesting brick-making process as well as their water bore which is 100 mtrs down the hill.

Dave explained his plan for the land down in front of the school which they own. He plans to clear it and then plant it with trees and crops to produce food for the school plus some additional income. It is a very good plan from what we could see and should make an ideal matching grant project at sometime in the future.

In the meantime putting electricity into the school (possibly having to come from 10 kms away) and



Kids at lunch, playing in the undercover area



Kids learning in their class room



New classroom building for grade 2 and 3

pumping the water up from the bore seemed to be the first priority. Over the next few days the Mengo Rotary club in Kampala agreed to make this a matching grant and the Ku-ring-ai club in Sydney will support this matching grant.

They are also working on a vocational project for the local women and I suspect I will be involved with the supply of sewing machines and such like at sometime in the future for his project. Visit www.UFF.org.au for more information on this school and how you could sponsor a child.



Ronald Kizitto, Dave Everett, Sandra and Tony Castley

Rotarians businesses

The next day we visited Ronald's furniture factory which really had to be seen to be appreciated. With bush saws and nails, and old treadle sewing machines, they actually produce remarkably good lounge suites. Ronald and Martins also run a small promotions business, and we visited their office in the afternoon. In both case I have plans to substantially assist them with these fledgeling businesses which appear to be struggling as a result of difficult economic times in Uganda. On Sunday Ronald and Martin and their families took us out to Jinji a holiday place renowned as the source of the Nile, where we again met up with Dave and enjoyed a lovely lunch and after a country resort. However on the 2 hour drive both ways we saw so much of the poverty with whole towns of families living in small lean-to or shed made of a few planks of wood or whatever they could find.

On the Monday I was the guest speaker at the Mengo club and members came from other clubs to hear me. There were four PDGs there. Dave Everett also came along and the Matching Grant for his UFF school was approved. We also had the Mengo club sign a RAWCS contract for Sue O 'Neil's project with Alive Medical Centre. We visited this medical centre in the afternoon where they look after 8,000 Aides patients. This medical centre funded mainly by Alicia Keys the American singer, is also a RAWCS project of Sue's and Kenthurst Rotary club. Amazing stuff!

Uganda and Rotary

Uganda is a very poor country where something like 30% of their 34 million people are just subsistence farmers. However Rotary is very strong here with an amazing 63 Rotary clubs plus 55 Rotaract clubs, 125 Interact clubs and 96 RCCs. This and the fact that English is the main language makes Uganda an ideal country for matching grants. Personally I believe this is not only a country that needs a lot of help but also one where Rotary is well position to be make a difference.

Mauritius

Between project work in Uganda and Madagascar we spent 5 very enjoyable days in Mauritius, which was a big surprise. This small island country in the South West Indian ocean is a great holiday destination. Very modern resorts all on beautiful beaches protected by a reef which encircles the whole island. Lots to do, we swam with dolphins, walked with lions and tigers and the ladies enjoyed shopping at factory outlets for Amani Guess, Lacoste clothing which is actually produced in Mauritius. Great place to spend a few days R & R.



The Lemeurs, a must see in Madagascar!

Reunion

We spent a couple of days in Reunion Island both before and after Madagascar. Reunion is a French owned territory and it is very French. French speaking, Euro currency and everything French. St Denis the capital is very modern and easy to get around. It is expensive, we stayed at a very nice Mercure hotel, bur rates were higher than comparable Mercure Hotels in Australia.

We flew home to Australia on Air Austral a French airline that flies Paris-Reunion-Sydney-New Caledonia, again very French, nothing in English.

Madagascar

We flew into Antananarivo (called Tanna) which is the capital situated in Northern Central area. It is a big Island being the Worlds 4th largest island after Greenland, New Guinea and Borneo. From top to bottom it is 1,600 kms which is about the length of Queensland. There are 20 million inhabitants with about 2 million in Tanna and French or Malagasy are the main languages. It is a very poor country and in Tanna the streets are crowded with people just filling in time. The kids were all bare footed and in shabby clothes and often asked us for money with very sad faces. There are market stalls everywhere, including butchers stalls with the meat hanging up beside the busy roads. Every so often there is a community tap with people lined up filling their yellow plastic jerry cans with water.

We arrived a couple of days earlier than the others and so we went out to Andasibe National Park (3 hours by road East of Tanna) for couple of days to see the Lemurs. This is a must if visiting Madagascar. The Lemurs are terrific and the trail walking was fantastic.

Later we met up with Peter Pearce (Shelterbox and RC Gosford North), his daughter Katie and Bob Nelson from RC of Taree North.

We spent another two days in Tanna together, Pete and his team organizing their adventure trip to the very South of Madagascar, while I visited potential projects in Tanna with local Rotarians.

Projects In Madagascar

The need in this country is so great it is hard to know where to start. Peter was here with Shelterbox earlier this year and he vowed he would, return to help the people. Along with Gosford North Rotary Club and lots of friends, Peter is planning to send a huge amount of products in a 40' container early next year. On this trip his team were travelling 1,500 kms to the very South of the island to prepare for this container arriving in early 2012. There is a list of the container goods further down in this report. Peter asked me if I could look at a Sewaid project here and so I visited a number of places such as homes for elderly, homes for street kids, vocational schools for the poor etc. in Tanna.



Street kids

Manaode Home and school for street kids.

This NGO school is under the Management of Rotarian Beatrice Randrianarison who took me there and looked after me while I was in Tanna. The school supports about 100 children aged from 8 to 18, some live there full time and others who live on the street come there for food and schooling. About 30 are sponsored by overseas people but they would like to have more kids sponsored. To sponsor a child here costs just A\$350 a year (\$1.00 a day) I am thinking this is something a Rotary club could do. Please contact me if you are interested to do this.



Beatrice Randrianarison

Vocational Schools

One of the problems with the Manaode Home is when the children reach 18 which is the maximum age for the Manaode home; where to send these teenagers? They try to send them back to some family or relatives but continue to support them. Some go to Vocational schools during the day and we visited one of these for the girls. It was called Foyer Chretien Des Jeunes Filles and it was run by the Lutheran church and it was the drabest place you could every imagine. This is a school with nothing, except for a blackboard and a few old tables and bench seats, these classrooms had nothing. They teach embroidery, sewing and craft. I asked to see the sewing machines and of the four they had not one was working. With no tools and little time I only managed to fix one, the other three needing major repairs and some new parts. However I will arrange to send this school all new

machines along with a full compliment of sewing and craft equipment, and my company will fund the courses from now on. However we will also see if through our Sewaid program we can send some teachers over for a couple of weeks as they desperately need help with instruction. Visit www.sewaid.com for more details.

Peter Pearce's project in Madagascar

Earlier this year Peter helped install 400 shelter boxes in the far Southern part of Madagascar which was hit by some very large flooding and some 5,000 people lost their house and everything they owned. Peter vowed to return again with some additional aid through Rotary. So Peter had got together this huge amount of items (see separate list) which he plans to ship in a 40ft container early 2012 and follow that up with a team of Rotarians visiting Madagascar in April or May.

Peter has made a very good contact in a Colonel Miha, a Director with the BNGRC which is a Disaster Relief department of the Government. Through the BRGRC Peter can land the container duty free and the BRGRC will transport the goods to the different areas where Rotary clubs will then take over the distribution and organization of the goods.

After a few days in Tanna, Peter, Katie and Bob I left in two 4WD vehicles for their trip down to Ambovombe in the very South of the island, a trip of some 1,500 kms and involving some 40 hours of car travel for the return trip, much of the journey on shocking roads. With them were members from the BNGRC and the Rotary club of Tanna. For approximately one week they will be investigating the most needy areas and making plans for the arrival of the container good next year. The project is a RAWCS project supported by the Rotary Club of Gosford North, other Rotarians and friends.

Conclusions

The main purpose of trip to Uganda and Madagascar was to investigate the possibilities for matching grant projects in 2012-13 and I am pleased to report we have successfully done that. The need in both counties is enormous but Ugnada is going to be an easier place to work, due to the strength of Rotary there and English being the main language.

PDG Tony Castley



Vocational School

The Madagascar 40 foot container contents

- 50,000 'pre-loved' clothing items packed into 25 large white bales
- 1,000's 'pre-loved' baby clothes
- 2 used baby humicribs
- Good used hospital lined, sheets etc
- 4,00 new 'Tee Shirts' without collars
- Microscopes, suitable for high school class rooms
- 500 new clothing uniforms, shirts & trousers (out-date corporate branded)
- Many satchels/bags, ideal for school children
- High school
- 250 used tennis balls
- 'Skyjuice' Water Filtration Unit including prefabricated holding tower ready for installation
- 6 Hand operated sewing machines & material provided by Tony Castley, Sew Aid
- 300 Old & new complete soccer strips with some soccer balls
- 600 little teddy bear, which are 'giveaways' for kids, plus some other toys
- Portable Ultrasound Scanner... dependant on appropriate need
- Finger Oximeter... dependent on appropriate need
- Electrocardiograph... dependant on appropriate
- Foetal Heart Monitor... dependant on appropriate need

