

# Tyume Valley Schools News



[www.tvschools.org.uk](http://www.tvschools.org.uk)

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## UK AID TO SOUTH AFRICA TO END

It has been recently announced that the UK is to end the annual £19 million aid package it gives to South Africa by 2015. The pressure on charities to fill the gap is now even greater. HIV Aids is still a huge problem as well as literacy and unemployment. Increasingly computer literacy is vital so that learners can access education resources on-line, and develop IT skills demanded by higher education colleges and employers. Proficiency in English Language is another priority, which TVS is supporting through its after-school classes.

As technology changes so does the focus of our fundraising. We still need £20,000 for a new minibus, as the old one is on its last legs. We also aim to provide ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD, starting with thirty laptops at £300 each to equip a classroom in a school.

## VISITORS TO TYUME

In January and February Liz Button, Jim Lewis and Jerry Parsons volunteered as teachers and trainers and supporters David Wilkin and Caroline Glendenning visited to find out more about the project.

Liz Button writes:

*My dear friend Steph had spoken so warmly of her visits to the valley and the work of TVS that curiosity won. TVS arranged for me to be attached to Auckland Primary School which has 182 children. Part of my role was to ensure that two new laptops which had been given to the school were introduced without delay to staff and students. At 08h00 I reported in to Auckland and discovered the Principal's main concern was the fact that he was two teachers short. I therefore became a classroom teacher. This*



*Learners receiving their certificates in English.*

*caused me some initial nerves as my original training forty plus years ago was in the secondary sector. As I am convinced that any teacher can make a difference to any class at any age I set out to prove this and found I was able to involve my recent work teaching English as a Foreign Language. I taught grades 4-7 and also did IT training with staff members and small groups of children.*



**Auckland School**

Some of Liz's comments underline how different South African village schools are from what we know in the UK.

*The children do a good job of cleaning their classrooms each week. Girls often remove their shoes and socks to wash floors. Informal school closures take place frequently, for example for funerals and union meetings.*

*The free school lunch of pap (mealie meal) was consumed with relish by every child when a small portion of tinned pilchard was added.*

*The children's singing was magic.*

*I thank the TVS team for their support, guidance and friendship and look forward to a return visit.*

## **NEW MUSIC PROJECT**

We are fortunate to have been granted funds for music education from the Mark Torkington Charitable Trust. TVS trustee Margaret Woodward visited Tyume Valley in January and made contact with the Music Department at Fort Hare University. As a result we have Zandi, a talented 4th year student who has led the university marimba band, and also plays trumpet, djembe and bowed African strings. Zandi is currently working with Festile Soga School once a week and is planning a concert on 24<sup>th</sup> September; she speaks excellent English so is a great support in English Language development as well.

## **NEW PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR**

We now have a local coordinator in Tyume. Vicky Riley hails from Newcastle, but has worked in South Africa several times over the last few years. She has sent us this report.

### **The Life of a Riley in the Tyume Valley, South Africa**

*I have now been in South Africa for 114 days as I sit down to write this piece. During this relatively short amount of time I have experienced a multitude of feelings ranging from satisfaction and frustration, joy and sadness, excitement and fear. I have encountered many lovely people, adults and children of all ages and creeds, an abundance of animals and I have driven thousands of kilometres.*

*I arrived at Johannesburg Airport on 17<sup>th</sup> January alongside Margaret Kiloh, the chair of TVS who, towards the end of 2012, had offered me the opportunity to work with the charity for nine months.*

*The local people have been tirelessly supportive and helpful to me here. Winnie, who lives in the village of Yamala, which also hosts the primary school from where we run our English course, has become a very dear friend. We sit and chat over cups of tea. She advises me on Xhosa traditions and ways of thinking, while I try to assist her finding reliable builders to come and repair her very leaky roof and offer her transport to town for her weekly shopping. There are also John, Fiona and Nadia in Hogsback. Each of them constantly come to my assistance at the drop of a hat, to tow any of the TVS vehicles to and from the garage when I have one of my regular breakdowns, and they all make sure I have a resemblance of a social life once in a while.*



**English classes at the Resource Centre**





**Great South Run at Portsmouth October 2012**

*The children who attend English classes are a joy to work with. They are still a little wary of me, but remain fascinated by my blond hair, peculiar northern English accent and constantly laugh at my pronunciation when attempting to talk in my very limited Xhosa!*

*Vehicles have remained a constant source of patience-testing while here: TVS currently own three vehicles, all of which are at least 20 years old so have already done many miles! To date between all of the vehicles I have encountered, three overheated engines, replaced a battery, faulty distributor, bust fan, disintegrated air filters and no less than 11 punctures, which are always a hazard when driving on the very poor gravel roads and there are many of those in the valley. However, having access to vehicles is essential in South Africa and particularly for the project, as we currently need to transport a total of 94 children and 8 teachers each week to and from*

*villages all over the valley, in order to run the English classes after school. So as not to interfere with the government curriculum, all of our lessons take place outside of school hours.*

*The roads can be pretty hazardous to drive too, even though there is generally much less vehicle traffic than in the UK and much more open space. You need to keep alert due to all sorts of things on the road when driving: potholes (lots and lots of them), people (especially school children), cows, goats, sheep, horses, pigs, tortoises, lizards, snakes, baboons and monkeys to name a few I have encountered so far. However, contrary to many peoples' perception of Africa, there are no elephants, lions, giraffes and rhinos aimlessly wandering the streets in the Eastern Cape! I hope to continue my personal journey here in this very rural corner of the Eastern Cape, South Africa until mid October.*

## HAVE FUN AND FUND RAISE FOR LAPTOPS AND A MINIBUS!

Following the success of last year's events we are repeating several. If you'd like to participate please check details with the office by email or phone.



- Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September - Walk for TVS
- October - Nic Suggit's Sports Day
- October - Great South Run
- This summer why not have a tea party or cake and plant sale?
- Or a quiz? We can provide some questions.

Already this year the golf tournament at St. Augustine's, Kent has raised £1000 for TVS. That's three laptops or one twentieth of a minibus!!



*Geraldine Palmer receives a cheque on behalf of TVS at St. Augustine's*

### **TVS Annual General Meeting**

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2013 10.30 a.m.

Central London location

Please contact office for details if you would like to attend.