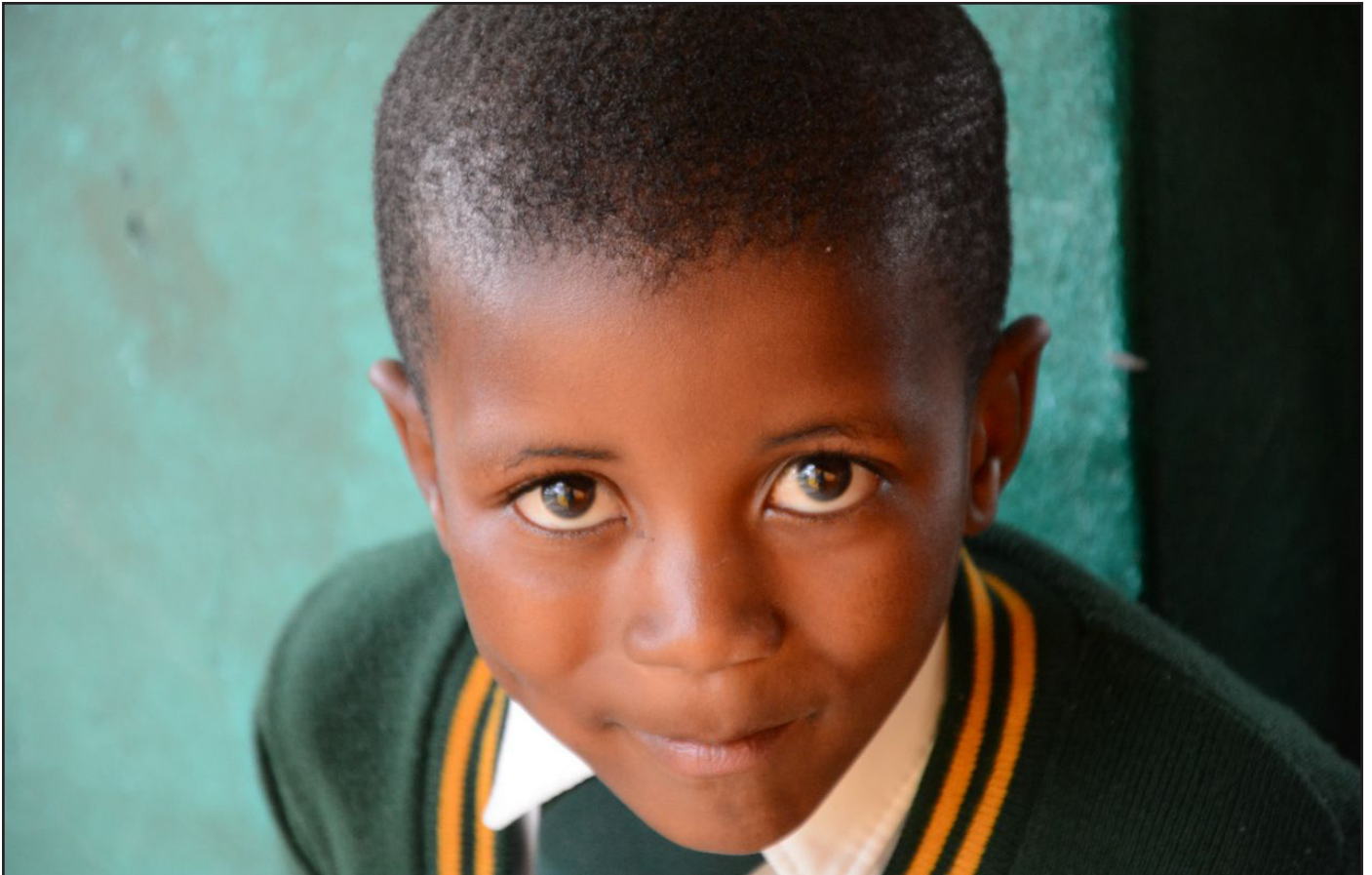


## Tenth Anniversary Issue



### Ten Years and Counting!

It is a decade since Margaret Kiloh recruited a team of teachers to help fulfil the dream of Margaret Woodward and herself to change the lives of children in Tyume Valley. Ten years after the election of Nelson Mandela, education in this impoverished region was still lagging behind the rest of South Africa. (And it still is.) The local teachers' organisation asked the two Margarets to help them implement the new curriculum which was being launched in South Africa, taking them from the old 1950s Bantu education system to education 2005 style with very little training.

The project began with the very first camp at Hobbiton. Fifteen English volunteers and eighty children were immersed in a project that involved Art, Drama, English, Sport and Maths as well as night hikes in the forest and a walk to the waterfall and the Big Tree (at 500 years one of the oldest in the Amatola forest).

Since then TVS has grown and continued its work. In the last ten years it has

- Run annual Study Camps, with up to 100 children attending over each week
- Built up a Resource Centre which has a library, computers and meeting room

- Provided IT lessons for staff and students, and IT equipment for 13 schools
- Run regular English Language lessons for the last three years, reaching over 300 students
- Created lasting school partnerships with at least four UK schools and arranged several teacher exchanges.
- Run a music course for primary school children
- Run sports coaching
- Employed a local co-ordinator to keep things running smoothly and report back to the Committee.



*The village of Krwa Krwa in 2004*

## A personal reflection Margaret Kiloh

When apartheid was finally defeated at the beginning of the 1990s it was clear that the new South Africa would still be in need of help and support. Government and corporate efforts would play an important role but this kind of help often fails to reach the grass roots. The country also needed to go through a healing process so that the next generation could participate fully in society and free itself from the legacy of apartheid. Giving money was all very well but I and others wanted to get involved and work to make a difference.

## The origins of the project

The Tyume Valley (pronounced chew me) was only one of many impoverished rural areas where we could have worked. We were guided there by Archie Sibeko, our founding President, who was a 'son of the soil' and knew the area intimately. He was committed to bringing together those in

the UK who wanted to get involved with those in South Africa who were in need of support, so when TVS began it had the tremendous advantage of having been introduced by a well-regarded local figure.

Tyume is a poor rural area needing support in many ways but TVS decided to concentrate on education. First, there was an obvious need. Despite a large national education budget and a new, 'integrated' National Curriculum, the schools were still run down and teachers ill-prepared to raise standards from the level of the old Bantu Education system to those now needed for the African majority to play a full role in running the country and to share the benefits previously reserved to white people. Secondly, as a teacher, I had a strong belief in the power of education to change lives and I knew that many in the profession felt the same way – despite the stresses and strains of working in UK schools.

## The highlights

For everybody who visits the TVS project it is the children who make it all worthwhile! They are the real highlight. All of the children in the valley need help to varying degrees, be it food/nutrition, better education, more support at home (lots of children, few adults, no income), clothing etc - the list goes on. However, children are children wherever you are in the world, and most of them are generally happy, mischievous children who make the most of what they have! It is a joy to see them growing up and grasping the opportunities previously denied them.



*Catching them young*



Another highlight is the TVS volunteers. TVS is an entirely volunteer organisation. Beginning with the first group who went on to form the first TVS committee, right up to now when the boat is kept moving forward by our volunteer Project Coordinator, Vicky, TVS could not operate without them.

Our big idea has always been to build teacher-to-teacher links between UK teachers and their counterparts in Tyume schools and to provide assistance from the ground up, rather than through a top-down organisation-led approach. Local teachers live and work together with white colleagues, often for the first time. Ideas are exchanged, relationships built up and racial barriers broken down. Individual friendships have developed, not only between teachers but also with the children, who seized this new experience with both hands.

Through our volunteers many local teachers have been introduced to new teaching methods and given the confidence to use them - and children have been introduced to the idea that learning can be fun!

## **School Profile: Kwezana Primary School**



*Dinner ladies at Kwezana preparing vegetables from the school garden*

Kwezana Primary School was first visited by Margaret Woodward and Margaret Kiloh in 2003 and its principal, Mr Philip Ngutu, became the first chairman of the Ikhwezi Teachers Association.

Kwezana is twinned with Settle Primary School and the link continues to flourish. In 2013 Miss Nojozi, the Reception teacher at Kwezana visited Settle and returned with lots of ideas on how to brighten up her classroom and improve play opportunities for her children. Hopefully Kwezana reception children will soon have access to a special outside play area and will discover the delights of playdough and dressing up.

The two schools are sharing a project on healthy eating and as part of this the visiting teachers from Settle had help plant a garden with fruit trees To find out more about the link between Kwezana School and Settle Primary visit the blog:

**[www.settlekwezana.wordpress.com](http://www.settlekwezana.wordpress.com)**

or the news section at the school website:

**[www.settle-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk/news.asp](http://www.settle-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk/news.asp)**

## **Keeping up the Good Work: Liz Button reports on the 2013 October Study Camp**

My first visit to Hobbiton....a recce....along the gravel road from Hogsback village centre....then a large enclosed forest space with low buildings, pool, climbing walls, zip wire and....stunning views. Tonya and her partner offered a brisk but warm welcome and we settled down to discuss the programme of activities, menus and sleeping accommodation.

Objectives included promoting socialisation between valley schools, increasing student confidence, extending physical skills, improving English and introducing alternative teaching styles for our SA colleagues.

Pupils were mixed ability with an age range of 10-15. Our English lessons involved simple stories suitable for young children enhanced by props to promote comprehension. We started with readymade 'Story Sacks' and children were encouraged to take part as narrator or characters. The second stage involved the selection of a new story for each school whose members then had responsibility for learning it and producing

props to prepare for performance on return to school. We found craft work sessions difficult, the children having had little previous experience of practical work.



*Supper time at Hobbiton*

The children loved the experience of Hobbiton study camp and all voted for a return visit! They voted Hot Dogs their favourite meal and 'Ropes' the activity most enjoyed. Many admitted to fears regarding the night hike but loved the game of Bingo! Accommodated in large dormitories it was no surprise that all went home needing a good night's sleep! Fine weather at the start of the week broke up midweek and teachers started to long for home comforts.



*Cold teachers longing for home!*

## **Future directions for TVS – sustaining our achievements**

### **By Caroline Glendinning and Sue Richards**



*Their future is ahead of them. Our aim is to help them to achieve their dreams.*

After 10 years of hard work raising money and working closely with schools in the Tyume Valley, we need to think forward to the future. How can we build on our achievements and ensure that the work of TVS can continue into the future? Currently the prospects are very good – TVS's fundraising activities have been very successful and the organisation is in better shape financially than it has ever been! But in thinking about the future, the Committee is very aware of two important considerations:

- We need new committee members to be actively involved in planning, finance, publicity etc.
- TVS can also operate much more effectively if we have a co-ordinator who is able to spend a considerable part of the year in South Africa. We've been lucky that Vicky Riley volunteered for this role during 2013 and has agreed to continue for 2014.

Thus we need both 'new blood' on the Committee and a sustainable source of income that will allow us to continue employing a local co-ordinator.

We will be contacting all our supporters over the next few weeks to see if you might be able to set up or increase your standing order to TVS – and also consider recruiting friends and family to become regular subscribers. There's nothing like enthusiasm from someone you know to inspire people to get involved in something new. Even



a small sum like £10 a month can make a big difference if enough people subscribe.

We are also very keen to encourage new people to become involved as members of the Committee. Over the next month we'll be reviewing the roles of Committee members and identifying any gaps – but we're already clear that TVS needs someone closely involved to be its Treasurer.

In the longer term, we are exploring potential partnerships with other (UK and South African) organisations that could take over at least some of the project's management and help deliver our core expertise in English, IT and music to schools in Tyume.

If you have ideas, suggestions or – most important – are willing to give a little (more) time or money to TVS, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

## TVS People



We are delighted that **Vicky Riley** is able to continue as our co-ordinator for another year. This is an important post because it enables all the programmes to run smoothly. Vicky has extensive administrative and project management experience as well as having creative skills in digital and film documentation and production. She knows the Tyume Valley well, having worked there previously with the Dodgy Clutch Theatre Company and the Tyume Valley Amphitheatre project.

Vicky supervises and mentors the local volunteers, organises workshops, networks with other organisations and provides vital information back to the committee. In addition she is a great photographer and provides material for our Facebook page and the website.

## New Committee members



**Liz Button** is a retired secondary school teacher. She now teaches English as a Foreign Language, provides support for the production and distribution of educational DVDs on health issues and works as a volunteer Adult Basic Education Tutor. Together with Stephanie Gallier, she is responsible for organising study camps.

**Caroline Glendinning** is Professor of Social Policy and Associate Director, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, and Associate Director NIHR School for Social Care Research. She has research expertise in the areas of disability, family care and social care services for adults and older people.





## Help for Zandie



Zandie is ten years old and a learner at a Tyume Primary School. She was unlucky enough to be born without a bridge to her nose. TVS is helping to arrange corrective surgery which we hope will be performed later on this year by the Smile Foundation, a charity which specialises in this kind of operation.

HIV is common in the Tyume Valley as are many life threatening diseases. In the past ten years we have lost a number of good friends. Over the Christmas holidays one of our IT facilitators died and last year our young music teacher was infected with drug resistant TB and was dangerously ill. She is now on the road to recovery and hopes to resume her teaching next month.

## Fantastic fund raising year

Our thanks to the many individual and corporate donors who have made it possible to run the English classes, up- grade the IT equipment and provide peripatetic music lessons.

Sponsors include the Alan and Nesta Ferguson Trust, Dial a Flight, the Pinmar Golf Tournament, the Mark Torkington Trust, the Eleanor Rathbone Trust, the Lord and Lady Lurgan Trust and the Big Give. The Good Shepherd Runners from Carshalton ran the Great South Run and raised a magnificent £2,000.

On a local basis we have had a Sports Day and cake sales. Why not open your garden, or have a quiz? It's all good fun and people do enjoy an excuse for a get together.

We now have to maintain this level of giving in order to continue to run the English classes and to fund a local co-ordinator. If you can make a regular monthly donation it helps us really know where we are in planning our projects.

*TVS Runners and lion at the Great South Run*

