



No. 15

# Dihlabeng Christian School Newsletter

June 2014

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## NEW TEACHER - HANNAH BANKS

In Term 1 we welcomed Hannah Banks to the staff of DCS. Hannah is 26 years old and comes from Southhampton. She came to teach Grade 5. She will be returning to the UK for Term 2 before rejoining us and Grade 5 for the rest of 2014, initially. Hannah's love for God, the children and her vivacious personality are evident in all she does. We are very grateful that she has joined the staff and Grade 5 are looking forward to her return in July.



## OUR COMPUTER ROOM

Our computer room has been completely upgraded with 10 new desktop computers running Windows 7. These refurbished computers have been purchased at a very reasonable price through the charity 'Computers For Africa', which is based near Maidstone, Kent, in the UK. They have worked in partnership with an IT company in Somerset West, near Cape Town to supply them. At DCS, the project has been funded largely from the extra funds available to the school from the accrued Gift Aid, claimed from sponsorship giving and other donations.

Alan Goodson and Michael Kruyshaar, a local computer technician in Clarens, have worked tirelessly to load, install and facilitate a working network within the school for both pupils and staff. This has been a huge task and has meant overcoming many obstacles, not least, getting the computers right across South Africa from Cape Town to Clarens and doing everything at minimal cost. We are extremely grateful to them and to all those who Gift Aid their donations to DCS.



## A NEW TEACHER NEEDED FOR JANUARY 2015

Dihlabeng Christian School is in need of a new teacher for Foundation Phase, Grades R to 3 from January 2015 (equivalent to KS1 in the UK). This is a voluntary post, requiring a volunteer's visa to South Africa, with a minimum commitment of two years. Ideally, we would like an experienced Infant school teacher who is able to provide financial support for him/herself, although some funding towards expenses may be possible. He/she should be a committed Christian who is able to uphold and work towards the school's aim of bringing 'Hope to the Hopeless' and provide a high standard of education to children, who may come from very impoverished backgrounds.



If you are such a teacher and are looking for a life changing opportunity and a challenge, or you know someone who may be interested in working with us at Dihlabeng, we invite you to contact the school direct by email at: [dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za](mailto:dihlabengschool@intekom.co.za) or contact New Life Church, Biggin Hill, as above. We will be happy to give you more information.

## LANDS END TO JOHN O'GROATS FOR DCS

Darren Hedges, the brother in-law of Carolyn Revill, who leads our Foundation Phase, committed himself to raising funds for DCS by cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats. Two other friends, Nick Jones and Neil Williams cycled with him. They raised money for a Dementia charity and the RNLI (Lifeboats), respectively. Darren's fund raising was towards replacing the Jungle Gym at Dihlabeng School. Our Jungle Gym was originally donated and built for us by Sakkie Van den Bergh, from Clarens, when his children were at DCS. It is much loved by all the children and very well used. It has long been in need of considerable repair or replacement.



The cycle ride, which covered a total of 1008 miles (1625 km) began on the 12th April and finished after 14 gruelling days on the 25th. The men averaged 70 miles (112 km) per day with the longest day being 88 miles (140 km), after they took a wrong turn. They kept going during the day on snacks of homemade flapjacks, Snicker bars and cakes and of course, plenty of water. Accommodation along the way was pre-booked at Premier Inns, youth hostels, pubs etc.

By using an 'Endomondo App' on mobile phones in the UK, the children in South Africa were able to keep track of their progress over the internet and send messages of encouragement to keep them strong.

Darren set up a donations page entitled '**LEJOG**' on *Give.net*, under the charity of New Life Church, Biggin Hill, which administers the sponsorship funds for Dihlabeng School. To date the funds raised on that page, including Gift Aid amount to **£1,031.00**. He also set up a donations box at the farm shop of his market gardening business, which alongside other donations has raised a staggering further **£3,065.00**. The total amount is way beyond the expectations of everyone and has given the school the wonderful task of choosing what else to use the money for. Carolyn has decided that, as well as replacing the Jungle Gym, the foundation Phase will also purchase reading books, outside picnic tables, maths and sports equipment.



We cannot thank Darren enough for this magnificent act of generosity and would also congratulate him and the other two men on their physical achievements in cycling this distance. We hope that the success of this ride gave them great personal satisfaction and not just aching muscles!

We would also like to thank all those who contributed, through the website, the donations box in the shop and other means. **THANK YOU ALL!**

I hope to be able to report on the progress of the new Jungle Gym in the next Newsletter.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

This is continuing my article about ex-pupils from Dihlabeng School, which I began in the December Newsletter.

Here is some information about two more young adults and their journeys so far.

**Mpho Mokoena**, the eldest of 4 children, all of whom have attended DCS, was one of the original pupils when the school started in 2000. She left DCS after Grade 7 and attended Clarens Combined until the end of Grade 9. She completed her education at Moriting High School, in Clarens, gaining her matric certificate.

In 2011, after several part time jobs and periods of unemployment, she spent over a year working at DCS supporting one of our young pupils, Pontsho, who had disabilities. This support helped the family to apply for and gain a place at a residential school, much more suited to the child's needs. Mpho worked hard during this time at DCS and showed patience and determination as an assistant to little Pontsho.

She has since followed the Grass Roots Management Selection programme, which is hosted at Dihlabeng Church, and is now working for Shoprite, one of South Africa's largest retailers, in Qwaqwa.



### **Michael Larter**

Michael is now aged 21 years. He left DCS in 2006 and continued his education first, at Lady Grey School in the Eastern Cape but finalised his matric certificate in Grade 12, at Witteberg High School in Bethlehem. Since then he has worked voluntarily for the church and part time, supporting his father's plumbing business.

After a recent trip to Dubai for a church conference he has set his sights on getting his driver's licence and hopefully returning to Dubai to work. This would be an amazing opportunity for Michael to expand his horizons and life experience, as well as his Christian faith.

## NEW SPONSORS THIS YEAR

We have pleasure in welcoming many new sponsors to our family of sponsors, since December. Nearly all have begun sponsoring following visits made to the school with their churches. We are thrilled to have them.

They are:

**Tracy and Steve Law** from Brighton, Sussex - sponsoring **Katleho Mokoena** in Grade R (Reception)

**Nikkita Pamment** from Biggin Hill - sponsoring **Tshepo Mwangi** in Grade R.

**George and Ruth Richardson** from Bristol - sponsoring **Lehlohonolo Mokoena** Grade R.

Pupils from **Bromley High School**, in Kent - collectively sponsoring **Mamotskeuwa Mosia** in Grade R.

**Dave Holt and Vivien Kilgour** from Caple, Bedfordshire - sponsoring **Mpolokeng Motaung** Grade R, and **Nthabiseng Mosia** Grade 5.

**Tom and Alex Horsley** from Oxted, Surrey - sponsoring **Amohelang Mokoena** from Grade 1.

**Gillian Cornell** from Dereham, Norfolk - sponsoring **Matshediso Mokoena**, Grade 4.

**Carol and Nick Carrolchick** from Brighton, Sussex - sponsoring **Sam Mota** Grade 5.



## VISITORS TO DCS IN TERM 1

We were fortunate to have visits from several teams of people from churches in the UK during Term 1.

**Lewes, Sussex** - In February a team of 10 people visited Clarens from Kings Church in Lewes, Sussex, the home church of Dr Rob and Hilary Ferns. The main focus of their visit was to see first hand the work Rob and Hilary are involved in, in Lesotho. They also visited Dihlabeng Church and the School, establishing good links with our Pre-School and Reception classes.

**Bedford/Brighton** - In early March a team came to Clarens, mainly from Kings Arms church in Bedford but with others joining them from Brighton. The purpose of this visit was to be part of a ministry school, with others from SA and participate in outreach in the township areas.

Towards the end of their stay they visited the school, furthering the contacts they had made with many of the local children from the township.

**Others** - Individual visits were also made by George and Ruth Richardson, George and Isabel Revill (Carolyn's parents) and Vic and Heather Wichall, all from the UK.

## GIFTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

During Term 1 we received some wonderful gifts from friends of DCS in South Africa.

**Isabella Wojtala** - Isabella is a frequent visitor to Clarens. She heard about the school and in February she came to school assembly with a gift of some soccer balls for the children. This lovely spontaneous gesture really blessed us and she has promised to pay us another visit in July bringing a donation of 6 wall heaters from her husbands company, 'Envirowaste'.



**Perimeter Fencing** - the fencing around the perimeter of the school site has been an on-going project. Thanks to the generous donations of the Harley Davidson Steel Wings Organisation, the Ficksburg Round Table and the local SPF (Sector Police Forum) we have been able to complete all the fencing, apart from a rolling security gate. We are extremely grateful to them for their help in keeping the children and our property safe.

We also had a generous donation for the fencing from The Women's Catholic League in the UK, through one of our sponsors, Rita Potter.



RIGHT - WONDERFUL GIFTS FOR THE SCHOOL - THANK YOU!

REETING THE CHILDREN OF DCS - JULIE DIXON WITH LINDIWE TSHABALALA, THE GIRL SHE SPONSORS



**Biggin Hill** - It was a pleasure to have 8 members of New Life Church and 2 from Selsdon, near Croydon, visit us. For 6 of them it was their first visit to SA. New Life Church has such a key role in the support and funding of Dihlabeng School; it is always a pleasure to welcome them at school. Many church members are sponsors and the relationship of the church and the school goes back to when the school first began in 2000. This team spent two weeks in SA. The first week was spent in Lesotho working on the clinic building in Rehobotho - painting, hanging doors, plumbing and even making a wooden bed!

The second week was spent in Clarens where they visited the school, church projects and attended the Master Builders Conference, they also relaxed and recovered from their week of hard work. They bought with them many wonderful gifts for the school and the children - too many to list here, but for which we are extremely grateful. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



'Thank You' to all our Sponsors and Friends

