



# **NEWS LETTER FROM ANDY GROOME**

**[www.outreachacrossafrica.org](http://www.outreachacrossafrica.org)**

**“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed.  
Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.”**  
**Proverbs chapter 31 verses 8 and 9.**

Hi to all my friends,

I want to write to you all now to let you know how we are moving forward and how things are developing.

Firstly I want to thank you all for the support you have given in every way, prayer, attending the meetings, financial support and offering your skills and time in moving this thing forward in helping the poor.

My last seven-week trip was beneficial in every way although sometimes difficult.

## **One thousand orphans in two days**

Much of my time was spent with my friends Clive, Zoliswa and their children, who are at present staying in Mthatha about three and a half hours drive away from the village Mgezwa where I lived for a year. It is at a time when T.M.A.T. who Clive and Zoliswa work for, are just starting a Children's Village (orphanage) in an area where H.I.V./A.I.D.S has ravaged families and the community. On one occasion when I was in the area where the Children's Village is to be built, I saw the faces of about 620 orphans looking at me. Their numbers could rise by about fifty more every year. The next day about an hour away in another village I saw 404 orphans. We talked to many children, one who was 17 years old and whose parents had passed away was left with many siblings to care for. This whole experience really affected me, reminding me of the scale of the problem and the work that is required to help them.



I saw the land that has been acquired for the project and it is vast, although only a third of the land has been fenced (200meters x 60meters). As we said at the last meeting, at present we are giving 60% of our funds raised to T.M.A.T for this project, which will help 82 of the children that are considered by the local government workers to be most at risk. The rest will stay with their extended family (uncles, aunts, sisters and brothers etc).

## **Back to the village where I lived for a year**

The journey back to Mgezwa was very emotional for me, back to visit my good friends, staying with Pastor Monde, Zethu his wife and family on the mission again. I visited Nomalizo's Mum, sisters and family and had a great time seeing them again and seeing the house we had built for them. It seemed like only yesterday that Nomalizo had been dying in the mud hut. I went to visit her grave in the garden, just marked by a small pile of sticks as they can't afford anything else, and then her mum informed me that her husband, son and others were buried there with her. It was a very difficult time.



I visited another family and Mrs Maxhakana was introduced to me by Pastor Monde. After spending time with her and hearing of her situation, Pastor Monde and I talked about helping her. We decided to lend her £200 for a period to buy the stock to start a small shop business. Mrs Maxhakana is H.I.V positive and very open about her status. Her husband has recently passed away and has left her to care for their four children, plus nine others from his previous marriage, some of whom are nearing their late teens. The Church will help Mrs Maxhakana (pictured left), in running the business and when the time is right she will pay back the loan so we can then help another

needy person with the same monies. It is a side of things we intend to develop and with which we will continue.

I also went to stay with Mr and Mrs Ntshangase, the Pastor and his wife for whom we bought the pickup. I really enjoyed my time with them and even drove the vehicle. It was good.

### **TWO AND HALF YEARS ON**

I then visited the village of Ntlamvukazi where our friend Siyabonga lives, the orphaned family in whom we invested £259, while I was out there in 2004-05. He is managing the business very well, and you will be pleased to know the chicken business has moved from the bedroom to a new chicken shack he has built. He is building an extension onto the shop that is well stocked and doing good business. He has a solar panel, I think for lighting, two gas run refrigerators for the business, a big water tank, makes concrete blocks and the field is still being used to grow crops. So thank you all for helping this family to help themselves. We have given them the opportunity to change their lives.

### **A PLOT IN THE VILLAGE**

Also in Ntlamvukazi I visited the site that you have all financially helped secure, and we have paid for the fence, which is now up and which marks the plot. All that's left to do is to get the drawings completed; the quote finalised and then push forward with building the church. The church building will not just be a place of worship but also a building where the church can help the community. We are considering building this project in two phases. Firstly a smaller room and then in phase two the building of the main hall and at that point the small room will be sub divided into three smaller rooms at the rear of the hall. The hall will also incorporate two large water tanks on either side of the building collecting valuable rainwater from the roofs.

### **Funerals**

While out there I attended a couple of funerals and was invited to others, one of them was the 28 year old daughter of my friends, reminding me of how fragile life is for all of us.

### **Thank you**

So again a big thank you, to all who have been involved in this in every way, seeing the prospects for people we have helped in the past and pushing forward with helping many more.

### **For the diary**

We have four meetings planned this year at two different venues, hoping to make it easier for people to attend. You are all welcome. Come and find out more about what we are doing and receive up-to-date news. Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May & Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept are in Luton and Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April & Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> Sept are in Hemel Hempstead. Please see the attached leaflet for more details or visit our web site at [www.outreachacrossafrica.org](http://www.outreachacrossafrica.org).

God Bless from Andy Groome